

# Alpha Epsilon Pi

## Tau Omega

Alpha Epsilon Pi

University of Toronto

Fall 2008



### Connect With Tau Omega!

We would love to stay in touch with you!  
Send your updated contact information to  
[josh.rosen@utoronto.ca](mailto:josh.rosen@utoronto.ca), and visit us online  
at <http://www.tauomega.aepi.ca/>

### What's Inside...

A Word From the Master  
The Lifeblood of the Fraternity: Rush  
Philanthropy and Community Outreach  
Alpha Epsilon Pi: International  
On The Wide Open Road: Cincinnati  
Alumni Corner: B'nai Brith Softball

# A Word From the Master

Dear Brothers, Parents and Alumni,

The fall semester was a fantastic start to a promising year for the Tau Omega chapter. We began the year with a revamped, ultra-inclusive rush period that nearly doubled our membership. The structure put together by Rush Chair Matthew Wasserman, with some assistance from our Chapter Advisor Daniel Debow, was executed flawlessly and led to greater engagement of not only prospective new members, but also our existing brotherhood. Pledge Master Simon Sitwell coordinated a thorough and meaningful pledge, growing the ten-member Pi Pledge Class into a close, cohesive unit that was enthusiastic and ready to contribute to making our chapter the best it could be. I believe the future of our chapter is in good hands with the gentlemen initiated this fall, and am excited to watch them continue to grow within Alpha Epsilon Pi.

Our focus this fall was philanthropy and community engagement. We participated in several large events that demonstrated our chapter's humility and dedication to making a difference in our campus and Jewish communities. In October, four brothers formed a team in The House's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Sukkah Build to construct a sukkah for those who would otherwise be unable to observe the holiday. We followed this with our coordination of a Gift of Life Bone Marrow Clinic on campus, collecting 50 samples to be contributed to the international registry. Finally, our chapter participated in the Reading of the Names during Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Week. Brothers stayed overnight at the Wolfond Centre reading aloud the names of those who perished in the Holocaust. This event is incredibly powerful and meaningful to Alpha Epsilon Pi, and one we are heavily involved with every year.

We hope to continue our philanthropic efforts in the Spring with our annual Hope is Dope party to benefit the Diabetes Hope Foundation, as well as our annual Matzah Truck event, where we assist an elderly Rabbi in unloading an 18-wheeler full of shmura matzos, and another Gift of Life

clinic this time held in conjunction with Hillel. The plans are also in the works to hold a Battle of the Bands contest to benefit the official Alpha Epsilon Pi philanthropies. I am very proud of our members and hope we can continue to have significant involvement in our campus and Jewish communities.

This semester will be devoted to brotherhood – forging bonds with brothers past, present and future. We are hoping to organize an alumni meet and greet, as well as mandate the production of a newsletter each semester to keep our Tau Omega ancestors up to date on chapter happenings. We would love to have more correspondence and a stronger relationship with our distinguished alumni. Our chapter has planned a Winter Rush period to find quality Jewish men at the University of Toronto to add to our chapter. Though briefer than our Fall period, we hope to use our planned events to make personal connections with a new group of prospective members. For our current brotherhood, we have scheduled two events per week to give active members ample opportunities to hang out and build lifelong friendships. We plan to attend the Northeast Conclave at the University of Connecticut at the start of February, as well as venture south on another Road Trip visit to our American chapters. Preparations are also underway to construct our chapter's first ever composite picture, to be displayed proudly at Tau Omega's current and future homes.

I hope to hear from all of you in the very near future.

Most Fraternaly,

Josh Rosen, Master

# The Lifeblood of the Fraternity: Rush

The Fall Rush Period took place this year through the month of September. As tradition dictates, we started Rush with our traditional first event Blind Date at O'Grady's Pub on College Street. This year's Rush concluded as is tradition with our final event of the period Men At Work jointly held with the Brothers of the Pi Rho Chapter at Ryerson University and graciously hosted by Brother Simon Sitwell and organized by Brother Aaron Belman and Alumnus Amir Gershon. I would like to thank the entire brotherhood for the effort that was put forward during Rush. Without their help and dedication, my job would be impossible. The Tau Omega chapter is proud to announce the initiation of 10 gentlemen from the University of Toronto and George Brown College into our chapter.



