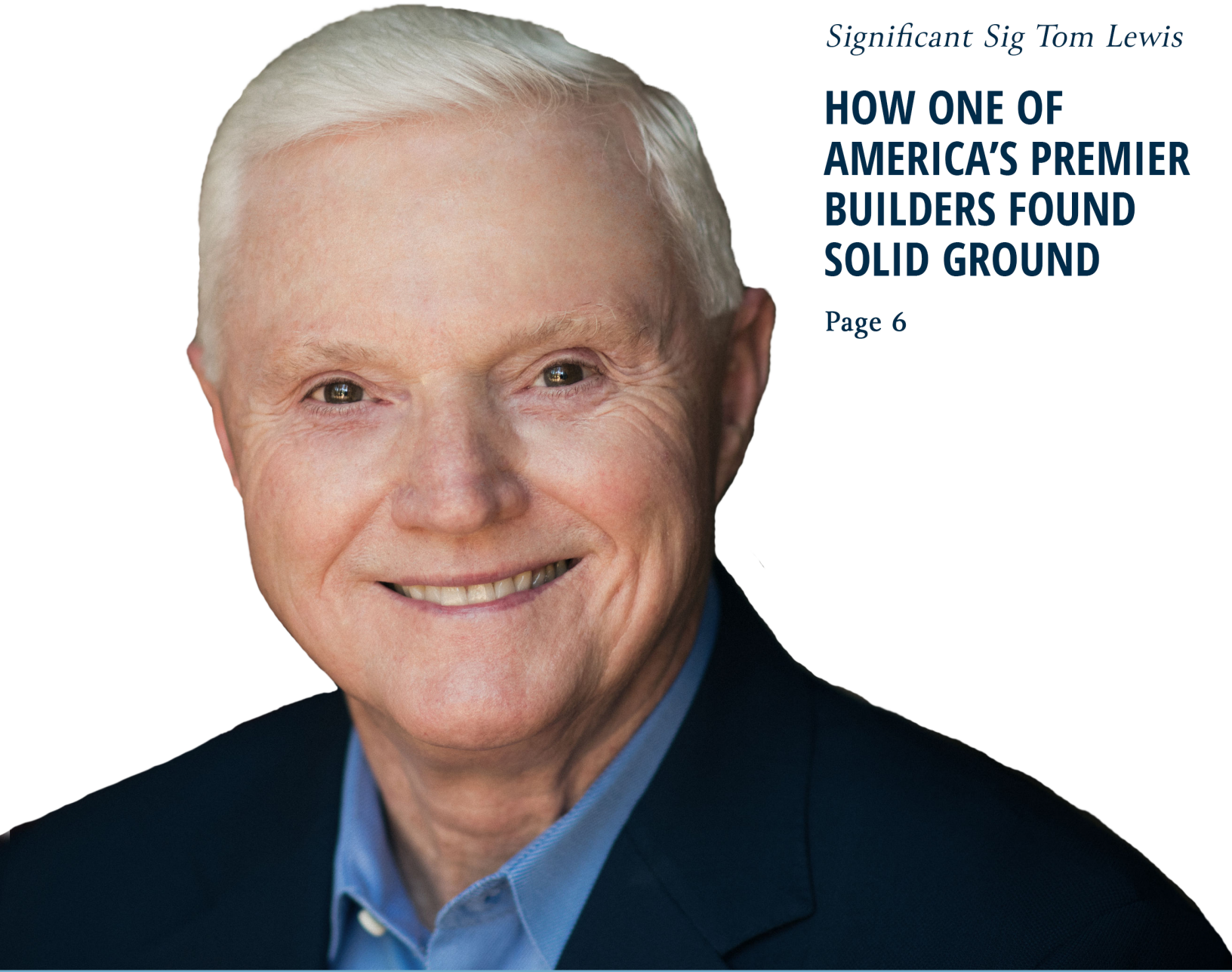


# F FOCUS S

A SIGMA CHI FOUNDATION PUBLICATION ■ SPRING 2021



*Significant Sig Tom Lewis*

## **HOW ONE OF AMERICA'S PREMIER BUILDERS FOUND SOLID GROUND**

Page 6

### **INSIDE:**

*A conversation with Cleveland Browns  
owner & Significant Sig Jimmy Haslam*



The best of brotherhood  
beneath the Arizona sky.



THERE'S MEETINGS AND THERE'S MEMORIES.  
WE'RE OPTING FOR THE LATTER.

VISIT [SIGMACHI.ORG/GRANDCHAPTER](http://SIGMACHI.ORG/GRANDCHAPTER) TO LEARN MORE



#### COVER STORY:

In his new book “Solid Ground: A Foundation For Winning In Life,” Significant Sig Tom Lewis, KENTUCKY 1971, provides a roadmap for success, purpose and happiness. PAGE 6

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## FOCUS

### A Sigma Chi Foundation Publication

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# THE NEWSROOM

✦ SPRING 2021 ✦

## SIGMA CHI LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

# ACCREDITATION EFFORTS UNDERWAY

### 2007

#### FOUNDATION SHIFTS FOCUS TO LEADERSHIP & SCHOLARSHIP GROWTH

After decades of supporting Sigma Chi's annual leadership workshop and helping fund the development and launch of Horizons, Sigma Chi Foundation unveils its strategic plan to move toward leadership and scholarship by funding a platform of programs for Sigma Chi members.

### 2015

#### NEXT LEVEL EDUCATION

Thanks to the generosity of Foundation donors, the Fraternity unveils a new online educational platform and new member program, Preparation for Brotherhood, setting the stage for rapid growth in leadership education for Sigma Chi members.

### 2019

#### A PATHWAY FOR THE FUTURE

The Sigma Chi Leadership Institute (SCLI) officially becomes a separate 501(c)(3) organization; begins work with educational partner Cyanna to build pathway to accreditation, future certificate program.

### 2021

#### ACCREDITATION CANDIDACY & CERTIFICATE LAUNCH

Following approval by MSA-CESS, SCLI unveils pilot certificate modules in Distance Leadership and Foundational Leadership; launch Horizons, Krach TLW certificate modules to Sigma Chi undergrads.

