



# THE LINK

BETA DELTA CHAPTER, FOUNDED 1885

*Success Starts Here.*

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## BETA DELTA EARNS 3.46 GPA

### *Chapter Focuses on Continuing Tradition of Success*

This past spring, Beta Delta posted its highest chapter GPA in recent history (10-plus years)! The overall GPA was a 3.46—well above the all-men's average 3.02 and the all-Greek average 3.29. After faltering the fall 2015 semester and not meeting our mark, it is nice to see the hard work our brothers put in toward making better grades paid off. Our hard work was also acknowledged through various awards and campus recognition.

#### *Brothers Engage in Leadership Roles on Campus*

ATΩ continues to lead the Greek community in campus involvement as well. A staggering 91 percent of our members are involved in at least one other organization on campus. Perhaps just as impressive, 50 percent of Beta Delta brothers hold some sort of leadership position within these organizations. We make marks across the board, in organizations ranging from the Blackburn Institute to hosts of WVUA radio shows.

#### *Social and Philanthropic Success*

Beta Delta has maintained outstanding social and philanthropic efforts through various events throughout the spring semester. In February, we held the inaugural Amos D. Burns Blackfoot Ball—a black tie date party named in honor of our late brother and chapter advisor, **Amos D. Burns '49**. Our signature Viking Week and Ruh Rah party both came and went with great success. Philanthropically, we held numerous events to raise money and awareness for different causes and the community. The two most successful events were Taus for Paws, benefiting the



*At Congress, Jake Varra '16 and Rob Grady '14 were the first Beta Deltas to receive the ATΩ Executive Leadership Certification.*

Tuscaloosa animal shelter, and Kups for Kids, benefiting the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

#### *Alumni, Come Visit Beta Delta*

So far, this year has been good to the Beta Delta Chapter of Alpha Tau Omega, and we look forward to what the remaining fall semester has in store. We are proud of our past accomplishments, but look forward to the challenge of achieving even greater success. On game days this fall, we will have plenty of food, brotherhood, and more at the chapter house. We hope you come by!

Fraternally,

**Hill Robinson '14**

Worthy Master

(251) 508-0833 / hillrob49@gmail.com

## 2016 CHAPTER OFFICERS

President **Hill Robinson '14**  
(251) 508-0833 / hillrob49@gmail.com  
Vice President **Luke Yordy '14**  
Chaplain **Austin Atkins '14**  
Treasurer **John Booth '14**  
Secretary **Rob Grady '14**  
Historian **Ben Splawn '14**  
Usher **Zach Lyles '14**  
Social Chairman **Jack Albritton '15**

Assistant Social Chairman **Jake Fleisher '15**  
New Member Education **Logan Skinner '15**  
Recruitment Chairman **Gaines Belcher '15**  
gainesb3@gmail.com  
Assistant Recruitment Chairman  
**Ry Esdale '15**  
resdale347@gmail.com  
Risk Management Chairman **Bradley Gray '15**  
House Manager **Grant Smith '14**

## Fall 2016 New Members

**James B. Bamberger** Bethesda, Md.  
**Dylan S. Barker** Columbus, Miss.  
**William A. Brooks** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Matthew T. Brown** Hoover, Ala.  
**Christopher L. Chain** Columbus, Miss.  
**Zachary M. Chandler** Hoover, Ala.  
**Cameron R. Cortinas** Fairhope, Ala.  
**Collin G. Crowe** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Albert C. Elliot** Vestavia Hills, Ala.  
**Brendan T. Fahey** Milton, Ga.  
**Jack R. Farmer** Birmingham, Ala.  
**Dillon F. Frederick** Florence, Ala.  
**Hayden J. Friedrich** Gulf Breeze, Fla.  
**Mitchell T. Gaddy** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Bryan K. Gilliland** Longview, Texas  
**Timothy S. Gully** Vestavia Hills, Ala.  
**Michael A. Harris** Huntsville, Ala.  
**William A. Hogue** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Chandler M. Jones** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Thornton W. Jones** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Daniel G. Kehl** Birmingham, Ala.  
**Steven B. Kittleson** Collierville, Tenn.  
**Judson D. Krout** Cullman, Ala.  
**Charles K. Lewis** Mountain Brook, Ala.  
**Howard W. Loveless** New Bern, N.C.  
**Trenton A. Makin** Daphne, Ala.  
**Louis A. McDonough** Jacksonville, Fla.  
**William J. Mizerany** Homewood, Ala.  
**Brett L. Mosier** Hoover, Ala.  
**Samuel T. Norris** Huntsville, Ala.  
**John A. Parker** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Samuel J. Perry** Chesterfield, Mo.  
**Joseph J. Pilleteri** Vestavia Hills, Ala.  
**John A. Pitts** Leander, Texas  
**Andrew W. Pratt** Oxford, Ala.  
**Fischer S. Priestley** Vestavia Hills, Ala.  
**Kinle M. Pullen** Jacksonville, Fla.  
**William P. Rantow** Memphis, Tenn.  
**John L. Reed** Birmingham, Ala.  
**James R. Robinson** Fairhope, Ala.  
**Joseph A. Ross** Birmingham, Ala.  
**Mitchell C. Rouse** Huntsville, Ala.  
**Dakota A. Roush** Tulsa, Okla.  
**John L. Rusevlyan** Florence, Ala.  
**William R. Ryan** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Logan M. Shugarts** Cullman, Ala.  
**Sam R. Sykstus** Huntsville, Ala.  
**James R. Tomilson** Birmingham, Ala.  
**William B. Tucker** Tuscaloosa, Ala.  
**Finn G. Veje** Los Angeles, Calif.  
**William G. Walker** Homewood, Ala.  
**Brandon W. Wermuth** Brownsboro, Ala.  
**Marshall S. Williams** Kansas City, Mo.  
**Richard A. Williamson** Montgomery, Ala.  
**Charles C. Wright** Guntersville, Ala.