Rush Chairman Matthew Wasserman

Winter Rush is fast approaching. With hard work and dedication, this Winter Rush could be the most successful one to date. The Tau Omega has gathered a significant number of prospects for the new Rush period and Pledge class. Your help in making this winter's Rush successful is always welcome and your attendance is always appreciated.

If you would like to participate in the Rush process or have names and contact information of individuals you think would make good Brother please do not hesitate to contact me personally or send me an email through the website ([www.tauomega.aepi.ca](http://www.tauomega.aepi.ca)).

Matthew Wasserman

416-346-5454

[matthew.wasserman@utoronto.ca](mailto:matthew.wasserman@utoronto.ca)



Tau Omega Brothers with Jewish musician Matisyahu

## Gift of Life: Bone Marrow Registry Drive

The Gift of Life Bone Marrow Foundation was established in 1991 as a donor recruitment organization to help save the life of New Jersey leukemia patient Jay Feinberg. As with other traits like eye or hair colour, bone marrow type is genetically inherited. A patient's best chance of finding a genetic match is from someone of similar ethnic and geographic ancestry. For this reason, the organization launched an ambitious push to recruit donors of Eastern-European Jewish ethnicity throughout North America and abroad. From a grassroots campaign to save a single individual, Gift of Life has become an international success story.

This year, on October 28<sup>th</sup>, Tau Omega took part in helping the charity recruit potential donors on the University of Toronto campus. The bone marrow registry drive started at 8:00 in the morning. To reach a larger pool of potential donors, the Chapter's Master Josh Rosen suggested (a) travelling to the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus life, to encourage students there to register; and (b) travelling to the Sidney Smith Building, one of the highest traffic areas in the University, to set up a secondary booth. At the Wolfond Centre, many brothers of the Chapter offered to register as potential donors.

The registration process involved filing out a simple form and subsequently swabbing the four inside corners of the mouth to obtain a genetic sample.

Due to the dedication of the brothers who volunteered their time for the event the event was an outstanding success. The Gift of Life: Bone Marrow Registry Drive illustrates the pivotal roles that charity and compassion play in the Tau Omega Chapter of the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity.

Vlad Calina



# Philanthropy and Community Outreach

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Sukkah Build

The Annual Great Sukkah Build is a charity competition offered by the House, a Toronto organization for Jewish youth. In a period of approximately 5 hours, teams of Jewish students build a kosher Sukkah from scratch. The lumber and tools were provided by the organization but the design of the Sukkah was left to participants. Each Sukkah, once completed, was shared with those who did not have the means to construct or purchase a Sukkah for themselves.

In October of 2008 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Sukkah Build was held at the Bathurst Jewish Community. Starting at approximately 10:00 in the morning, teams were provided with the tools and materials needed to realize their dreams. This year, Tau Omega entered a team of four brothers: Ben Wachtel, Chaim Kuhnreich, Steven Rados, and Vlad Calina.

Steven proposed the structure of the Sukkah. Each wall would be a perfect square, with a fifth beam through the middle of the square to reinforce the structure and with each joint reinforced. The construction of the Sukkah was a true team effort, with Chaim and Ben working to drill the beams together and Vlad and Steven providing support. Finally, each team member added something to the décor of the Sukkah, so that it accurately reflected the values of the fraternity as a whole. The centrepiece of this effort was the pledge pin constructed on one of the outside walls of the Sukkah.

Although we did not win the grand prize, the true purpose of the event lay in dedicating ourselves to charity, in providing something for those who lacked the means to provide for themselves. That mattered most to the brothers who participated.

