



# The DUCK CALL

A Publication of Delta Upsilon at the University of Missouri • Spring 2025



*Our fall 2024 new member class takes the oath of initiation on October 31 at Memorial Union.*

## INSIDE:

PAGE 2

A Lifelong Brotherhood

Greek Week

PAGE 3

Welcome, New Members

Chapter Officers

PAGE 4

Running for a Reason

## RAISING THE BAR

### University Recognizes DU as Top 5 Chapter

#### WELCOMING OUR NEWEST BROTHERS

Building on a strong fall recruitment class, we proudly initiated 54 brothers into our membership. The ceremony took place on October 31 at Memorial Union, where **Jens Christianson '26** delivered an inspiring charge.

This spring, we also welcomed nine new associate members into the fraternity. Our official pinning ceremony took place on February 2, marking the beginning of their journey as DU brothers.

#### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

We wrapped up the fall semester with an impressive overall GPA of 3.2, surpassing the all-male average. Additionally, 60 of our members earned a spot on various dean's lists, ranking us sixth among fraternities.

For nearly two decades, the Randal J. Farmer Award has recognized freshmen with the highest first-semester GPA. Thanks to a dedicated effort from brothers close to **Randal J. Farmer '79**, a \$10,000 endowment was established to fund annual scholarships

for winners. This year, **Rhett Pierce '28** and **Alex Bender '28** both achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA. Chapter Advisor **Chuck Hatley '80** honored them with a recognition plaque and a \$500 scholarship check each.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Following our officer elections in late November, Advisory Board Chairman **Jeff Kreutz '99** organized a new officer retreat in January to prepare for the upcoming semester. As chapter president, I had the privilege of attending the Delta Upsilon International Fraternity President's Academy in Indianapolis, where I engaged with fellow DU chapter presidents from across the country. The experience provided invaluable leadership training and networking opportunities, reinforcing our mission to build a stronger fraternity community at Mizzou.

In February, 14 members, including our executive board, attended DUIF's Regional Leadership Academy in Kansas City, a program designed to equip new officers with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their roles.

Our second annual Building Better Men's Weekend, held at the Mizzou Recreation Center on Saturday, March 8, was facilitated by **Kody Rather, North Dakota '09**, of DUIF's leadership staff. This event, made possible by a generous endowment from **Bob Doyle '71**, fosters personal growth and leadership skills among our members. On March 9, our executive board held individual meetings with Kody to evaluate the retreat and refine our chapter's goals.

#### DOMINATING GREEK WEEK

This year, we were paired with Pi Beta Phi for Greek Week, and our competitive spirit shone through! Our team clinched first place in volleyball and soccer and secured third place in basketball. Beyond athletics, we made a meaningful impact in the community by donating over 1,200 cans to the Food Bank of Central Missouri and surpassing \$1,000 in contributions. More than 300 members from our pairing participated in the blood drive. To top it off, we delivered an unforgettable Skit and Dance performance in front of thousands at Jesse Hall.

*Continued on page 3*



# A LIFELONG BROTHERHOOD

## David Williams '90 Shares His DU Experience

**F**or David Williams '90, joining Delta Upsilon at Mizzou was more than just a college

decision—it was the beginning of a lifelong journey filled with camaraderie, leadership, and unforgettable memories.

“My brother, **Chris Thomas '87**, introduced me to **Steven Schellhase '88**, the recruitment chairman, when I was in high school,” Dave recalled. “I visited Mizzou for rush weekends, and we took in a few Cardinals games. **Andy Watt '88**, my future pledge dad, organized an indoor soccer team that summer, and we won the league!” The combination of these experiences and meeting a great group of guys sealed the deal for Dave.

Years later, the connections he forged as an undergraduate are still influential. “The great relationships make me proud to be a DU,” he said. Those friendships were forged through countless shared experiences at the chapter house, from Intramural soccer to Homecoming house decoration construction. “IC Beach, The Count, DG Coke Run, Chapter Dinners and Meetings. Study hall during pledge ship monitored by brother **Chris Stecher '89** are some of my favorite memories,” he shared. “And, of course, meeting my future wife, Donna!”

### LIVING BEYOND CAMPUS

After graduating in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in business administration, Dave embarked on a career in sales. “I started at

Sherwin Williams in their management trainee program,” he said. After realizing retail wasn't the right fit, he pivoted to industrial sales, eventually finding a long-term career in the steel industry. “I started as an inside sales representative at National Steel, then moved to Huntco Steel before joining Leeco Steel in Chicago, where I've been for over 30 years.” He eventually opened a greenfield plant in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

### THE POWER OF ONE ALUMNUS

Dave's love for Delta Upsilon never faded, leading him to stay involved by recommending new members. “I made great memories and relationships at DU and knew the candidates I referred could benefit as well,” he explained. The new members Dave recommended are all thriving in leadership positions: **Andrew Smentek '27** is VP of academics, **Ben Cummings '27** is VP of loss prevention, and **Ryan Nelson '27** is house director.

Staying connected to the chapter isn't just a matter of nostalgia; it's about ensuring the fraternity's future success. “Empowering solid leaders makes the entire organization better,” Dave said. He encourages other alumni to find their own ways to reconnect. “The undergraduates can learn from your experience and use your professional advice,” he said. “It's all about networking.”

