



Zeta Sigma Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity History

Members of the fraternity who may be considered as founders of the Zeta Sigma Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity at the Florida Institute of Technology are as follows:

Carl Bollum	Gamma Eta – Univ. of Southern California
Ray Mahaffey	Gamma Beta – Univ. of Nebraska
Richard Lawrence	Beta Kappa – Emory University
Jefferson Steck	Chapter Unknown
Dr. Woodbridge	Beta Beta – Univ. of Washington
Oliver Kern	Beta Beta – Univ. of Washington
Lt. Col. Henry N. Moore	Gamma Iota – Univ. of Mississippi

The above fraternity members are those who were in the vicinity of Melbourne and Florida Institute of Technology when procedures were initiated in order to colonize: they created a local alumnae chapter, starting a local fraternity, establishing a Pi Kappa Alpha colony, and installing the colony as the Zeta Sigma chapter. The steps that led to the charter of Zeta Sigma are explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

In October 1965, Carl Bollum contacted Col. Silverwood and the District President for District Nine (which encompasses the state of Florida for Pi Kappa Alpha) in regard to the requirements for chartering an Alumni Association in the Melbourne, Satellite Beach, Cocoa, Cocoa Beach, and Cape Canaveral areas. The organizational meeting for the Alumni Association was held in October 1965 at the Officers Club, on Patrick Air Force Base in Cocoa Beach. The Alumni Association decided to sponsor a Pi Kappa Alpha chapter at Brevard Engineering College. Approximately forty Pi Kappa Alpha brothers from sixteen different chapters were the first charter members of the Cape Canaveral Pi Kappa Alpha Alumni Association. Carl Bollum was elected as the first president.

Immediately after the formation of the Cape Canaveral Alumni Association, Carl Bollum along with Dick Lawrence contacted Dr. Jerome Keuper, President of Brevard Engineering College, about starting a fraternity on the BEC Campus. Dr. Keuper was very receptive, since he knew fraternities quite well and had completed a Doctorate Degree at the University of Virginia, where Pi Kappa Alpha was founded on March 1, 1868. Dr. Keuper felt a fraternity system should be a part of the overall education system offered to the college students. He was also interested in having a fraternity system in order to give the opportunity to selected students for greater fellowship and to instill a spirit of service and esprit de corps within the college.

Carl Bollum and Dick Lawrence then contacted several interested students on the campus who, in turn, decided to form a local fraternity. Col. Silverwood was asked to meet with the students who had indicated interest in a fraternity and outline necessary steps to meet Pi Kappa Alpha's requirements for a charter. In order to simplify the organization of a local fraternity, the name of Alpha Kappa Pi was chosen for the local fraternity; spelling the name backwards indicated their interest in Pi Kappa Alpha. The local fraternity immediately began to exert a great deal of influence on campus. The members wore red vests every Wednesday along with ties and coats if the weather was cool and indicated to the other students and the faculty that the fraternity intended to exemplify high standards of appearance and behavior at all times. The local fraternity thus began their work towards meeting the requirements of Pi Kappa Alpha in order to be able to charter the group at a later time. The local fraternity became involved with many campus and civic projects that enhanced their public relations with the college and the civilian community. One notable project was the construction of a bridge over a creek that ran between the classroom area and the dormitories on campus.

The local chapter of Alpha Kappa Pi began operation in November 1965 and by the end of the school year, in June 1966, the chapter had thirty-five members. In the interim, the local chapter had become acquainted with the policies and practices of Pi Kappa Alpha and indicated their desire to become a colony of Pi Kappa Alpha.