Vlad Calina



Tau Omega Brothers hard at work building their Sukkah



Brothers posing with the finished product

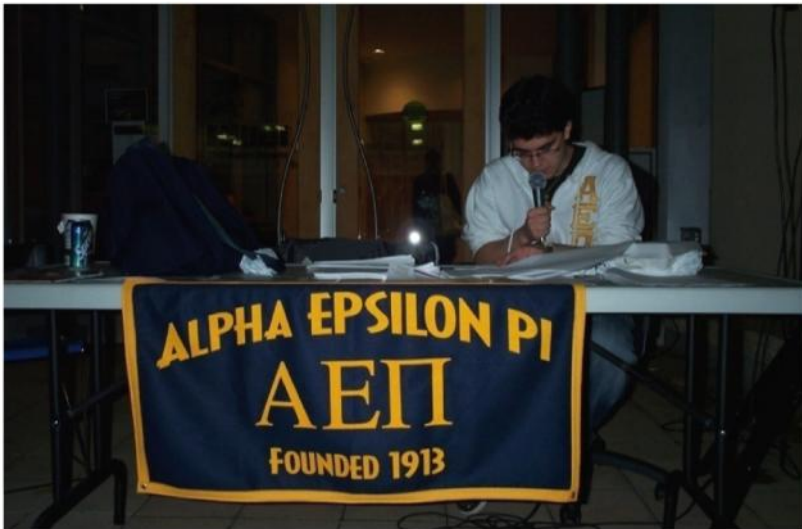
# Philanthropy and Community Outreach

## Holocaust Remembrance: The Reading of the Names

Reading of the Names, a twenty-four hour vigil where Alpha Epsilon Pi and student volunteers read the names of victims from the Holocaust, is an annual tradition held during University of Toronto's Holocaust and Genocide Awareness Week (HGAW). HGAW is sponsored by Hillel and is joined by many student organizations on campus, such as Alpha Epsilon Pi and the Multi-Faith Center. Educational seminars and lectures are offered during the week, and speakers include genocide survivors and university professors.



Brothers Mike Lavian and Vlad Calina participating in the Reading of the Names



Brother Vlad Calina reading names of Holocaust victims through the night at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life

Reading of the Names was created by Tau Omega AEPi. Held outside Sidney Smith (where the largest concentration of students has class), the event received much attention from the community and the university. Over the years, Reading of the Names became a cornerstone event of HGAW. This year, the event was held outside of Hart House on main campus during the day and moved to the Wolfond Center for Jewish Campus Life (located next to the university's largest library, Robart's Library) in the evening. Several dedicated brothers spent the entire night reading victims' names and answering questions from passers-by. The brothers from the University of Toronto remember the phrase "never again" and that a continued commitment to philanthropy makes Alpha Epsilon Pi stand out as leaders in Toronto's Jewish community.

Jordan Dymont

# Alpha Epsilon Pi: International

## Canadian Conclave 2008

Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity organized its first major Canadian conclave in Niagara Falls this past October. A monumental event for all, this conclave marked the first inter-fraternal gathering of Canadian brothers representing all of the Canadian chapters. Nine delegates from the Tau Omega (University of Toronto) chapter attended the conclave, joining brothers from the ten other chapters in Canada.



Above: Canadian Conclave delegates from Tau Omega

Below: Brothers participating in Canadian Conclave workshops



Andy Borans, Executive Director of Alpha Epsilon Pi, provided a warm welcoming to all attendees. Michael Mostyn of B'Nai Brith Canada provided the keynote address in which he emphasized Alpha Epsilon Pi's crucial role in creating a positive Jewish identity for students facing increasing political pressures in university. Canadian Conclave consisted of educational classes where brothers learned techniques and strategies for rushing potential members, planning philanthropic initiatives, and finding contributors for fundraisers. When the classes had ended, Andy announced (to thundering applause) that Canadian conclave would become an annual event. Conclave ended with a dodgeball tournament. Tau Omega played valiantly, but fell just short of a win in their first round. The true victory, however, was the chance to form so many new friendships with brothers from all over Canada.

Jordan Dymont



Masters from each of the ten Canadian chapters

# Alpha Epsilon Pi: International

## Alpha Epsilon Pi: Convention 2008

Every year, the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity holds a convention at which all of its chapters gather together. This year, the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of AEPi was held in Chicago at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place hotel and convention center over five days (Aug. 6-10). Several brothers from the Tau Omega chapter, along with brothers from several other Canadian chapters took a bus together down to Chicago to attend Convention.



Scoreboard welcomes Alpha Epsilon Pi, courtesy of Alumnus Jerry Reinsdorf

This being my first year attending Convention, I was excited to attend meet brothers from chapters all over the Canada and the United States, as well as some of the senior members of the fraternity. Attending the opening ceremony and sitting down to a meal with hundreds of other brothers, I really got a sense of the scope and immense size of AEPi. It's one thing to *know* that there are 8,000 other undergraduate brothers out there and well over 100 active chapters; it's quite another to actually *see and meet* the hundreds of brothers that represent the fraternity. The atmosphere was one filled with a sense of community, excitement, fun, and brotherly love.