### KEEPING CONNECTED WITH BROTHERS

Even decades after leaving the chapter house, Dave's connection to the brotherhood remains



*The men Dave referred to Missouri Chapter. From left: Ben Cummings '27, Alex Smentek '27, and Ryan Nelson '27.*

strong. “Our crew gets together two or more times a year,” he shared. Brother **Dr. Bob Becker '87** is in Branson, and we meet each summer to play golf and talk about the old days. Fun fact: when we get together for lunches or dinners, I have yet to ‘lose’ or ‘win’ the credit card game!” he laughed.

Now residing in Plainfield, Illinois, Dave plays golf, runs, and stays involved with his family's activities. He and his wife, Donna, a fellow Mizzou graduate, have three children: “Emily is getting her doctorate in Computational Science and Engineering at MIT, Alison was a Pi Phi and 2024 Mizzou graduate working at State Farm, and Justin is a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville majoring in civil engineering and playing soccer.”

If you'd like to reconnect with Dave, you can send an email to [williamsd16@outlook.com](mailto:williamsd16@outlook.com).

*“Swing by the new house and say hello to the brothers!  
They'd love to meet you.”*



# GREEK WEEK



Welcome, spring 2025 associate members!



Meet the 2025 chapter officers!

# WELCOME, SPRING NEW MEMBERS

**Jack Bartnick '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Francis Howell

**Connor Byrne '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Vianney

**Will Darling '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Marquette

**Rodrigo DeLeon '28**  
Kansas City, Mo.  
Lee's Summit North

**Jack Hill '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Desmet

**Tanner Howes '28**  
Lee Summit, Mo.  
Lee's Summit North

**Blake Huelskotter '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Parkway Central

**Sam Lurkins '28**  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Oakville

**Drew Perry '28**  
Kansas City, Mo.  
Liberty North

# CHAPTER OFFICERS

President  
**Bryant Thomas '27**  
St. Charles, Mo.

VP Member Education  
**JB Ney '27**  
Defiance, Mo.

VP Administration  
**Leo Wolkey '27**  
St. Louis, Mo.

VP External Relations  
**Alex Shank '27**  
Shawnee, Kan.

VP Recruitment  
**Tyler Laux '27**  
St. Louis, Mo.

VP Academics  
**Andrew Smentek '27**  
Plainfield, Ill.

VP Loss Prevention  
**Ben Cummings '27**  
Plainfield, Ill.

VP Finance  
**Tucker Rapp '27**  
Oswego, Ill.

# RAISING THE BAR

## University Recognizes DU as Top 5 Chapter

*Continued from page 1*

### SPRING EVENTS

We attended the Fraternity and Sorority Life Honors Ceremony on April 10. We are proud to report that we were recognized as one of the **Top 5 fraternity chapters on campus!** In addition to this award for overall chapter excellence, the chapter received special recognition for civic/community involvement and academic achievement. We also nominated **Rhett Pierce '28** for the Unsung Hero Award, recognizing his behind-the-scenes contributions in helping us meet the reporting requirements for FSL and DUIF.

We also thoroughly enjoyed Mom's Weekend on April 25-27. It was, as always, a special time for our members and their families.

### COME SEE US!

If you ever find yourself back in Columbia, we encourage you to stop by the chapter house.



Chapter Advisor Chuck Hatley '80 presents a plaque and a check to Rhett Pierce '28 and Alex Bender '28 in recognition of their academic excellence.

We would love to reconnect and share in the continued success of our brotherhood.

Fraternally,  
**Bryant Thomas '27**  
Chapter President  
missouridu.president@gmail.com



Missouri Chapter brothers take in a DUIF Building Better Men workshop.



Missouri Chapter representatives participate in the DUIF Regional Leadership Academy in Kansas City.

# What's New with DU's Missouri Chapter?

Dive into the Latest Updates!

It's hard to believe that fall 2025 will mark the 10th anniversary of the completion of our new chapter house. I am happy to say that the facility is still in excellent shape and the chapter continues to be a significant force in the Mizzou fraternity community. As you peruse this issue of *The Duck Call*, I hope you enjoy the chapter president's report, the spotlight on **Dave Williams '91**, and the great collection of photos from campus events.

Thank you for your support of DU!

Fraternally,

**Bruce McKinney '74**

President, Missouri Alumni of Delta Upsilon

ebmckin@gmail.com



# The DUCK CALL

Delta Upsilon, University of Missouri  
P.O. Box 442100  
Lawrence, KS 66044-2100

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## DU is a Top 5 Chapter! Read more inside.



Mary Stice, House Director; Chuck Hatley '80; Bryant Thomas '27; Leo Wolkey '27; and Rick Montgomery '90 at the FSL awards ceremony.



Brothers pause for a well-deserved celebratory photo after completing the RAMS 5K Run.

## Running for a Reason

This year, we proudly participated in Rockin' Against Multiple Sclerosis, a philanthropic initiative dedicated to supporting the Multiple Sclerosis Institute of Mid-Missouri. RAMS hosts various fundraising events throughout February, including a 5K run, pickleball tournament, pool tournament, and dodgeball tournament.