December 22, 2020 marked a historic moment for Sigma Chi, the Sigma Chi Foundation and the Sigma Chi Leadership Institute (SCLI).

Decades of program development, fundraising and training efforts reached a new milestone as SCLI earned accreditation candidacy by the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS), which is recognized by the United States Department of Education.

“This status is one that Greek-letter leadership education has never before achieved, and it instantaneously places an added value and benefit to becoming a Sigma Chi,” said Sigma Chi Leadership Institute chairman and Sigma Chi Foundation board member Mike Greenberg, ILLINOIS WESLEYAN 1982. “This added layer of third-party validation highlights that Sigma Chi is the preeminent leadership brotherhood aimed at changing the world for the better.”

As of February, the launch of SCLI's first certificate pilot modules in Distance and Foundational Leadership, Sigma Chi members can now earn SCLI's certificates, credentials and micro-credentials that display their character, values and ideals to future employers or chapter members — a differentiator undergraduates can use to elevate the Sigma Chi experience across campuses in North America.

CONTINUED >>

## THE NEWSROOM



Sigma Chi Leadership Institute (SCLI) will unveil two micro-certificates in Recruitment and Resilience along with full program launches in Authentic Leadership and Values-Based Leadership. The launch coincides with the return of in-person Krach Transformational Leaders Workshop this summer.

These leadership certificate offerings will enhance, evolve and demonstrate a mastery of important leadership and social skills. Specifically, they focus on underdeveloped skills identified in today's collegiate experience, according to industry research.

Along with the launch in February, SCLI will unveil its Enduring Leadership certificate module during this summer's Horizons Huntsman Leadership Summit.

Krach Transformational Leaders Workshop will also undergo a new look and feel for Sigma Chi members when it returns to an in-person platform this July.

Thanks to the Sigma Chi Officer Training Academy's

successful debut, which will return in early July, officer-specific modules have gone virtual. Modules are available to all chapter officers and undergrads seeking to learn individual job duties.

Krach TLW will also undertake a new look and feel when it returns to an in-person platform this July. The redesigned Krach TLW will see the launch of micro-certificates in Recruitment and Resilience with certificates in Authentic Leadership and Values-Based Leadership receiving a full launch.

These efforts serve as further evidence of the longtime vision of the Sigma Chi Foundation and the many alumni donors. Over the last

two decades, their generosity led to Sigma Chi's growth in leadership education opportunities for members.

"This is a groundbreaking moment for the Greek-letter world and further builds a case for the ongoing support from our alumni and donors, showing what Sigma Chi can and will become through hard work and support," said Sigma Chi Foundation Chairman John Forst, GEORGE WASHINGTON 1984. "By no means is our work complete. This accreditation candidacy signifies that our support for this work and our members is as important today than at any moment in our Foundation's history, and we must do everything to ensure its success."

## THOMAS COWAN BELL CHAPTER CHALLENGE

# NEW BENEFITS, ONLINE PLATFORM FOR 2021

Over the last decade, the Sigma Chi Foundation's Thomas Cowan Bell Chapter Program has provided alumni with opportunities to directly impact home chapters through academic scholarships and expanded educational program offerings for members.

In Spring 2021, the Foundation is upgrading the Bell Chapter benefit package in alignment with the Sigma Chi Leadership Institute's accreditation efforts.

Chapters whose alumni contribute \$10,000 or more annually towards their Bell Chapter campaign through the Sigma Chi Foundation's Life Loyal Sig Annual Fund will receive: Three

reserved slots at Krach Transformational Leaders Workshop, one designated Huntsman Horizons Leadership Summit slot for a qualified applicant, three designated academic scholarships (\$1,000 each), an SCLI credentialed local chapter retreat, seven sponsored slots at the Officer Leadership Academy and much more.

Alumni can also view their chapter's active metrics, existing Bell benefits, and 2021-2022 campaign status within the Foundation's new online crowdfunding platform:  
<https://sigmachi.org/bellcampaign>.

## FOUNDERS' WEEK OF GIVING

# LIFE LOYAL SIG DRIVE RETURNS IN LATE JUNE

Last year, more than 3,400 Sigma Chi alumni raised more than \$1.1 million towards academic scholarships and leadership programming efforts through the Life Loyal Sig Annual Fund.

More than \$200,000 of those funds were made during the Sigma Chi Foundation's inaugural seven-day campaign honoring the seven Sigma Chi founders.

The Foundation's Founders' Week of Giving returns from June 24-30, 2021, giving alumni, sweethearts, and friends one final opportunity to have their contributions recorded towards

the 2020-2021 fiscal year campaign.

All donors to the Founders' Week of Giving will earn Life Loyal Sig status and benefits while sponsoring world-class leadership programming, academic scholarship, and chapter support provided to our Sigma Chi Foundation members.

Visit <https://members.sigmachi.org/fwog> any time from June 24-30 to honor Sigma Chi's founders' legacy and further support our efforts to impact the Greek-letter world positively.



# A LIFE WITH PURPOSE

*Guided by values discovered from Sigma Chi and throughout life, Significant Sig Tom Lewis, helps a new generation of leaders find solid ground*

BY WES HOLTSCRAW, **EAST TENNESSEE 2012**

Before his career journey truly began —filled with accolades and philanthropic endeavors — Significant Sig Tom Lewis, KENTUCKY 1971, was a college freshman in pursuit of a purpose.

His mother wanted him to be an engineer, his father wanted him to be an attorney. A resident of Lexington, Lewis drove to and from school, walked to class, studied, then returned home.

“I met nobody my first semester,” he recalled. “Nothing in college is lower than a freshman engineer townie.”

When campus-wide Greek recruitment began during the spring semester, Lewis made a decision that provided some initial building blocks of values, purpose and drive that would impact his life and career.