Our chapter was one of several to receive a reward recognizing our philanthropy work, which was well deserved in light of the great contributions that Tau Omega has made to the community over the past year. We attended Supreme Council, which is fraternity-wide meeting in which new senior members are sworn in as international leaders of the fraternity. There were also several workshops which took place over the weekend, focusing on everything from philanthropy to risk management at fraternity events, as well as individual seminars for each position of the chapter executive board. Aside from being fun, these events were highly educational in understanding what AEPi is all about, from the level of the international fraternity down to the level of the roles of each individual brother. (Continued on next page)



Tau Omega delegates at Convention's evening reception

# Alpha Epsilon Pi: International

We had ample opportunities to see the beautiful city of Chicago. We went to the impressive and biologically diverse Shedd Aquarium, one of the largest aquariums in North America. We also attended a few baseball games (both White Sox and Cubs), spent an evening at the famous Second City Comedy Club, and toured various parts of the city. Brother Master Josh Rosen and I got absolutely lost on “the loop” of the elevated subway transit system, but successfully navigated our way to our destination (with the help of a friendly Chicagoan). We made the most of our time in the “windy city” and had a great time!



Supreme Council

It was an incredible honour and opportunity to meet many esteemed senior brothers of AEPi, including a speech and meet-and-greet with Jerry Reinsdorf (owner of the Chicago Bulls and White Sox), and the always flamboyantly dressed and well-tanned Centennial Founder and Past Supreme Master Phil Cohen. I was touched by the great history and success of Alpha Epsilon Pi during the convention and inspired by the dedication and commitment to the fraternity made by so many brothers, even decades after the completion of their undergraduate careers. My experiences at Convention were fun-filled, exciting, overall inspiring. I left convention with a greater sense of fraternal unity and pride at the accomplishments of the fraternity as a whole – feelings which are still with me today. I think I can speak for all of my fellow brothers when I say that I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful organization. I have no doubt that the memories of the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Chicago will last, like brotherhood itself, for a lifetime.

Daniel Farb



Tau Omega accepting the Philip and Susan Cohen Award for Jewish Communal Service from Centennial Founder and Past Supreme Master Philip H. Cohen

# On The Wide Open Road: Cincinnati

This year's annual Road Trip took seven brothers to the Omicron Deuteron chapter at the University of Cincinnati. The main attraction of the weekend was the Cincinnati Bengals football game we would be attending on the Sunday afternoon. We arrived to their brand new house just in time for Shabbat dinner, graciously hosted by Hillel. At dinner, hosting Master Justin Miller suggested we take a side-trip to Alpha Epsilon Pi International Headquarters, located in Indianapolis. After a quick call to Executive Director Andy Borans to confirm logistics, we were all set for our Road Trip detour. To celebrate, we crossed the state border into Kentucky to gather partying supplies.



**Tau Omega and Omicron Deuteron Brothers pose at Alpha Epsilon Pi International Headquarters**

We awoke early Saturday morning and hopped in the car en route to Indiana. A short two-hour drive later, we arrived at our fraternity's headquarters – the source of all things AEPi. We were treated to a lengthy tour and pizza lunch by Executive Fellow Ian Young, an educational and satisfying experience for all involved – from Alumnus and Past Master Amir Gershon to Newly Initiated Brother Kyle Bernstein. Among the artefacts on display at headquarters are

the various incarnations of our fraternity's brother pin and pledge pin, as well as photographs of our chapter as it evolved into one of the largest in North America. Seeing the history of the fraternity really put into perspective the broad array of opportunities our organization affords young Jewish men. Brothers posed for pictures with various historical treasures and with the signage on the outside of the headquarters. When we reluctantly climbed back into the car to return to Cincinnati, each of us knew that we had just experienced the highlight of our Road Trip.

