



Cal Delta Spotlight

USC House Corporation of Phi Delta Theta | Winter 2021 | University of Southern California

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President's Corner

Fall 2021

This President's Corner is a bit sentimental for me, because it is my last time writing one for the newsletter. The older I get, the faster time appears to pass. It seems like it was just yesterday when Bruce Buettell pulled me aside and asked if I would be interested in stepping up as house corporation president. Believe it or not, that was in Fall of 2016, and I started my term in January 2017.



I looked back on the goals we set out for the house corporation when we launched our "Five Year Plan" with the Board in 2017. The plan had three main pillars:

- Increased chapter transparency
- Stronger focus on alumni engagement
- Renewed emphasis on proactive maintenance and capital investments for the house

I am extremely proud of the progress we have made in these areas, with key highlights below:

- Transparency: We fostered deep relationships with the chapter executive board, established biannual visits to the chapter, standardized the resident advisor position with established roles and responsibilities, and formalized move-in and move-out processes.
- Alumni Engagement: We continued publishing Cal Delta Spotlight biannually, established

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Holiday party from back in my undergraduate days at Phi Delta Theta (my freshman year of college, 2010)

Alumni Spotlight: Steve Scully '81



For this newsletter, we are shining a spotlight on Brother Steve Scully '81. Steve graduated from USC with a business degree in corporate finance and investments. He served as rush chairman, pledge master, and president in his time with the chapter. He is the founder and president of The Scully Companies, a full-service truck leasing and rental company and specialized contract logistics provider, which he started following graduation. He grew the business over 30 years into the largest independent asset-based logistics provider in the western US and sold the company in 2011 to Ryder System, a public Fortune 500 company. Currently, he is chairman of the board

of Clean Energy Fuels (NASDAQ: CLNE), the largest provider of natural-gas fuel to all facets of the transportation industry. Steve is also on the City of Newport Beach Harbor Commission. The Harbor Commission works with the city council and oversees all commercial, non-profit, and residential activities of Newport Harbor. Additionally, he serves on the advisory board of the USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies, as well as on the philanthropy committee of the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

Scully USC Fact: Most of Steve's family are USC graduates. His two daughters, Jessica (2014) and Madysen (2016), are fourth generation graduates. In total, nine people in Steve's family have graduated from USC, including himself, his grandmother, his mother, his father, his aunts, his niece, and both of his daughters!

Q: How would you describe your experience in the chapter?

A: Being a Phi Delt at USC was an outstanding experience. I made incredible friends that continue to stay in touch, and being part of the fraternity made the time that I was at USC so fulfilling.

Q: How do you stay in touch with fellow chapter members?

A: There is a large group of guys from multiple pledge classes in my era who stay in touch. We periodically get together for lunch, baseball games, football games, and chapter alumni events. All such a great group of guys.

Q: How did your chapter experience shape your life post-graduation?

A: I pledged the house my fall sophomore year. Experiencing campus life as a freshman without being in the house was difficult and nowhere near as entertaining from the moment that I pledged. I moved into the house as a pledge and never moved out until I graduated. I lived every summer in house. There were so many great people, and that is where I



grew up. That said, being president of the house was a great experience and, compounded with the business school at USC, helped shape my desire to want to run my own company. It gave me the confidence to take the risk and give it a hundred percent.

Q: What is something you are most proud of in your career or field?

A: My experience at the Scully Companies was incredible. We had many years where the business was not performing, and those were tough. But, through the 30 years in the transportation business, I met so many outstanding people and was able to build an incredible management team. It was mind boggling to

SCULLY, continued on page 4

President's Message

Fellow Brothers of California Delta:

My name is Josh Rana, and this is my final semester as president of the chapter. The fall semester is in full swing, and the more than 90 current members of Phi Delt are excited to be back on campus for the first time in a year and a half!



Our newest Phikeia class, Alpha Theta, has been fully recruited and are well on their way to becoming Brothers. With 25 new Phikeia, this is our largest pledge class since spring 2019. Although rush was extremely competitive this semester, our rush chairs, Sagan Gor, Carson Mogush, and JJ Valderrama, definitely exceeded expectations. We'd also like to extend a special thanks to alumnus **Stephen Scully** for hosting a rush event on his boat with other alumni. Their stories and continued enthusiasm for the chapter contributed heavily to our success.

Now that we're back in person, our usual fall events have been revived. Tailgate chair Sam Bennett has assured us a great football season, planning tailgates at one of our three senior houses on 30th street, all of which have featured either live bands or DJ sets made up of fellow Phis. Philanthropy Chair Riley Hernandez is currently planning our Beach Bash philanthropy event, which will see the sororities of the row competing for volleyball glory to raise money for the furthering of ALS research, as well as COVID-19 relief in our local community.