# FIGHTING WITH FAITH

## AN UNDERGRADUATE'S BATTLE WITH CANCER

**J**ohn Stoffer '14 began his college experience just like anyone else—as one of the 34,832 students at the University of Alabama. He followed his family's footsteps and joined Alpha Tau Omega and was one of many in Bama Crew, Blue Key, Mortar Board, and The Anderson Society. But, on May 16, John became one out of an estimated 76,380 people to be diagnosed with melanoma.

In spring 2016, John visited multiple doctors regarding a swollen lymph node. Each of the doctors dismissed the swelling, saying it was a normal bacterial infection in his body. John went a step further and had a pathologist run a needle biopsy on the lymph node, which resulted in normal, cancer-free results. It wasn't until John had his lymph node removed that the surgical oncologist discovered a mass of melanoma cells behind it. When John awoke from the surgery, he began shaking the doctor's and nurse's hands, thanking them for performing a successful procedure, unaware of the news he was about to hear.

Quickly, John's hospital room was cleared and the chief surgeon returned, only to say two words, "It's melanoma." John had been anticipating and hoping for good news for so long that he was unprepared to hear the worst news of his life. It threw him off his feet, but the Lord was there to catch him. Through the shock, John remembered His promise in Romans 8:28, that all things work together for good, and in James 1:2, to count all of life's trials as joy, and moreover, in Philippians 1:21, "to live is Christ, and to die is gain." John responded to the doctor, "The Lord is faithful and He's got this."

The next week, John went in for scans, which showed that his cancer had metastasized from its original source in his ear to several locations on his liver—making it stage four metastatic melanoma. The cancer removed John from school, as he was far from healthy and needed to be close to doctors for monitoring. Almost immediately after his diagnosis, John's ATΩ brothers were the first to reach out, showing their love and support. Several brothers visited him in Nashville, and John was updated every day on different ways the Beta Delta Chapter was supporting him.

"Melanoma is an incredibly insidious disease that hides from the immune system. The beautiful thing about this is that John has brothers who will love and respect him no matter where this disease runs," older brother **Kevin Stoffer '12** said. "For men, it's hard to be vulnerable. ATΩ has allowed John to be vulnerable with his fears and he has a whole support system that can surround him and comfort him."

In August, John received extremely positive scan results, and although there was still cancer in his liver, it was in a further-advanced stage of healing, and he was told returning to school would be a possibility. John is now attending classes part time, and returns to Nashville for immunotherapy treatment every other Thursday.

"John's diagnosis has revealed his selfless character more than anyone could have expected. His everyday life is still focused on caring about and improving the lives of those around him," **Luke Yordy '14** said. "One line that strongly reminds me of John comes from a church hymn, 'They'll know we are Christians by our love.' I could not think of a truer line to describe John's Christian faith, his character, and how he chooses to live his day-to-day life, even in this troubling time."

Through his walk with cancer, John has learned to let go of the things that are out of his control, and to cherish what is. He's learned that mountains and molehills are summited by the same method of taking another step forward, that fear is the opposite of living, and that true friends are just as willing to share a tear as they are a laugh. As he returns to school, John hopes to regain his role as a college student rather than a cancer patient.