“What I learned at (the University of) Kentucky was huge, but it had nothing to do with the classroom,” Lewis said. “Everything I learned in college I attribute to Sigma Chi because I wasn’t ready to learn engineering and I wasn’t ready to learn business. What I really was ready to learn was how to be a leader.”

CONTINUED >>

Fifty years after graduating from Kentucky and a series of essential career steps, Lewis is Founder, Owner and CEO of the Phoenix, Arizona based T.W. Lewis Company. The award-winning real estate and investment company is known nationally for its quality and customer service in the homebuilding industry.

Lewis is also known for something much more important than homebuilding. Along with his wife, Jan, the couple has impacted numerous lives through their philanthropic endeavor, the T.W. Lewis Foundation, which focuses on higher education, youth education and supporting families in need.

“I was raised as a Christian back in Kentucky,” Lewis said. “I think there’s a fundamental purpose there that we’re here to help other people and what you give comes back to you. It’s kind of a biblical responsibility, really. We started with that, and we began giving scholarships to kids that had a financial need that were really talented. We’ve done that for a long time, and it’s really been meaningful.”

In 2020, Lewis discussed his many life lessons, values and leadership principles learned in his book “Solid Ground,” which reached number one best-seller status on Kindle on Amazon.

For every smart risk and good

decision, there is a reward. Lewis’ life is full of them.

— — —

When Lewis began pledging Sigma Chi during the second semester of his freshman year in Kentucky, not only was he following the footsteps of his father, but he gained his first real taste of collegiate social life.

“For six months, I hadn’t really had any social life at all, and then the blinders came off,” he said. “When I rushed, the Sigma Chis had some pretty impressive upperclassmen there. Of course, my dad was a Sig, I was kind of prone to that, but I was excited to pledge in the spring of 1968.”

Upon initiation, Lewis moved into room 205 in the Lambda Lambda chapter house along with three other guys from different parts of the country. There were 48 young men living there at the time — a time Lewis recalls fondly.

“There was so much fun and so much brotherhood,” he said. “We went through the different classes (of pledges), there were memories, parties and intramural sports, but it was mainly the friendships and the laughter we had. It was one of those special times.”

In academics, engineering wasn’t the right fit for Lewis. He worked through the program and earned his degree, but leadership roles within the Fraternity and on campus had the biggest impact

on his life to that point. He was a member and chairman of the Greek Activities Steering Committee, but his most fond roles were Pro Consul, as a junior, and Derby Daddy, the chairman of the chapter’s Derby Days for two years.

“I took on leadership roles in the Fraternity and took on leadership roles campus-wide,” Lewis said. “There was a lot of planning, organizing, motivating and controlling; that’s what business is. That’s what I learned at Sigma Chi, doing those kinds of things. The environment was so good for a 19, 20-year-old.” There were also inspirational values. Values that would follow Lewis as he left Kentucky for graduate business school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and entered the various stages of life and career that followed.

“One of the reasons I knew Sigma Chi was the right place for me was the seven virtues,” he said. “That was my first exposure to a definition of character. There is a definition and Sigma Chi had a really good one, a White Cross, which was pure and inspiring. Those seven virtues, they didn’t teach that in high school. If you want to be a good man, a good person, these are the seven virtues. That was formational, I think, that there is a list of virtues that we need to follow.”



*“One of the reasons I knew Sigma Chi was the right place for me, was the seven virtues. That was my first exposure to a definition of character. There is a definition and Sigma Chi had a really good one, a White Cross which was pure and inspiring.”*

— Tom Lewis

“I think it kind of planted the seed for me. So, when I started my company, I had six virtues, and they were...the ones I thought meant the most to me and the ones I thought would be best for our company. The idea that there are ideals in life that we may never achieve but always aspire to.”

Upon receiving his Master of Business Administration at North Carolina, Lewis was ready to learn how to be successful in business.

His first job was with a land development company, the Sea Pines Company, which built masterplan communities in the Carolinas region. Three years into his work there, however, the company went bankrupt.

“I learned a lot of lessons about what not to do,” said Lewis. During his time there, Lewis sold land to homebuilders. As Sea Pines went bankrupt, fortunately

for Lewis, one of the companies he worked with, Ryan Homes, a public builder based out of Pittsburgh, offered him a spot in their manager training program.

In a tough environment, Lewis learned the ins and outs of managing the organization’s various divisions alongside valued mentors.

“It was kind of like a home-builder boot camp,” he said. “If you make a mistake, they call you on it. I really learned how to run a home building company there.” Ryan Homes moved Lewis to Dayton and later Akron, Ohio, where at age 28, he was the youngest division manager in the company’s history.

Most important for Lewis, he met his wife, and they were married 12 months later when an opportunity appeared from Phoenix, Arizona.

“I got married on a Saturday,

and the next day our honeymoon was driving to Phoenix.”

After five years with a home building company in Arizona, a graduate school friend provided Lewis with an opening that would change his life — a regional partnership with the Trammel Crow company based in Dallas, Texas.

“That’s really, again, preparation meets opportunity,” he said. “What I really needed then was more knowledge and experience in finance and deal structure. I’d been running x’s and o’s, and it was kind of like a defensive coordinator. I was ready to be a head coach, but I didn’t know enough to be a head coach.”

After eight years with Trammell Crow, in 1991, the company decided to divest away from its multi-family development portfolio. Lewis was offered to purchase his partner’s interest in Trammell Crow Homes and founded T.W. Lewis Company.

“My senior partner asked me if I wanted to take it and go with it or close it down. I decided to take it and go with it. The market got better, and we were off and running. It turned out to be a huge blessing to me.”

— — —

Building upon his experiences as a real estate developer with four different companies over 18 years,

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Lewis knew his company had to be different from a typical housing business.

“Whenever you start a company, you have to be able to differentiate it, and I like the old saying, ‘Any CEO that can’t say what is unique about his company in 25 words or less is running a company that’s in trouble,’” he said. “I couldn’t afford to get in trouble. I had all of my chips on the table, and it was just me. I had no partners, no equity partners, just me. So, I couldn’t afford to fail, and we get two little boys and a third one on the way. I had to be clear on how we were different.”