This October saw a few very significant events. The chapter went on its first trip to Las Vegas in three years! Over 90 brothers and their dates were in attendance, which led to lots of new, definitely sober, memories being made. We had our third annual alumni Reunion, which saw 30 alumni make their way back to the house on the 28th, as well as at the historic 901 Bar and Grill.

As the end of our first semester back on campus and my presidency draws near, I'd just like to say that I am extremely proud of the culture, brotherhood, and, most importantly, family that I've seen our house and its men grow into. I could not ask for better brothers. To the alumni: thank you all for your continued support during these crazy times, and I hope to meet as many of you as possible in the coming years. It has been an honor to help shape this organization into what it is today; this truly is my Phi Delt.

Damn Proud to Be a Phi,

Josh Rana #1982
Chapter President



Chapter Spotlight: Greg Sarandi

In this edition of the newsletter, we're shining a spotlight on brother Greg Sarandi '23. A junior, studying electrical and computer engineering at USC, Greg pledged Phi Delta Theta during the spring 2021 semester. He currently serves as one of the Phi Delta Theta social chairs and will serve on the rush committee again this upcoming semester. Upon graduating with his ECE bachelor's degree in spring 2023, Greg plans to pursue an MBA in industrial and systems engineering. Greg hopes to design and code beneficial technology to make life more efficient and enjoyable for all.



What made you choose Phi Delta Theta?

I chose Phi Delta Theta because I felt the brothers were the most personable of any on the row. Every fraternity will have its parties and other events, but I wanted to make sure the guys I was hanging around were people I could relate to and bond with. Additionally, every Brother I spoke with during rush seemed incredibly enterprising and motivated, providing a community where I felt I could grow as a person. Choosing Phi Delta Theta has proved to be among the best decisions of my life.



Greg (center) with his big, Sagan Gor (right), and his grandbig Sam Bennett (left).

What is one highlight of your time in the chapter?

My favorite moment as a Phi was when we took a house trip to the US Virgin Islands. Although planning the event was a logistical nightmare, especially considering COVID restrictions, the fruit was worth squeezing. Honestly, I felt the whole chapter really fit in with the Virgin Island culture, and I don't say that lightly. The craziest moment was when Brother **Johnny McKay** got attacked by a family of jellyfish, and instinctively, my big, Sagan Gor, urinated upon the stings to relieve Johnny's severe pain. I've never seen such brotherhood in action, and don't think I ever will again. Outside of the scrumptious virgin daiquiris,

the best thing I consumed on the trip was a 40-pound dorado speared by Brother **Joseph Antonello** and prepared by a local chef. To top it all off, I got the pleasure of drinking water out of a coconut, and that's a tropical feeling I will never forget. The brothers of Phi Delta Theta will forever cherish the Utopian oasis known as the US Virgin Islands and hope to return soon.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

In my free time, I try to be versatile in my interests. I love to ice skate; however, the warm LA weather has prevented that for a while. Additionally, I greatly enjoy woodworking and recently just completed a fractal Lichtenberg table—you should look it up, the style is incredible. Over the summer, I went shark hunting in Mexico with my grand big, Sam Bennett, an amazing experience I'll never forget. The catch of the day was certainly when Sam caught a 400-pound tiger shark. He was reeling that baby in for hours! When I'm back home, I prefer to explore the beautiful Arizona nature, hiking through areas such as the Grand Canyon, Sedona Red Rocks, and the Superstition Mountains. Also, I love all sports, especially football and NASCAR. Kevin Harvick is the man.



Over the summer, Greg worked on a woodworking project called a Lichtenberg table.

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3rd Annual California Delta Alumni Reunion

by Brenton Caldwell

Nothing makes the alumni reunion planning committee happier than seeing a bunch of brothers at the trusty 901 Bar & Grill, and that is exactly how the third annual alumni reunion ended up on October 28, so they must have all had big smiles on their faces!

But, let's start at the beginning. The event began over at the new University Village, which is absolutely stunning. If you haven't seen it in person, it is highly recommended. The plaza even has a Trader Joes and Target in it—what a “hard life” current USC students have. We had a private area at Rock & Reilly's, an upscale venue situated in the Village. Drinks and appetizers were flowing, and the party truly

started once the shuttle bus from Orange County arrived! Sidenote: have you ever had deep fried mac 'n' cheese balls? Most of us hadn't either, but Rock & Reilly's got us hooked!

We had a blast reconnecting at Rock & Reilly's, and before we knew it, we were headed over to 1005 West 28th Street, the place that connects us all! We met undergrads at the house who were giving house tours, tried to find ourselves in composites hung around the property, and got to choose between two different food trucks (Savage Tacos or Wicked Kitchen) for dinner. While we were eating dinner, we heard from the current chapter president, Joshua Rana, about the current status of the

active chapter, as well as about Greek life at USC. Additionally, the house corporation president, Brenton Caldwell, provided an update on the financial position of the house corporation and answered questions.