Sunday morning was another early wakeup, this time to prepare for a tailgate party and NFL football game. Ben Ulster and I awoke at the crack of dawn to take pictures on the University of Cincinnati football field, a nice memento from our campus tour. Once the others woke up, we headed to Paul Brown Stadium to take in an afternoon of football. Alumnus Amir Gershon took the liberty of quickly constructing our barbeque, a \$5 bargain found at a local Wal-Mart, and the cooking commenced. By 12:15, we had eaten, cleaned up and were ready for the game. Despite a lacklustre performance by both teams, the Brothers enjoyed simply taking in the exciting and enthusiastic NFL environment with more than 60,000 others. It is worth noting that the game ended in a tie – the first one in more than five years. (Continued on next page)



# On The Wide Open Road: Cincinnati

We encountered inclement weather on the way home, but nevertheless pulled through and made it home safely thanks to the skilful and courageous driving of Ben Wachtel and Amir Gershon. Despite encountering icy roads and snowy conditions, the extra travel time gave us an opportunity to reflect and share our memories from the trip, including an entertaining picture slideshow.

In my experiences on Road Trips, each one provides unique memories to look back on. The major theme of this trip was undoubtedly brotherhood, demonstrated by the amazing hospitality from the Brothers of the University of Cincinnati chapter as well as our side-trip to International Headquarters. It was certainly a weekend to remember, at least until our next adventure!

Josh Rosen



Above and Below: Brothers enjoying a day of tailgating and NFL football action



Brothers enjoying an evening out at the University of Cincinnati



# Alumni Corner: B'nai Brith Softball

This past summer, brotherhood extended to the playing field as the Tau Omega Alumni softball team suited up for another season of B'nai Brith softball. As a rookie, I was given the task of outfitting the team in its first-ever team uniforms. By opening day, the team was looking good with a solid group of players in the league's flashiest jerseys.

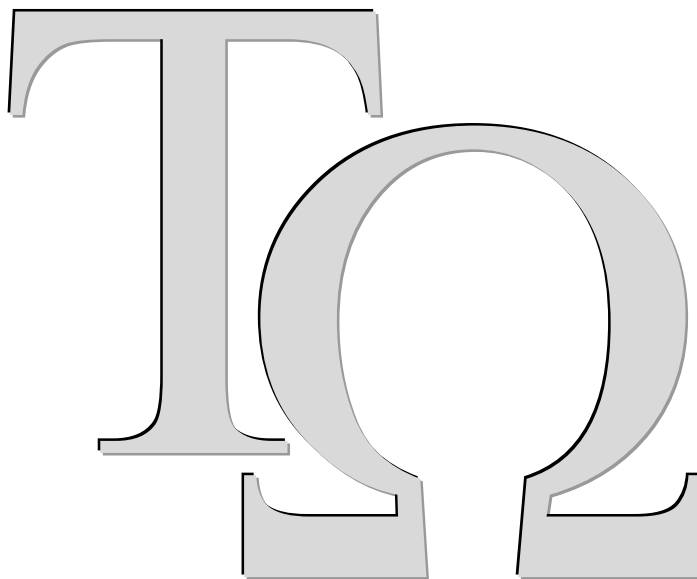
The team surged into mid-June, going 3-2 in its first five games. The competition caught up to us resulting in a 6-10 overall record, good for a sixth place finish in our division. Regardless of record, the season was an enjoyable experience for those involved.

Throughout the summer, team captain David Silver did a sensational job organizing the team and keeping everyone up-to-date on schedule changes and game locations. Silver also turned in several sound pitching performances, propelling the team to four wins in the first half of the season. Fellow undergraduates Michael Wexler (Eta Omicron), Jon Matthews and Cory Rosenfield (Kappa Omega) were able to infuse the team with energy and clutch hitting that paid dividends in several close games.

With each passing week, I was able to get a sense of the relationships that transcend one's undergraduate career. Founding fathers who had remained close to each other and still endeavouring on road trips together even after attending each other's weddings. Despite not knowing many of my teammates going into the season, I came away with a strong network of our chapter's alumni who I have kept in touch with through the first semester of the school year and hope to involve in our chapter's events this coming spring.

Josh Rosen





**Alpha Epsilon Pi Newsletter – Fall 2008**

**Compiled by Vlad Calina, Daniel Farb and Josh Rosen**

**Edited by Howard Gerson**

**Contributions from Matthew Wasserman, Jordan Dymant**