"I'm going to school, dating the same girl, hanging out with the same people, involved with the same ministry, and pursuing the same dreams," he said. "Nothing has really changed, but at the same time, everything has. All of a sudden, everything I did became tinted with terminality. My work, my relationships, and my dreams now have deadlines, so I'm motivated to get done what needs to be done. Cancer has not taken away my identity; it has only spurred me to be more *me* than before. God has used this agent of death to bring about renewed life in me."

John's parents, Carol and **Jack Stoffer, Simpson '76**, have discovered an extended family within ATΩ. They have felt the support of brothers and parents circling around the family offering their help. "The ATΩ creed begins, '*To bind men together in a brotherhood based upon eternal and immutable principles, with a bond as strong as right itself and as lasting as humanity,*' and we're seeing that come through in spades with the support and bond that John has with his brothers and the love they have for him," Jack said.



*John Stoffer '14 with his oncologist, Dr. Infante.*

In September, John celebrated his 22nd birthday. Each birthday, the Stoffer family picks a word-of-the-year to express what they see in the family member. This year, John's word was a true warrior. A Christ-like warrior. Throughout his diagnosis, John has always wanted to be himself—not John with cancer, just John. Carol remembers him saying to her that nobody knows how long cancer has been inside of him and he's still the same person he was before his diagnosis; he's still John, her son. "John is so strong. He has such a calm resolve about him; it's beyond understanding," she said.

Early on in his diagnosis, John was asked to stop studying for the MCAT because it put too much stress on his body. However, that didn't stop him from learning about the medical field. He served as a student of his own illness, reading all he could about his cancer. He was able to read his charts, communicate with the doctors, and use his time as a learning experience on what it means to be a patient. John still hopes to be a doctor and plans to take the MCAT in the spring. "My goal in life is to impact the world to the greatest extent by meeting its most imminent medical needs both at home and abroad," he said.

Beta Delta brothers have shown their support outside of visiting John in Nashville. The philanthropy committee wants to hold a fundraiser to support the Stoffer family financially. John was given a coveted parking spot close to the chapter house, fraternity brothers encouraged their entire churches to pray for John, and a melanoma-awareness movement was started on campus through wristband sales. If you would like a 'Stand with John' bracelet, contact Beta Delta's housemother, Sue Downy. Fundraising support is also available online at [www.gofundme.com/johnatalabama](http://www.gofundme.com/johnatalabama), or by searching "John Stoffer Medical Fund" on gofundme.com.

## 2016-17 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

### *Board of Trustees Introduce New Scholarship*

#### THE ALPHA TAU OMEGA FOUNDATION

“Alpha Tau Omega holds before the young men of the country an ideal and something greater than a mere intellectual ideal. Alpha Tau Omega stands for heart as well as head. It has given men a true ideal of life.” – **Otis Allan Glazebrook, Virginia Military Institute 1865**

Founded in 1935 with a \$5,000 gift from **Erskine Mayo Ross, Virginia Military Institute 1865**, one of the founders of the Alpha Tau Omega, the Alpha Tau Omega Foundation 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization was formed. Alpha Tau Omega has been entrusted with an important and influential role in the lives of its young men. It honors this trust by providing educational programs and scholarships of the highest standards. To maintain this standard, the Foundation depends on the regular financial support of its alumni, parents, friends, and income from the Foundation’s endowment.

#### BETA DELTA ANNOUNCES 2016-17 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The Beta Delta Chapter of Alpha Tau Omega is committed to providing undergraduate men with a meaningful brotherhood experience. With your continued support, the scholarships offered by Beta Delta will continue to increase. Beta Delta currently maintains three designated scholarship funds in the ATΩ Foundation and a fourth scholarship funded by the Board of Trustees. Scholarship award winners this past spring were:

Amos D. Burns Memorial scholarship – **Wyatt Robinson '16**  
Michael Wray Moak Memorial scholarship – **Tyler Green '16**  
Carl W. Albright Jr. Memorial scholarship – **Logan Skinner '16**  
The Board of Trustees scholarship – **Blake Baker '16**

#### BETA DELTA CREATES NEW SCHOLARSHIP

An additional scholarship has been designated by the chapter and the Board of Trustees. The scholarship will be awarded on a need-basis to any incoming pledge of diverse ethnicity who, but for the scholarship, would be unable to join Beta Delta.