Lewis’ focus was on quality versus quantity. In his 18 years of experience, the home building industry was more focused on the number of homes built versus the quality of the product. Without quality and attention to detail, not only were companies’ reputations damaged, but customers were failed over time.

That wouldn’t be the case with the T.W. Lewis Company.

“I knew there was a real opportunity here,” he said. “If a homebuilder focused on quality and didn’t try to keep growing, they would have a niche.

“In Phoenix, there was like 30 public homebuilders when I started, and I couldn’t compete with them on the basis of price.

Significant Sig Tom Lewis, KENTUCKY 1971, and his wife, Jan, through their T.W. Lewis Foundation have supported a wide range of charities since 2001.

I had to compete somehow else. So, we started off with a billboard campaign with my face on the billboard. We came up with the slogan, 'Homes for particular people.' And that was our marketing campaign. It really stuck."

From day one, Lewis' company was guided by six core values: honesty, integrity, hard work, reliability, achievement and compassion. Along with a customer-first philosophy of respect, courtesy and prompt attention to their needs.

From 1991 through 2011, Lewis' company built 250 homes per year and received numerous accolades. Lewis was named America's Best Builder in 1998, and the company received the National Housing Quality Gold Award in 2009.

"It became a purpose, and our employees rallied around that, because we were a homebuilder that kind of wanted to do it right," he said. "We put those (values) on the wall, and everybody saluted them, and it reminded us of what we stood for."

In 2001, after a decade of success, Lewis and his wife wanted to make a real difference in the community supporting higher education, children and families in need, and other nonprofit organizations.

By 2012, the Lewis' wanted

to focus solely on philanthropy and investments, phasing out the homebuilding portion of the business to David Weekley Homes.

Outside of an annual college scholarship fund that has impacted more than 200 individuals, their largest gift was made in 2015 when the couple made a \$23 million gift to establish the Lewis Honors College at the University of Kentucky. Later, they made a gift to establish the T.W. Lewis Center for Personal Development at Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University.

"I've always loved the idea of helping young people become the best they can be," Lewis said. "We all have our potential, and almost none of us ever really reach it. Young people are so enthusiastic, and they need direction, and are hungry for good advice.

"I always loved helping young people come up with a game plan, come up with a good strategy. Not just everybody, but the ones who seem to be willing to work and have some talent. That's what we did with our scholarship program. These are really cool, young, ambitious, good people, and we enjoy (giving back)." Lewis' legacy of giving back and roadmap for a successful career is detailed in his book "Solid

Ground: A Foundation for Winning in Work and in Life," released in 2020.

He calls "Solid Ground" a response to his passion for giving advice to young people. The book details his career, life and leadership lessons, utilizing a key set of values and principles enabling the reader to develop a successful path of their own. "There are principles in life, and you need to follow those, understand those and be clear about what those things are," Lewis said. "In my book, I try to provide what I call a roadmap and a compass in order to find success in work and in life. A compass points to true north. It doesn't tell you how to get there; it identifies what is true north. A roadmap helps you identify what is true north and helps you get there.

"First things are your habits of work and character. As John Wooden said, 'Talent can get you to the top, but it takes character to stay there.' If you don't have character, any success you have is going to be short-term. Why would you want to go down that road? You have to play a little defense in life to make sure something bad doesn't happen."

One of Lewis' favorite elements of the book is a centerpiece

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discussing how one can reach their potential through good decisions and intelligent risks taken throughout life.

“It’s a very important part of success,” he says. “If you show me a person that is a good decision-maker, that person is going to be successful in life. I don’t care what your IQ is. It’s not about your IQ. It’s about your ability to make good decisions. There are ways you can improve your ability to make good decisions.”

He closes the book with a series of thoughts, quotes and readings from some of the great thinkers of the times and compiles them in a way that provides guidance. “Life’s greatest achievements are success, purpose, meaning, wisdom and happiness,” he said. “I’ve always enjoyed talking about those subjects. I try to package them and pass them along to someone who is looking for some guidance.”

Lewis, who resides in Paradise Valley, AZ, is a 2007 recipient of the Significant Sig award and 2011 recipient of a Grand Consul Citation.

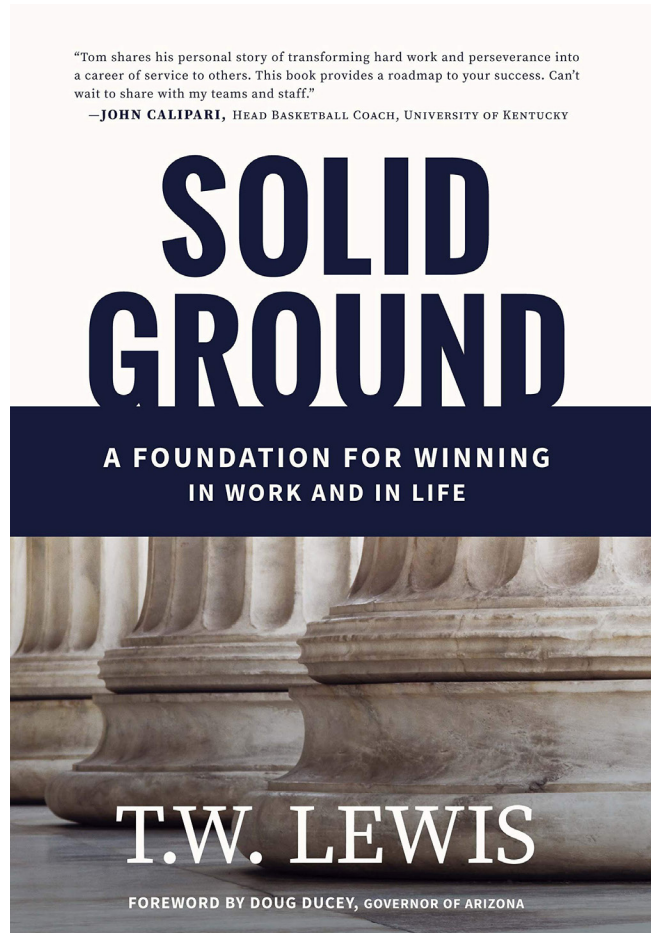
Two of his three sons, Tom Lewis Jr, PEPPERDINE 2003, and John Lewis, VIRGINIA 2005, became Sigma Chis — third generation legacies — following Lewis and his father’s footsteps.

