

# Reflections For A Stronger Future

By Bill Russo (Epsilon Xi/Clarion University), Director of Leadership Development



Dayton, Ohio is a city known for its proud heritage as the “birthplace of flight.” This turned out to be the perfect setting for our Fraternity that is also proud of its heritage and preparing to celebrate its 150th year of existence. Thanks in part to the support of the Foundation Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity, more than 300 undergraduate and alumnus Theta Chi brothers from all over the United States and Canada recently converged in western Ohio for this historic event.

Chapter Leadership Conference (CLC) XI, with its Reflections theme, started Thursday, July 14th and ended on Sunday morning, July 17th. Undergraduates from 110 different chapters participated in 42 breakout sessions that covered a variety of Fraternity issues and professional development skills.

One very popular breakout session was entitled “Ghosts of Theta Chi.” In it, Regional Counselor Sam Prestipino (Iota Alpha/University of North Carolina-Wilmington) dressed in a full Civil War uniform and talked to participants in character about Theta Chi Fraternity’s founders and what each person in the audience would leave as a legacy to their

chapter. Another session entitled “Courage In Leadership,” taught by Regional Counselor Terry Landes (Zeta Psi/Western Illinois), showed participants why pushing forward and not making excuses is real leadership.

Among the highlights of the conference was a keynote address by Jon Williamson, Executive Vice President of the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). Jon, a member of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, spoke of true courage in the new era of fraternities. He also presented the NIC Award of Distinction to Brother Michael Mayer and Brother Andrew Wise, both members of Theta Chi through our Epsilon Phi/Central Missouri State chapter. This marked the first time that two brothers from the same fraternity and same chapter received this award. The Award of Distinction is given to any chapter, individual or Greek system that has made great strides for the Greek movement. To learn more about the NIC’s mission and the award, check out the NIC website at <http://www.nicindy.org/>

A particularly enjoyable part of CLC was the evening performance by comedian and hypnotist, Dale K. He had the participants rolling in

the isles as he turned our brothers into human marionette puppets on stage. Just ask someone who attended about “The Magic Trout”!

Our Theta Chi Initiative Program continued with the Mu Class, our thirteenth group in this program, taking part. Each year the International Headquarters picks twelve undergraduate participants by application, to take part in a special, advanced leadership track opportunity. Clarence Frank (Eta Omicron/Northwestern State), Regional Counselor in the Southwest Region and former Leadership and Education Consultant, and Megan Read, a member of Theta Chi’s Leadership Education Committee and a former consultant for Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity, developed a fast-paced curriculum for the initiative program. It included the opportunity to interact with the Grand Chapter and extended sessions with the keynote speakers.

The Chapter Leadership Conference XI service project was a toy drive for the Children’s Medical Center of Dayton. As I did in person at CLC, I again want to thank the individuals and chapters who donated toys to this effort. A representative from the Children’s Medical Center

# Chapter Leadership Conference XI

of Dayton remarked that the gifts given by Theta Chi "...make a tremendous impact on the quality of care offered daily to the young children."

There are no words to adequately express my personal and professional 'thank you' to the members of our Fraternity's Leadership Education Committee for their hard work, commitment, and many hours of time invested in planning and executing a very successful conference. The members of the Leadership Education Committee of Theta Chi Fraternity are: National Secretary and Committee Chairman, Michael Maloney (Delta Upsilon/Arizona State University); Amy Wyre, Coordinator of Resident Life for Kennesaw State University; Megan Read, Regional Recruitment Counselor for Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity; Joe Grim (Alpha Omicron/Washington State University), the Committee's undergraduate representative; Royce Keehr (Zeta Sigma/Wisconsin-River Falls), Regional Director for the Plains Region; Clarence Frank (Eta Omicron/Northwestern State), Regional Counselor in the Southwest Region; and, Chad Strelow (Theta Psi/University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh), Regional Counselor in the Plains Region. They deserve our gratitude for putting Theta Chi Fraternity at the forefront of leadership education.

My thanks as well to our energetic and energizing faculty members, including our Regional Counselors, Norwich Housing Corporation Board members, Foundation Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity Board members, and International Headquarters Staff who continue to exemplify leading by example through their passion and uplifting attitudes while educating our undergraduate members.

With the completion of CLC XI, we now turn our attention to our 2005-2006 Mid-Year Leadership Challenges (MYLC), that will be held throughout the United States on the weekends of November 4-5 and 11-12, and in February, 2006 on the weekends of 3-4 and 10-11. The Headquarters staff is also preparing for the 12th B. Nelson Deranian Presidents Conference, to be held January 6-7, 2006, in Indianapolis. More information on these confer-



ences can be found under the "Events" icon at our website, [www.thetachi.org](http://www.thetachi.org).

Looking to the future, it is my goal to see a record number of brothers and 100% of our chapters, colonies, and interest groups represented next Summer, June 8-11, 2006, for the Theta Chi Fraternity Sesquicentennial convention to be held at Norwich University in Northfield Vermont. At the CLC closing banquet, Norwich University's President, Dr. Richard W. Schneider, spoke vividly and affectionately of Theta Chi's past, and extended his invitation to all Theta Chi brothers to join Alpha Chapter alumni and "report for duty" by attending the 150th anniversary celebration.

Brothers and members of Theta Chi Fraternity's extended family, I hope to see you there! ■