*Alumni at the 1960s reunion.*



## Jeremiah Johnson '15 Interns with ESPN

**Jeremiah Johnson '15** took his considerable talents to Bristol, Conn., to spend the summer as an intern for ESPN. He spent his time as an intern in the digital media department, helping to produce content for the ESPN website. Some of his duties included editing highlight videos and building topic bars and graphics for the website. Earlier in his internship, he created a library of picture roll (edited pictures with graphics and effects) by player position for the Fantasy Focus Football podcast. He also learned how to produce various types of segments for the website. On top of all that, Jeremiah says, “I have operated the teleprompter for some of the talent, too! This summer has been such an amazing experience!”

According to Jeremiah, “The culture at ESPN is something that will always stand out to me. It is free-flowing, and you are encouraged to explore all of your interests. I have gotten to shadow great people from the radio department, on SportsCenter, and others. They have also allowed me to get on-camera experience, which is very exciting as well. It has truly been such a blessing to meet so many wonderful people and gain invaluable experience here at ESPN!” Jeremiah is a senior majoring in sports journalism. He is from Huntsville, Alabama.

## 1960s Reunion Draws Large Crowd to Chapter House

**M**ore than 40 brothers attended a reunion for the Beta Delta classes of 1950-69 at the chapter house on Saturday, May 14. The reunion was instigated by “The Three Lighthouses” and featured music played by famous disc jockey Porta Potty. Everyone has a good time, with many exhibitions of the Twist and PC Bop attempted. Fortunately, there were no broken bones! Because of the age of most of the attendees, the party broke up about 7 p.m. so the Montgomery brothers could get home to bed before 10 p.m.! Some of the brothers who stayed a while longer are shown to the left. Identities are intentionally withheld!



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*Read about John Stoffer '14 and his incredible journey on page 2.*

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*The 2015 pledge class continued the Beta Delta tradition, "Apple Pie with Mrs. Dot Burns," at her home in Tuscaloosa. Each year, the new pledge class meets with Mrs. Dot to introduce themselves and hear what they can do to be the best ATQs possible.*

*Attention: This newsletter is intended for Alpha Tau Omega alumni and parents. If your son is still attending The University of Alabama, he will receive a copy at the chapter house. If he is no longer in school, please send us his permanent address to update our records. Thank you.*

## Another Good Year at Beta Delta Board of Trustees Report

The Beta Delta Chapter of Alpha Tau Omega continues to be the premier fraternity at the University of Alabama, being recognized as the top fraternity on campus by the Order of Omega for 2015. Additionally, the chapter had an overall grade point average of 3.46 for the spring semester, which ranked second among all fraternities at the university and fifth among all ATQ chapters nationwide!

At Honors Day, **Rob Grady '14** and **John Booth '14** were tapped for Jasons Men's Honorary and **Luke Yordy '14**, **Grant Smith '14**, and John Booth '14 were tapped into ODK. **John Stoffer '14** was one of only 24 students selected for the prestigious Anderson Society. Blue Key tapped **Hill Robinson '14** as well as John Stoffer '14, John Booth '14, and Luke Yordy '14. **Matthew Tetford '16** was selected as the Freshman of the Year for the entire university! **North Patterson '16**, **Jake Varra '16** and Rob Grady '14 were selected as Capstone Men and Women.

The chapter was recognized as a True Merit Chapter by National at Congress for the ninth straight year. **Conner Hereford '13**, our Worthy Master last year, was recognized as Honorable mention for the Thomas Arkle Clark Award. **Marlan Golden '09** was awarded a Thomas Arkle Clark Scholarship to assist him in his studies this fall at Harvard Law School. **Peter Inge '12** received the Undergraduate Award of Distinction from the North-American Interfraternity Conference for 2016.

With 55 new pledges, this year's pledge class represents one of the largest in Beta Delta history, with more than 75% from the state of Alabama. Total membership this year is approximately 175 men. Congratulations are due to the five neophytes who made their grades in the spring and will be initiated this fall. The chapter and the Board agree that the maximum chapter pledge class and total membership size has been attained.

One final note. On its own initiative over the last three years, and without any fanfare or publicity, the chapter has recruited several extraordinarily talented and bright African American young men, including **Jeremiah Johnson '15**, who is featured on page 3 for his internship with ESPN. Our Chapter has accomplished many things and received several accolades since **Amos Burns '49** and several other loyal brothers recolonized Beta Delta in the late 1990s, but the way in which our chapter has gone about achieving and accepting a diverse membership is absolutely incredible!

Fraternally,  
**Walter H. Monroe '63**  
Chairman, Board of Trustees  
whmonroe3@aol.com



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