Col. Silverwood contacted the fraternity's national office in Memphis, Tennessee. Earl Watkins, the executive secretary, and John Horton, secretary of Supreme Council of the national fraternity were requested to visit Brevard Engineering College to determine the eligibility of the college for a national fraternity and to make an initial inspection of the local fraternity. Earl Watkins, from Millsaps College, John Horton, from Davidson University, and Col. Silverwood visited the campus of Brevard Engineering College in October 1966. After conferring with Dr. Keuper and touring the campus, Earl Watkins was very impressed with the college; however, John Horton was of the opinion that the college would not survive financially and would, in a short time, be forced to cease operations. Therefore, John Horton would not support the expansion of the fraternity to the Brevard Engineering Campus. At this time, there were only about 350 students on the college campus and the outlook for an expanded enrollment did not seem very plausible. In addition, the national fraternity was not receptive to the name of Brevard Engineering College since it did not, in their opinion, connote a school of high caliber or one that might gain national recognition in the future. Additionally, the national fraternity had an unwritten policy whereby a Pi Kappa Alpha Chapter would not be approved for any campus where Pi Kappa Alpha would be the only national fraternity on campus.

After the visit of Earl Watkins and John Horton, the local fraternity was disappointed, but did not lose interest in being able to eventually gain the recognition of Pi Kappa Alpha and to become a Chapter of the Fraternity. The local fraternity grew in strength and stature and in a short time had a membership of over forty-five men.

Early in 1967, the name of Brevard Engineering College was changed to Florida Institute of Technology, which eliminated the disapproval of the national fraternity. Also, since it was necessary to have another national fraternity on campus, the Alpha Kappa Pi local

colony took appropriate steps along with Dick Lawrence, and their Alumnus Council to begin to form another local fraternity. Since Dick Lawrence's father was a member of Chi Phi Fraternity, Mr. Gladfelter, the Executive Director of Chi Phi, was contacted as to their interest in organizing a fraternity on the Florida Tech campus. Chi Phi Fraternity was most receptive and with the help of the Alpha Kappa Pi colony, sufficient young men were recruited to be able to form a local fraternity that would, apply for recognition as a chapter of Chi Phi Fraternity.

With the name of the college changed to Florida Tech and the organization of another fraternity on campus, two of the roadblocks that had prevented the local Alpha Kappa Pi colony from being recognized had now been eliminated. The other roadblock was the presence of John Horton on the Supreme Council who vowed that he would never approve a chapter at Florida Tech.

At the National Convention that was held in August 1967, John Horton retired and a new Supreme Council was elected. As soon as the new Supreme Council was sworn in, Col. Silverwood presented to them a history and prospectus of Florida Tech and requested that the local fraternity Alpha Kappa Pi be inspected by the fraternity for recognition as a colony of Pi Kappa Alpha. The new Supreme Council then agreed to consider a colony at Florida Institute of Technology. Steps were taken immediately to have the Delta Delta Chapter of Florida Southern College and Delta Upsilon chapter of Stetson University visit Alpha Kappa Pi and to recommend or reject the local fraternity for possible recognition as a colony of Pi Kappa Alpha.

In October 1967, Alpha Kappa Pi was inspected by the closest chapters and was established as a colony with the main purpose of securing a charter by March 1, 1968 as a Centennial Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha. The colony had a very difficult task to perform since they were required to meet the following requirements in less than five months (normal time required is 12 months):

- 1) Must have a savings account of at least \$1,000.
- 2) Must have a House Corporation chartered by the State of Florida.
- 3) Must have a minimum of forty members.
- 4) The grade point average of the fraternity members must be equal to or better than the all-men's average.
- 5) Must have attended a District Convention within the past year.
- 6) Must secure recommendations from the President of the school, the Dean of Student Affairs, and one other faculty member indicating the quality of the men in the fraternity and their feelings toward the chartering of the local group.
- 7) Must have participated in numerous civic and college activities and must have gained recognition through newspaper articles or other media.
- 8) Must be inspected by the three closest chapters and representation of the national office to insure that they meet the necessary criteria for the fraternity nationalization.

In January 1968, the Pi Kappa Alpha colony at Florida Institute of Technology was inspected by chapters from Florida Southern College, Stetson University, and Florida State University and was unanimously recommended for a charter in Pi Kappa Alpha

Fraternity. An inspection team from the National office also visited the Florida Tech campus and approved the colony for nationalization as a Centennial chapter, with chartering ceremonies to be held on March 1, 1968.