Looking back on Sigma Chi

and its future, Lewis is proud to see the Fraternity maintaining its legacy through values-centered educational opportunities by creating a roadmap for thousands of young men like himself who entered college seeking a vision and values for life.

“I think Sigma Chi is unique in the Fraternity world,” he added. “I don’t think many Fraternities have a values-based core to it. Some do, but it’s not like Sigma Chi. It’s not

the seven virtues. It’s not the Norman Shield. Sigma Chi has a core set of character traits it advocates and always has. I think there’s something about that that makes a father want to encourage his son to do that. It does make a difference. I can remember living in the house and our chapter meetings when someone would stand up and say something those values were right there.”



Lewis’ book “Solid Ground” is a number one best seller on Kindle by Amazon, and is available at all online retailers or at [solidgroundbook.com](http://solidgroundbook.com)



# CENTERPIECE

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A CONVERSATION WITH SIGNIFICANT SIG  
JIMMY HASLAM, TENNESSEE-KNOXVILLE 1976



## BY WES HOLTSCLAW, EAST TENNESSEE 2012

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From the moment he pledged the Beta Sigma chapter at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in November of 1972, Significant Sig Jimmy Haslam, TENNESSEE-KNOXVILLE 1976, was inspired to lead.

Haslam was no stranger to leadership. His father, Significant Sig Jim Haslam Sr., TENNESSEE-KNOXVILLE 1952, was a good example within the family's Pilot Oil Corporation. Haslam Jr. had even held leadership roles himself at his small high school in East Tennessee. But it was the motivation of a chapter brother that steered the younger Haslam to lead larger audiences on campus as his chapter's recruitment chairman, chairman of the university's interfraternity council and other leadership roles within the student government.

The sudden passing of his mother, Cynthia, in 1974 changed Haslam's life, and career-wise led to an earlier than expected placement on the company's board of directors.

Following graduation, Haslam advanced as Pilot's vice president of sales, development and operations. Over the following decade, he helped expand the company from 100 convenience stores into a nationwide leader in travel centers. By 1996 — the year he succeeded his father as president and chief executive officer — the company operated 96 travel centers and sold more than \$1.2 billion in gas sales.

In 2001, under Haslam's leadership, Pilot joined with Marathon Ashland Petroleum to form Pilot Travel Centers, eventually merging with rival Flying J. Inc. in 2010. Today, the Pilot Company, which Haslam now serves as chairman, is one of the top 10 largest privately held companies in the United States and employs more than 24,000.

In the sports world, he is known as co-owner, with wife, Dee, of the National Football League's Cleveland Browns and Major League Soccer's Columbus Crew SC. The two franchises have seen vast improvement under Haslam's ownership, highlighted by the Crew's 2020 MLS Cup championship and 2020 season playoff run by the Browns.

Haslam and his wife also served in several prominent civic and community roles in East Tennessee and Northern Ohio. Their philanthropic efforts via The Haslam3 Foundation, Cleveland Browns Foundation and Columbus Crew Foundation impact thousands of lives annually.

In 2020, the Haslams donated \$1.5 million to COVID-19 relief efforts in Ohio. Along with his father and brother, Significant Sig Bill Haslam, EMORY 1980, made a \$40 million gift to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville's Haslam College of Business, among others.

In March 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, Haslam sat down with us to discuss his Sigma Chi experience and more.

**Wes Holtsclaw:** I want to walk through your introduction to Sigma Chi. How old were you when you learned of Sigma Chi's place in your father's life, and how soon did you know it was something you wanted to do in college?

**Jimmy Haslam:** It's kind of interesting. I was aware my dad was a Sigma Chi. He played football (at the University of Tennessee), and I'll be quite honest, he talked more about playing football than he did being a Sigma Chi. He never put any pressure on me. I went to the University of Tennessee, and it was somewhat of a last-minute decision. A friend of mine from high school said, 'Why don't we go through rush and visit two or three houses?' One of them was Sigma Chi, and I just had a natural affinity to the guys there and ended up pledging Sigma Chi. (Dad) was happy that I pledged Sigma Chi, but he never really put any pressure on me.

**WH:** What were some of your favorite memories from your undergraduate experience with the Beta Sigma chapter?

**JH:** I had so much fun and learned so much. Really some of my great friends today are Sigma Chis. First of all, being in a Fraternity at the University of Tennessee — and I had gone to a real small high school — kind of helped me

associate with a group of people.

I went from a graduating high school class of 59 to Tennessee, which I think, at the time, had around 25,000 students, and my first class had around two to three hundred people. It's a bit of a culture shock. I think if I hadn't been involved in a Fraternity, I wouldn't have met so many people and been involved in so many different activities. I think we had 100 people in Sigma Chi. You meet those 100 people, you meet their girlfriends, their families and friends. Immediately you have a large association with people and a nice little network in a giant university setting that I don't think I would've had without Sigma Chi.

**WH:** Obviously, this company (Pilot Flying J) means a great deal to your family. But to you, especially, you were in college when you had to come in and step into a big role right away?

**JH:** My mom died in the fall of my junior year. I have always wanted to work at Pilot. I grew up around the business. It was a really small business when I was younger. I worked there in high school and was working there in college. After my mom died, it was still a pretty small company. We were partners with Marathon Oil, and my dad and mom represented us, and two senior executives from Marathon represented them. I slipped into

my mother's place. It was a great grow-up experience because here I am in college, 20-21 years old, flying up to Ohio four times a year and meeting senior executives with the company. It was an early indoctrination into the real world of business. Obviously, (it was) a very tragic experience that my mom died, but it gave me that opportunity to see how real-world business worked.

