

ATO honored by national board

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After four years of working to be the best, the 2007 pledge class of the Beta Delta chapter of Alpha Tau Omega achieved their goal of being named Top Chapter by the National Alpha Tau Omega Board.

ATO received the recognition in August at the ATO National Convention in Orlando, Fla.

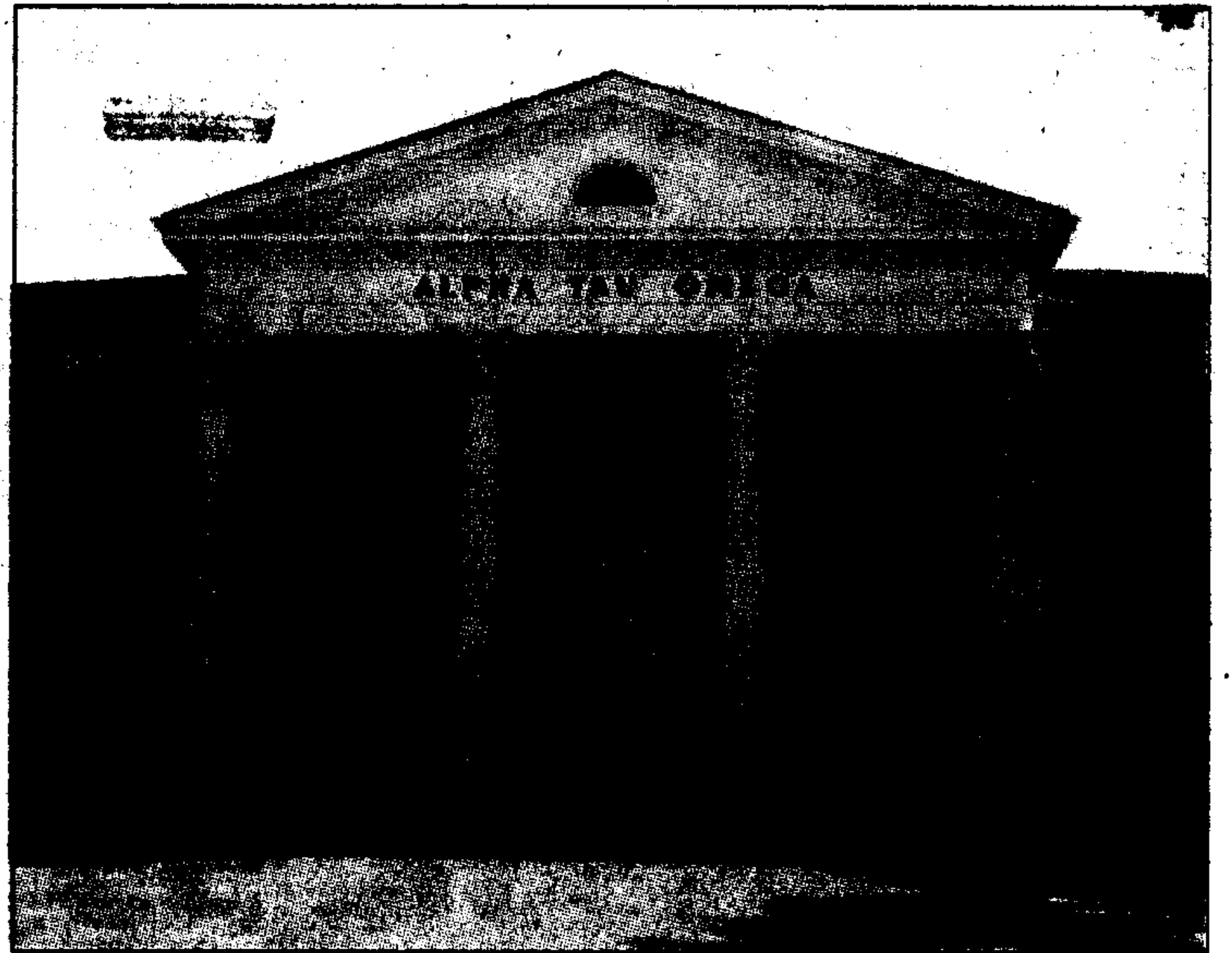
"The Top Chapter award is the highest honor a chapter of ATO can receive," said Sandra Ross of ATO's National Headquarters. "We're thrilled the Beta Delta Chapter at the University of Alabama was the recipient this year. They have done an excellent job

representing the ideals and values of the fraternity and showing responsibility in the Tuscaloosa community."

According to Wynn Smiley, chief executive officer of ATO, a chapter must exemplify outstanding qualities in academics and university and community relations to be chosen for the Top Chapter award.

"In order to be considered for Top Chapter of the year, the chapter must first be recognized as a true merit chapter and then recommended by a group of judges," Smiley said. "It can be a quite long process as the chapter must file a report relating their academic, philanthropic and community achievements, along

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CW File Photo

The UA Beta Delta chapter of ATO was named top chapter by the National Alpha Tau Omega Board.

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with their work to recruit new members and maintain contact with alumni."

Beta Delta was one of 27 merit chapters named by the National ATO Board this year and was chosen in the final selection round from eight chapters, according to Smiley.

"Alabama's chapter of ATO just does everything right," Smiley said. "They're a great chapter; we couldn't be more proud of them."

ATO President Jameson Hughston and Ross Mullins, both members of Beta Delta's 2007 pledge class, said they have been working toward this honor since they were freshmen at the Capstone.

"We're extremely excited to

have been chosen as the top chapter out of over 130 chapters nationwide. It's such an honor and I'm very proud of our work over these past four years," Hughston said.

"I think it's a great honor. My pledge class members and I made receiving this award a goal our freshman year. We set some pretty high standards for ourselves and have really worked to hold those standards," Mullins said. "In my four years I've had the pleasure of meeting brothers from other chapters around the country. It's really something to be here at Alabama and see this happen for our chapter," Mullins said.

Hughston said there are several things that make Beta Delta stand out from the other ATO chapters.

"Last year, we worked really

hard to make improvements in our annual golf tournament that benefits the RISE school," he said. "We also had a lot of members get into honor societies and receive a lot of awards at the SGA Banquet last spring."

Mullins agreed.

"I think what really helped us in achieving our goal was not becoming complacent," he said. "When you're at the top, it's easy to stop working toward constant improvement. We've been sure to teach the younger guys about hard work and determination, and I think that has really made a difference."

Hughston said the Beta Delta chapter is not stopping with this award.

"This year we are going to build on our success and keep improving. We're not going to settle."