With full stomachs, fond memories of our time as active Phi Deltas, and a greater understanding of the operations of the current chapter, we knew it was time to migrate to the 901, and you know how that ended!

In total, 41 alumni were able to attend the third annual alumni reunion, and their graduation years spanned from 1977 to 2021. It was an absolute blast to catch up with everyone before Homecoming Weekend! Hope to see you at the next one!



Scully (continued from page 1)

start with two trucks and to grow the business to operate throughout the western US, and build it to 3,000 pieces of equipment. It was an extraordinary experience.

Q: What's life been like for you since the pandemic?

A: Personally, it has been a challenge, particularly with older parents. My wife and I have been dealing with our mothers, and COVID was a threat that we took very seriously. Other than that, we have been getting through it, and as time goes on, we are putting it behind us. Fortunately, those in our family who were infected are okay and did not have to deal with any life-threatening challenges.

Q: What was one of your highlights of your undergraduate experience in the chapter?

A: Without question, it was the people. I was with an incredible group of guys. Everyone was committed to the fraternity, and we all got along. There

was never a night or a weekend that someone didn't ask if you wanted to do something or to go out. Our Thursday night dinners and chapter meetings were priceless. Being elected president was a milestone in my life, and I will never forget this time during my senior year.

Q: What's something you'd like the current chapter members to take away from their experience?

A: Enjoy your time at USC. It will go so incredibly fast. Make as many friends in the house and on campus as you can. These are the people that you will remember and stay in touch with, and some you will even do business with. The USC network is incredible, and it helped me through my career.

In addition, live in the house. I will never forget the experiences and the time that I spent while living in the house. And, finally, do not forget to give back and to make sure that Phi Delta Theta stays on campus and that we continue to own our house. As USC Phi Deltas, we are unique, and we must keep the legacy that those who were Phis before us and those who will come after get to experience what we did 40 years ago.

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the annual Alumni Reunion, sponsored and coordinated alumni events (e.g., Angels baseball, alumni barbecue), and increased communications with alumni via email updates.

- Proactive Maintenance and Capital Investments: We refurbished all 18 bedrooms in the house, established standard maintenance procedures, and determined a maintenance plan for the property to ensure reserves account for large, expected expenses (e.g., exterior painting, wood flooring refurbishment, AC replacement).

We did all of this while consolidating the loans on the house from three to one, paying the mortgage down from \$1.4M to \$890K, weathering a pandemic, launching a digital presence for California Delta at www.uscphidelt.org, and formally closing out both capital campaigns (Restoring our Legacy and Securing our Future).

Of course, this is not a one-man show. The successes of the past five years are due to the highly committed team of house corporation members, including: Bruce Buettell, Kevin Fohrer, Gabe Galanti, Mike Gundell, Frank Hough, Bill Mitchell, Steve Scully, Nick Stubberfield, and Austin Vogel. I can't thank this dream team enough for all their effort, support, and guidance over the past five years.

It has been not only an honor but a privilege to serve as the California Delta House Corporation president for the past five years. I hope I made you all proud!

Yours in the Bond,

Brenton J Caldwell
Brenton Caldwell



Above: Angels baseball game with alumni (2017) Below: USC football game with my wife (2019)



Alumni Continue a Great Tradition at Angels-Yankees Game

It was in 2013 that Andy Fong first reached out to his fellow 1980s-era Phi Deltas and organized an outing to an Angels game. The response was so good that a tradition took hold, which has been repeated every one to two years. A lot of these alums are in their 60s now, but these great brothers are on guard against problems like aging and personal growth, so the latest renewal on August 30 was as terrific as ever. It was over

a year in the making, after COVID cancelled a game originally scheduled in 2020. The wait was worth it; the event expanded to include undergrads and pledges who joined the 19 Reagan-era alumni who were on hand. Condolences to Brother Fong, who watched his beloved Yankees fall to the Angels. The Yankees will be back in Anaheim next year, and the Phi Deltas figure to be there also.



Greg (continued from page 2)

What are your plans post-graduation?

Post-graduation, I hope to find love. It's a cold world out there, don't forget to bring a jacket.