**WH:** What leadership lessons did you learn from that experience? And how did you learn from your father and others to that point?

**JH:** My dad is a great natural leader. He's not necessarily a great coach to how to be a leader. So I just watched him and tried to emulate him. He was always in charge no matter what. He picked the restaurants people were going to. I remember he and my mom were pretty young when I was born, so when I was 13 or 14, he was probably in his late 30s, and we would go out to the high school I went to and played basketball on Sundays. It would be his friends and my friends, and he'd always decide what time we were playing, he picked the teams and always picked a great shooter to be on his team, but he was always in charge. I watched that and always learned from those things. I will say this,

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I was always involved in leadership in high school, and my first year at Tennessee, I had a good time. I can't say I accomplished a lot. But one of my good friends in the Fraternity pushed me into a leadership role to become the rush chairman. That led me to get more involved in the Fraternity, which led me to get more involved in the interfraternity council, which led me to get more involved in student government which was a tremendous experience.

**WH:** You bought a minority interest in the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2008, but you and your wife, Dee, were able to buy one of the league's most storied franchises, the Cleveland Browns, in 2012. What is the biggest thing you've learned from NFL team ownership?

**JH:** Everybody has high expectations. I understood that coming from Knoxville (and high expectations around college football). Still, when you're the owner, it's a lot bigger deal than we ever thought it would be.

**WH:** Looking forward, what are some of your personal goals for the Browns organization now and looking ahead in the future?

**JH:** It's all about winning. I hate to say it that way. We have really good people who work with us on the business side who values the



Jimmy Haslam with wife, Dee, in 2019

franchise tremendously.

My wife, Dee, and I have done a lot of tremendous things in the community, and at the end of the day, all of that stuff is nice, but the fans and everybody in the organization want to win. We have not had a good record (from 2012 to 2020). I think we're poised to win games. The whole deal is to win games, get into the playoffs, win your division, win your conference and ultimately win the Super Bowl. Everything in the NFL is judged by wins and losses.

(Editor's Note: Throughout the 2020 season, which began five months following the interview, Haslam's decision to hire general

manager Andrew Berry and head coach Kevin Stefanski paid off. The Browns improved from 6-10 to 11-5, clinching the franchise's best season since reactivation in 1999, also ending a league-high 18-year playoff drought before falling to AFC champion Kansas City in a 22-17 Divisional Round nail biter.)

**WH:** In Sigma Chi, the education our members are receiving from day one incorporates the transformational leadership philosophy. What were some ways Sigma Chi and the University of Tennessee, at the time, transformed your leadership ability?



**JH:** Here's how I view college. You're somewhat of a boy when you get in high school. When you go, college is when you really grow up. You're on your own, you have to make decisions on your own, you have a lot of free time — which is something I never had a lot of in high school — and I think that's when you really learn.

I started out as rush chairman, then I was chairman of the interfraternity council, and then I was really active in student government. That was in the early-to-mid-seventies during a very liberal time period following the Vietnam War, etc. I was a very conservative person. Learning to work with people who had much different political views than I did and gaining their respect and learning to respect them, that was a great growth experience for me. As chairman of the interfraternity council, I think there were 25 or 30 fraternities on campus, and a lot of good things happened, and some not-so-good things happened.

I was viewed as the person in charge of them, which wasn't exactly accurate. Every other week I had breakfast with the chancellor, and once a month, I had breakfast with the president of the university. I was 21 years old at the time. Being around those types of people, those leaders, learning how to work with the presidents of the fraternities was a great experience.

Several of those guys are still great friends of mine. It taught me how to be a leader in a much diverse and very different setting than being president of your class or captain of your team in high school.

**WH:** If you had any specific life or career advice you'd want to give a young Sigma Chi or a young man in college now during this ever-changing world, especially now — what would you tell them?

**JH:** That's a great question. I would say work hard. I don't think anybody who's achieved any type of success in any type of environment hasn't worked hard... I'd say work hard, do the right thing and really get to know people because those relationships — of my five closest friends, two of them are fraternity brothers, and I love them like they are real brothers — those type of relationships can become lifelong friendships. Also, learn from the people you're around and take advantage of the opportunities that both Sigma Chi and being in college afford you. Whether that's being more active on campus, traveling abroad, working in a different part of the country, or something like that. When you get out of college, most people are going to go to work. At some point in time, you're going to have a family and a lot less time to do those things. Take advantage of that time period you have.

**WH:** One last thing, your brother, Significant Sig Bill Haslam, EMORY 1980, was Governor of Tennessee, one of your close friends, brother and Significant Sig Bob Corker, TENNESSEE-KNOXVILLE 1974, was United States Senator for the state, and another Sig alum Significant Sig Lamar Alexander, VANDERBILT 1962, was also United States Senator here. All three Sigma Chis. All three holding perhaps the most important political positions in a single state. The first time in Greek-letter history that has happened. You have close relationships there; what did that mean to you on a personal level?

**JH:** I love our representatives now, but I don't think our state will ever have three people like that all of whom happen to be from East Tennessee, but more importantly were high character, low ego and were serving their country and state for the right reasons. It was a lot of fun to have my younger brother, one of my best friends in college and best friends today (Corker) and then Lamar, who has been a part of our family since the seventies, all in office at the same time. I'd just say it was cool and a lot of fun. All three are out now and I'm happy for them, but the state and country miss them because they're all so talented and great leaders.

# CONNECTING OFF CAMPUS

## *Zoom meetings help Washington State alumni give pledges a fuller Sigma Chi experience during pandemic*

BY JEFF BURNSIDE, WASHINGTON STATE 1979

It was unmistakable. You could see it in their eyes. Sure, the zoom calls would occasionally freeze, and the camera shots weren't always perfect.

But, in the pledges' eyes, while they spoke with alumni and undergraduate brothers during the Covid-19 shutdowns, you could see it became clear to them: Sigma Chi is, in fact, a life-long commitment.

