

# Theta Chapter Returns to UMASS!

By Joe Wachs (Delta Kappa/Ball State University '99), Director of Chapter Services

Since being originally installed on December 16th, 1911, more than one thousand and five hundred men at the University of Massachusetts have recited the oaths found in our Ritual. As the eighth installed chapter in Theta Chi Fraternity, our Theta Chapter has maintained a long and proud legacy. Like most of our chapters' history, not every generation in Theta Chapter was a glorious one. The chapter had actually been closed once, before being closed a

second time in 1998 due to risk management violations. The doors were shut, but they would be re-opened again.

On April 23rd, 2004, forty-seven men were initiated into Theta Chi Fraternity at the University of Massachusetts, and on April 24th, 2004, Theta Chapter was installed as an active chapter once more! While those forty-seven brothers do not have their names on the original charter of Theta Chapter, their collective accomplishment is no less important than their chapter's Founding Fathers. They have bridged the gap between the past of Theta Chapter and the 1,500+ men before them, and the scores of future brothers who will one day join our bond of Brotherhood at Amherst, Massachusetts.

Having started as an interest group in October of 2001, the men at UMass never gave up when faced with adversity. Starting a new fraternity, albeit one with a long history on the campus, inside a Greek environment that itself was facing challenge, was a daunting task. In the time that



The men of Theta Chapter, April 2004.

Theta was transitioning from an interest group to a colony to a chapter, several established chapters of other National fraternities closed. Fraternal membership was dwindling. Being a Greek at UMass was not necessarily the most popular thing to do.

In a two and a half year time span, however, the men stayed the course. Working together to realize their common goal, they recruited students from all parts of the campus. They moved back into their old chapter house, and used alcohol-free housing as a major recruitment tool. They were definitely raising the bar on campus.

At the celebration banquet on installation weekend earlier this year, new brothers and their family and friends were joined by the Vice Chancellor, **Dr. Michael Gargano**. His words were brief, but his message was simple: The Brothers of Theta Chi Fraternity did, indeed, raise the standard for all other fraternity men at the University of Massachusetts, and he was proud of them. To hear a university administra-

tor in his position express gratitude for the work that the students had done was validation that the new brothers of Theta Chi truly exemplified "Alma Mater First, and Theta Chi for Alma Mater."

Since the reinstatement of Theta Chapter, the Interfraternity Council on campus has been pursuing future expansion opportunities. That is a testament to the men in our group, and we are so proud of them for being leaders in efforts of achieving a stronger Greek system at their campus.

Many brothers assisted to make the weekend possible. Alumni Corporation President and now-National Marshal **Rich Partridge** (Theta '91), was instrumental in the development of the group, and its progression from colony to chapter. He demonstrated remarkable perseverance and leadership that inspired many and led all to grasp the quest to reestablish Theta. National Counselor, Dana Richardson (Delta Psi/Kansas '83), was the installing officer, and he comment-

# Giving Back to Theta Chi— Our Brothers on the Road

By Joe Wachs, Director of Chapter Services

ed on how rewarding the experience was, as he was a founding member of his own re-installed chapter.

The ranks of Theta alumni were also well represented by **Paul O'Connell** ('91), **Ron Perry** ('61) and **Eric Luftig** ('94), to name a few. I thank them, their fellow alumnus members, and the rest of the brothers of the newly reinstalled Theta Chapter. Together, they have reminded us that Theta Chi is for Life. Congratulations, Brothers!

## Other Expansion Projects on the Horizon...

The reinstallation of Theta Chapter leaves us with two colonies, two interest groups, and a full slate of expansion projects lined up for the 2004-2005 academic year. Please contact Joe Wachs (Director of Chapter Services), at 317-824-1881 or [joe@thetachi.org](mailto:joe@thetachi.org) with any questions or interest in supporting the return of the following interest groups and colonies to chapter status. Remember, we may all be interested in the return of *our* chapter, but your physical proximity to a campus *not your own* can still be tremendously valuable to men who need your 'Helping Hand.'

### Colonies:

Lambda Colony/Cornell University  
University of Pacific Colony

### Interest Groups:

Beta Tau/University of Southern California  
Gamma Mu/Bowling Green State University

### Projects Starting 2004-2005:

Gamma Rho/Florida State University  
Gamma Eta/Bucknell University  
Eta/University of Rhode Island  
Alpha Iota/Indiana University  
Alpha Pi/University of Minnesota  
University of Central Florida

One of the basic necessities for any fraternal organization to be successful is to have an active support network. The logic is simple for us—the more brothers we have who give of their time to better our Fraternity in any way possible, the stronger Theta Chi will be. In particular, each August, six dedicated men depart from the International Headquarters and give their time, wisdom, and effort to the betterment of our undergraduate chapter members across the United States and Canada, during the academic year that begins in August and ends ten to eleven months later.

Arriving each summer in June, the Leadership and Education Consultants (LECs) spend two months in training in Indianapolis at the IHQ, studying and preparing for the year that awaits them. When August rolls around, they hit the road, going their separate ways as collectively, they visit with each chapter in Theta Chi. Logging thousands of miles behind the wheels, they give back in a remarkable way.

This year, three men joined our staff for their first year of travel. **Kyle Weaver** (Zeta Sigma/Wisconsin-River Falls '04), **Mike Mayer** (Epsilon Phi/Central Missouri State '04), and **Brent Liner** (Iota Alpha/North Carolina-Wilmington '04) joined the ranks of 200+ brothers before them who have served as a Consultant for Theta Chi Fraternity.

Two men, **Joshua Wilson** (Delta Kappa/Ball State '03) and **Bjorn Gass** (Iota Zeta/Radford '03), returned for their second year of travel. Rounding out the staff of six, **Benjamin Hill** (Eta Kappa/James Madison '02) returned for his *third* of traveling for Theta Chi. The experience of these three returning 'road veterans' in particular is invaluable to the teamwork and education of the entire Consultant staff.

A lot is asked of our LECs, and they faithfully give much of themselves. While each of them has his own particular reason for traveling, each carries with them the common thread of being able to serve Theta Chi in a unique way. They spend the year away from their friends and family, living out of their cars and in chapter houses for short periods of time, and they cannot be lauded enough for the work that they do. I take this opportunity to identify these six men publicly, and to say 'thank you' to them for giving back to Theta Chi as our 2004–2005 Leadership and Education Consultants.



The Academic Year 2004–2005 Leadership and Education Consultants, from left to right: Mike Mayer, Kyle Weaver, Ben Hill, Brent Liner, and Josh Wilson. Not pictured: Bjorn Gass.