As soon as the local fraternity Alpha Kappa Pi had received colony status under Pi Kappa Alpha, the chapter became very interested in securing a fraternity house. Dr. Keuper was in full accord with the chapter house providing additional accommodations for students since Florida Tech was deficient in student housing. In addition, fraternity housing was considered essential in furthering the fraternity system at Florida Tech. Carl Bollum, President of the Cape Canaveral Alumni Association, who was in the real estate business in Satellite Beach, had learned of a large Southern mansion type house on the Indian River in Palm Bay which was for sale. This house, which had thirteen rooms and seven baths and had been built as a minister's retirement home, who was in financial difficulty with the loan company about to foreclose on the mortgage. Carl Bollum immediately began negotiations with the mortgage holders and the owners to determine if the house could be purchased at a reasonable price. Before the house could be purchased as a fraternity house, however, it was necessary for the Alumni Association to go before the City Council and have the housing area rezoned from a single-dwelling residence to a multiple dwelling residence. Mr. Bollum spent a great deal of time and energy meeting with the City Council and the Zoning Board, and convincing the other property owners that a fraternity house would not have an adverse effect on the property values in the area.

Eventually, all the owners gave their permission to the Fraternity House Zoning. Mr. Bollum was then able to make arrangements for purchasing the house. It was necessary to raise sufficient money in order to make a down payment could be made on the property. Furniture and kitchen equipment also needed to be obtained. A \$40,000 loan was obtained from the Pi Kappa Alpha House Corporation, of the National Fraternity, in order to purchase furniture and other equipment for the bedrooms. Dick Lawrence completed all legal documents for chartering the House Corporation through the state and when the arrangement was made for purchase, the Title for the Fraternity House was taken over by the Pi Kappa Alpha House Corporation of Florida Institute of Technology. Dick Lawrence, as treasurer, assumed responsibility for making arrangements for the payments of the mortgage each month to the Pi Kappa Alpha House Corporation of the National Fraternity. The fraternity house was badly in need of equipment for the kitchen and dining room and a great deal of money would be required to purchase suitable equipment. About this time a restaurant which had been located in a large private home in Melbourne decided to close its doors and placed their kitchen and dining room equipment for sale at a very low price. Dick Lawrence and Col. Silverwood visited the restaurant and decided that the refrigerator, bun warmers, kitchen range, deep freezer, and the dining room tables and chairs were sufficiently low priced and the house corporation was able to secure approximately \$2,500 worth of equipment for less than \$700. With the purchase of this equipment for the kitchen and dining room and the purchase of beds and mattresses and other furniture through the loan from the National House Corporation, the fraternity was able to move into the new house in October 1967.

The Pi Kappa Alpha colony at Florida Tech met all of the requirements for nationalization well ahead of the deadline of March 1, 1968. It was approved and

chartered as the Zeta Sigma Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha on March 1, 1968 as a centennial chapter, along with Zeta Pi of the University of South Florida and Zeta Rho of the University of North Dakota. Zeta Sigma had completed their nationalization requirements in less than five months, which was considered a record for new chapters. Mr. Garth Grissom, from Alpha Omega of Kansas State and President of the National Fraternity, was present for the chartering ceremony along with other representatives of the National Fraternity. Approximately thirty-seven members were initiated as charter members with Dr. Jerome Keuper, President of Florida Tech and Mr. Ray Work, Dean of Student Affairs being initiated under the special dispensation rule of the fraternity. The first President of Zeta Sigma Chapter was William Melloling.

The Zeta Sigma Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha was thus made part of the National Fraternity of Pi Kappa Alpha through the hard work of many individuals who felt a deep sense of responsibility in chartering a quality chapter. Everyone involved in the chartering of Zeta Sigma was confident that the chapter would grow in strength and be one of the top chapters of the Fraternity in the years to come. Zeta Sigma is very much indebted to all those loyal members of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity who worked so unselfishly to make possible the beginning of the fraternity community at the Florida Institute of Technology.