Beta Upsilon's (Washington State University) alumni became concerned about how the pandemic was cloistering pledges away from the Sigma Chi chapter in Pullman. Most pledges are living at home – in Seattle, Spokane, even Arizona, Colorado and Hawaii – rather than in the fraternity or on campus. Many had never met the others in their pledge class or even set foot inside the chapter house. And they'd almost certainly never interacted with alumni Sigs.

Were they missing out on some of the important intangibles of

potential brotherhood? Was the pandemic creating a less impactful pledge period for these young guys? If left unaddressed, might that affect the strength of the future brotherhood in the chapter?

To counter that possibility, we worked closely with the undergraduate brothers to pair up every single pledge with at least one alumni brother and at least one undergraduate brother for a series of zoom calls. During those calls, it became clear as day: That glint in the eye of the Sigma Chi pledge, the crack in his smile when he starts to understand that it's a lifetime commitment.

We called them "A Conversation with a Pledge." And it proved very successful. As the pandemic continues, other chapter alumni groups might consider doing this with your spring pledges.

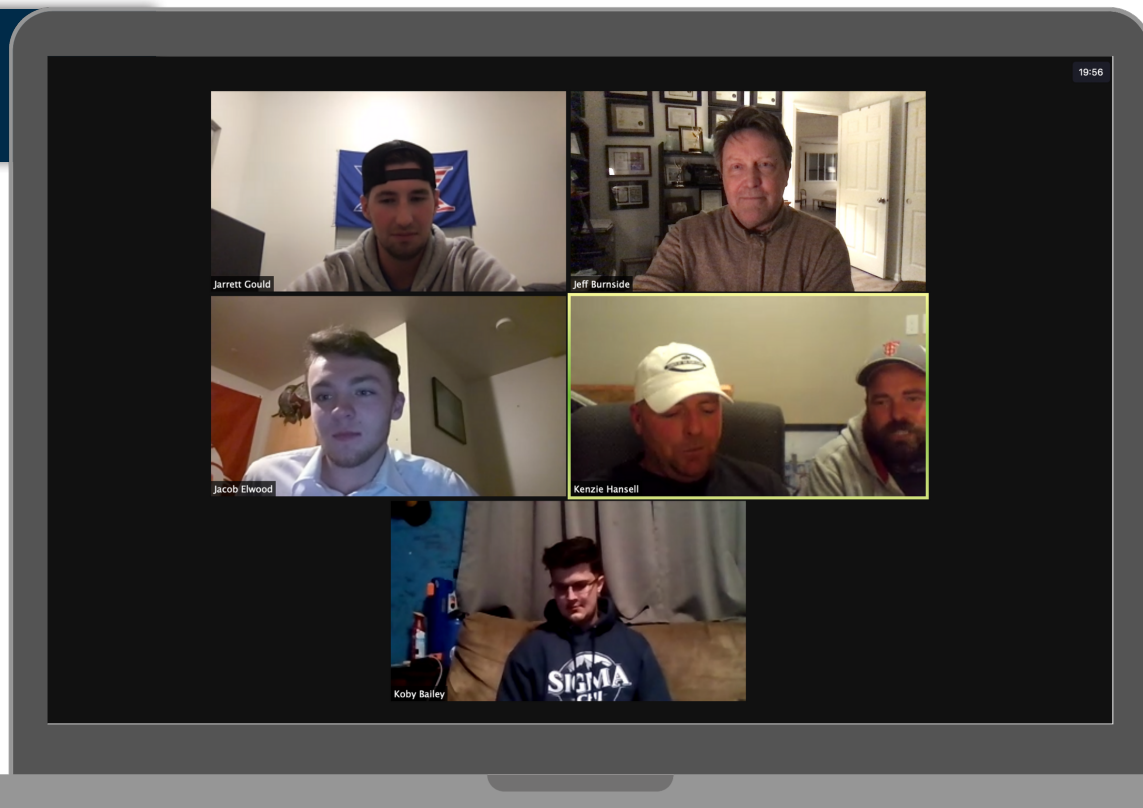
"The experience with the pledges on zoom," said Consul Pat Summit, WASHINGTON STATE 2021,

"was a wonderful way to get to know the pledges as well as deeper connection with the alumni."

The calls were introductory and inspirational, not harsh in any way. The focus seemed to be the *Jordan Standard* and the Creed and how they've been central to the alumni's personal and professional lives.

"I was impressed that the young man I spoke to had done research on me," said Jeff Pyatt, WASHINGTON STATE 1981, who was paired with pledge Jake Whorley from Arizona. "He had questions about my career, which showed he had done his homework. We certainly talked about the fun of being a Sigma Chi – the camaraderie, the brotherhood, some of the silliness, and how much I anticipated he would enjoy that part when he was able to live in the house with his brothers."

Pyatt recently rang the bell at the New York Stock Exchange opening after his company, Broadmark



Realty Capital, went public. Notably, career preparation became a prominent topic of these conversations with pledges.

“I am really grateful I had the opportunity to speak with a Sigma Chi alum, who had gone through the pledge process,” said Whorley, “and helped to reaffirm that I made the right decision choosing to pledge Sigma Chi.”

The zoom calls were scheduled for 45 minutes, but most, including Whorley and Pyatt, spoke longer.

“We talked for quite a while about what it took to get into a successful business position, such as the one that he is in, as well as what his experiences were like in college,” said Whorley. “In addition, I shared with him a few of my goals

for the next four years.”

Alumni brother John Hale, WASHINGTON STATE 1986, asked pledge Hunter Ford why he chose Sigma Chi. Hunter’s older brother is the current Quaestor in the house.

“He didn’t say he pledged because his brother was a Sig,” Hale recounts, “But he pledged because he saw how much his brother had matured and developed leadership skills and purpose over his two years in Pullman.”

Before their call, alumni Rick Beal, WASHINGTON STATE 1975, a lawyer in Seattle, emailed pledge Ben Rosenbach some law school teachings he wrote that are based on the Jordan Standard and that Beal has used as his personal code throughout life.