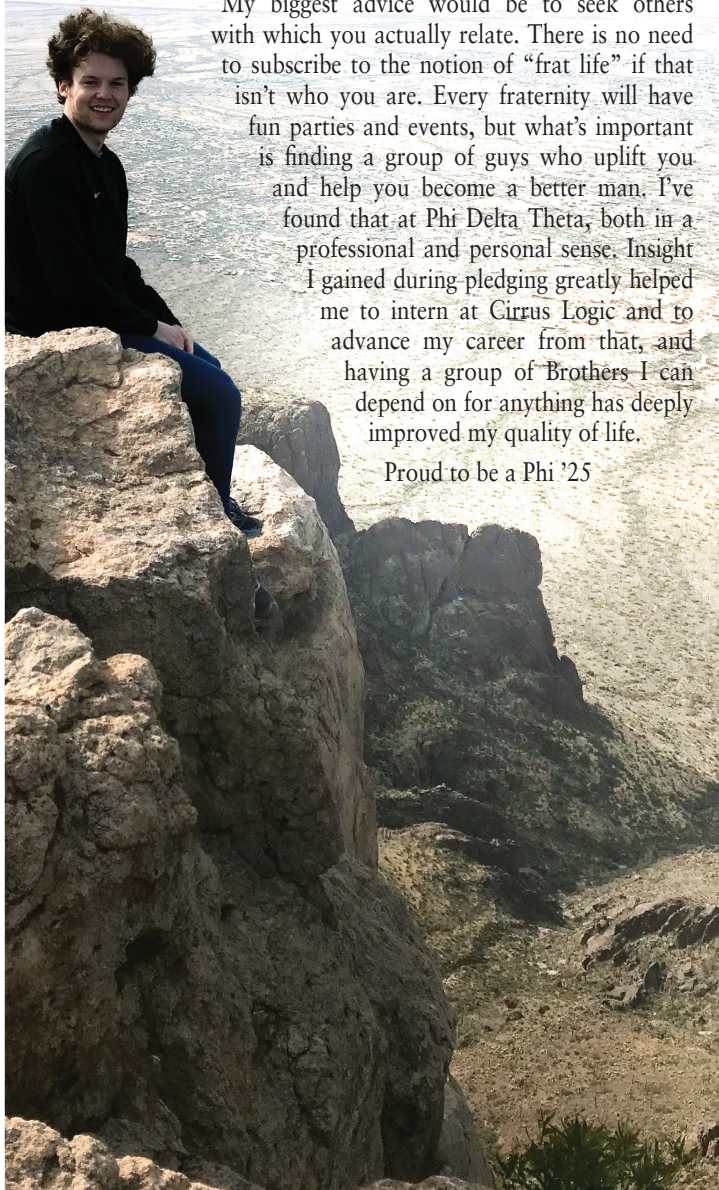
What are you looking forward to as a USC California Delta alumnus?

I'm excited to watch the progression of the chapter, both among my current Brothers and incoming Phis down the road. I hope to come back to 1005 W 28th and to see what modifications and renovations have taken place at the house. Speaking with current Phi Delta Theta alumni has been an honor and a privilege, especially considering how much we all relate, granted we lived in the same house during college. Finally, once Stellar Lumens hits a dollar, I'm excited to buy the entire row and claim it as Phi Delta Theta California Delta.

What advice would you give to someone looking to join fraternity life?

My biggest advice would be to seek others with which you actually relate. There is no need to subscribe to the notion of "frat life" if that isn't who you are. Every fraternity will have fun parties and events, but what's important is finding a group of guys who uplift you and help you become a better man. I've found that at Phi Delta Theta, both in a professional and personal sense. Insight I gained during pledging greatly helped me to intern at Cirrus Logic and to advance my career from that, and having a group of Brothers I can depend on for anything has deeply improved my quality of life.

Proud to be a Phi '25



Chapter Grand

We are saddened to have learned of the passing of the following Cal Delta brothers since the last issue of the Cal Delta Spotlight. We extend our sympathies to their friends, families, and their loved ones:

Gordon M. Anderson '54

John F. Knight '55

Robert H. Kirkland '59

Robert A. Stark '60

Gerard P. Wooters '65

Robert Kirkland '59 was born in Los Angeles to Katherine and Richard Kirkland in 1937. He attended South Pasadena High School, class of 1955, and USC, class of 1959. He followed his brother, Richard, class of 1956, to California Delta. He served in the US Navy as an officer on the USS Helena, returning to USC to earn a master's degree in business administration in 1963. Bob and Richard together started purchasing real estate in 1961, which continued for 60 years. In addition, he formed his own development company, constructing apartments and industrial buildings. He is survived by his wife, Mary Jane, his son Todd, and his brother, Richard.



Leave A Legacy!

Consider a lasting gift that will support Phi Delta Theta long after you are gone. By including the USC Phi Delt House Corporation in your estate plans, you ensure the long-term health and success of our fraternity. To inform us of your gift, or for more information on how you can contribute to the USC Phi Delt House Corp., contact the California Delta House Corporation at housecorp@uscphidelt.com.



Have Alumni News?

We Want to Hear From You!

Send your personal updates, accomplishments, adventures, and photos to our Account Manager at info@elevateims.com. We want to share it in the next issue of the *Cal Delta Spotlight!*