



The Case of the Disgruntled Theta Chi

By James J. Moylan (Gamma Lambda/University of Denver '69)

The primary purpose of the Foundation Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity, Inc. is to raise funds to provide scholarships to brothers attending college and graduate school, and to assist in defraying the expense of funding the Fraternity's annual educational and leadership programming activities. We do this in a variety of ways: conducting an Annual Campaign for fundraising, marketing the Undergraduate Giving Program, conducting a Planned Giving Program, Pathway of Brotherhood brick sales, IHQ room sales, and other fund raising activities. Thus, when you hear from us, it is generally about soliciting funds under the banner of "Helping Brothers Help Brothers."

Invariably, we receive a communication from a brother, following one of these solicitations, that is full of invective and bitterness toward Theta Chi. I am always distressed to receive this type of communication from a brother who has obviously become disgruntled with the Fraternity from suffering this "sling," or that "arrow," or this "slight," in the recent past. Someone on the Development Office team will individually respond to that brother.

What I would like to address in the remainder of this column is why I perceive some brothers become disgruntled and how we can remedy it.

First off, brothers, the majority of us who are committed to moving Theta Chi forward are volunteers. We, like most alumni, are in "real world" jobs, have families, belong to other organizations, have other commitments, enjoy other pursuits, and are just generally busy. Moreover, it is impossible for us to know how a particular solicitation letter is going to impact someone in our brotherhood, which is itself so large and diverse. Believe me when I say that the last thing we would ever want to do is cause a brother or any other potential donor, for that matter, to get mad at us.

Second, I have to believe that the reason for the expressed disgruntlement is something recent, i.e., the last thing that happened connected to Theta Chi was something that left a bad taste in that brother's mouth.

What I would ask these brothers who have had an unfortunate experience, is to put it behind them. There are a tremendous number of good things that happen to us because we are Theta Chi's. I am sure that no matter how grating that last experience was, we have all had so many good, and sometimes great, experiences as a Theta Chi brother that the scale must tip decidedly in

favor of the positive experiences. Perhaps your chapter, and the brothers in it, enabled you to identify and develop your leadership skills, provided you with a mentor or role model, assisted in improving your academics and scholastic standing, opened the door to graduate school or new areas of interest for you, helped you get a job or start a career, was involved in your wedding, have some formal tie to your children, or, as I think we have all experienced, enabled you to form life-long friendships.

This is what being a member of Theta Chi is about. These things do not happen in the dorms, or with a few roommates in campus apartments. Indeed, you have to be a member of this great Fraternity to appreciate concepts like: "teaches Truth, Temperance, and Tolerance, extols Virtue, exacts Harmony" so well verbalized in our Creed, and our obligation to live by the Law of the Helping Hand, not just during our college years, but in our journey through life as members of Theta Chi. Simply stated, if we reflect on it, I think we can all agree that Theta Chi is a values based organization. Belonging strengthens our character, helps to make us contributing members of society, and overall improves our lives.

So, for those of you who find being asked for your financial support is troublesome, I would ask you to put aside any animus toward our Fraternity. Theta Chi is about leadership, scholarship, community service, and forming life-long friendships. On behalf of my fellow Foundation Board members, and our Development Office staff, help us help our undergraduate brothers experience all the good and positive experiences we had as undergraduates, as well as those we experience as alumnus members.

We often ask our alumni to share with us what I call the three "T's." They are: your time, your talent, and your treasure. We need our alumni to give back to Theta Chi. If you cannot provide our Fraternity with the first or second "T," then please consider the third "T," making a donation to the Foundation Chapter, so that those of us who are able to volunteer at this time of our lives, can manage your gift, to assist our undergraduate brothers, and for the overall betterment of Theta Chi Fraternity.

I continue to believe in: "Better Because of Theta Chi."

Thank you, brothers