“I hope it makes you smile,” Beal told him. “Hoping the Jordan Standard helps focus you on the value of developing your own signature ‘Code of the Road’.”

The zoom calls come just months after Beta Upsilon opened its new \$6 million chapter house right in the midst of a pandemic. As a result, the chapter’s brotherhood is exceedingly close, and these zoom calls helped fold those pledges into that closeness now that most of them are initiated.

“It was a good example of how the best way to learn is to teach,” said Pyatt, “because it allowed me to review the Standard and the Creed and really ask myself if I was living them.”

# IN HOC CRUISE 2022



# FOUNDATION, IN HOC NAPA VALLEY ANNOUNCE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

## IN HOC CRUISE 2022

The Sigma Chi Foundation and In Hoc Napa Valley have announced a joint 9-night Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona to Rome.

**Pictured (clockwise) from top left:** the Monaco Grand Prix in Monte Carlo; the CrystalSymphony ship hosting the event in May 2022; a view of Palma de Mallorca from the Bay of Palma; the docks in Olbia, Italy; the Arch of Constantine in Rome; the Modern City of Arts & Sciences in Valencia, Spain.

**At right:** The 9-night itinerary from Barcelona to Rome aboard the Crystal Symphony.



As global and cruise travel expects a return to some semblance of normalcy with the expanded reach of the COVID-19 vaccine, the Sigma Chi Foundation and In Hoc Napa Valley are partnering on a special 9-night cruise aboard the Crystal Symphony ship in May 2022.

Starting in Barcelona, the cruise will visit Valencia and Palma de Mallorca in Spain with a stop in Monte Carlo for the running of the annual Monaco Grand Prix. The cruise will visit Olbia and Sorrento in Italy before docking outside of Rome in Civitavecchia. The cruise will offer up several opportunities for connection and fellowship with Sig alumni and sweethearts in port and at sea,

with an additional three-day add-on in Rome, including historic Sigma Chi-related sites and a ceremonial meeting.

The highly-rated Crystal Symphony ship features Michelin-inspired cuisine with a variety of restaurants and cafes. Travelers will receive unlimited beverages, Wi-Fi and luxurious ship amenities, including a fitness center, spa, sun deck, pool and award-winning Broadway-style entertainment.

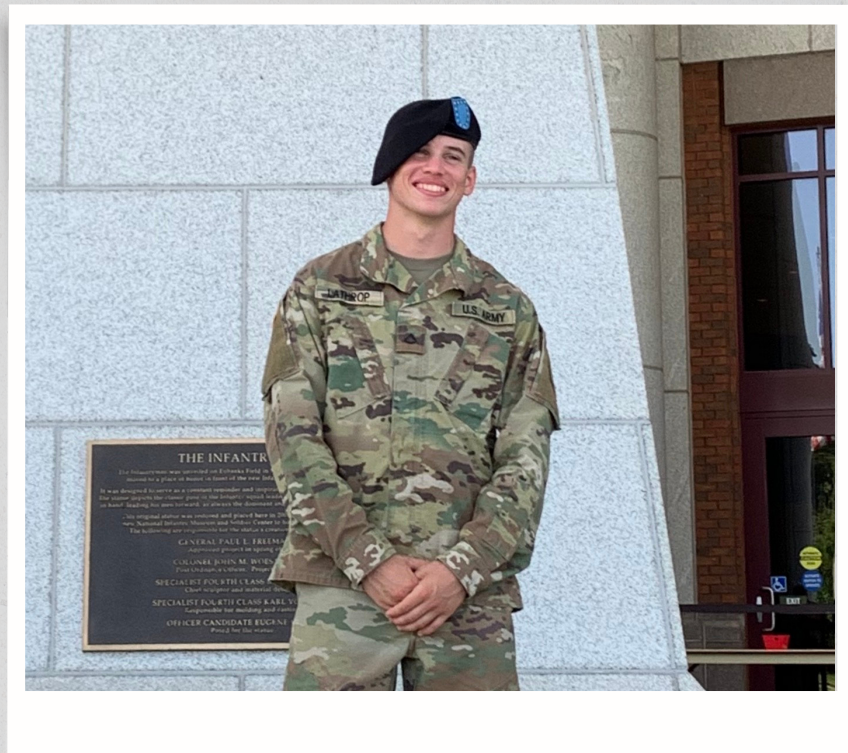
“We are thrilled to create special memories with you on this adventure,” said In Hoc Napa Valley Proprietor and CEO Significant Sig Brandon Chaney, INDIANA 1993. “Imagine experiencing the final day of the 79th Monaco Grand Prix and then a Sigma

Chi ritual at a Constantine historical site in Rome all in one trip! It will be amazing!”

Exclusive Sigma Chis events include special receptions, seminars, dinners with featured hosts, shore excursions and on-board events, including wine tastings, and a whiskey and cigars event under the stars.

The Foundation will host a pre-cruise opportunity in Barcelona with a post-cruise outing in Rome celebrating Sigma Chi’s history and the ancient domain of Constantine along with some of Rome’s most well-known landmarks.

For more information on the inaugural Sigma Chi Foundation cruise visit [inhocruise.com](http://inhocruise.com).



## SNAPSHOT: SPC LANDON LATHROP

Earlier this month, SPC Landon Lathrop, ST. THOMAS 2023, deployed to the Middle East to serve the United States during Operation Spartan Shield to support local and allied forces on behalf of the Minnesota Army National Guard.

Prior to his service deployment, Landon dedicated two weeks towards the Sigma Chi Leadership Institute's Distance Leadership pilot program alongside his regular academic efforts.

Working through 40 hours of in-person and online coursework, quizzes and tests, Landon became SCLI's

inaugural certificate graduate on March 5.

"I'm very appreciative for the opportunity and it feels great to be the first person to get this done and be a part of literal history," Landon said. "This program opened my eyes completely to leadership as a whole and how it's done. I think this is going to be a well-needed facelift for the Greek world in general.

"This is a great start toward opening people's eyes and letting them see there's a lot more to fraternities in general, and Sigma Chi especially, than the perception."



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