



For Alumni and Friends of the  
Kansas Gamma Chapter

Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity  
University of Kansas

[www.kusigep.com](http://www.kusigep.com)

No. 215 • Winter 2011



# SigEp Gamma Ramma



## *A First at KU:*

### Exclusive class for KU SigEps—Pre-101

Think back for a moment to your first days as a student at KU. Remember waking up for class, and feeling a little uneasy as you walked up the hill and into a classroom full of complete strangers. As a new college student, away from home for the first time, taking college courses... that can be pretty scary! But, when freshmen KU SigEp students enrolled in Pre-101 walk into class, they enter a classroom full of fellow KU SigEps, and a class curriculum designed exclusively for KU SigEp! This is the first time in KU's history that the university has offered an accredited 2-hour course exclusively for an individual fraternity!

Pre-101 is an introductory course that teaches new members how to get adjusted to college life, and it teaches organization skills, leadership skills, and more. In addition, the course focuses on resumé writing, cover letters, public speaking, presentation and interview skills, philosophy, and more. The course was offered for the very first time in the Fall Semester 2010. KU SigEp's Pre-101 was taught by KU faculty member **Russ Waltz**. Russ is a PhD candidate, and he also serves as KU SigEp's Faculty Fellow. "Our first session of Pre-101 was very successful and will continue with KU's support," said Russ Waltz. "The best part about SigEps' Residential Learning Community and the Pre-101 class is that I get to learn and earn KU credit while helping SigEp undergraduates. No other fraternity is offering this type of programming and experience to

their members, and it makes me proud to be a SigEp," said Miles Gill, a KU SigEp new member. Pre-101 is a part of the RLC program and offers members a variety of different resources to help them succeed. Kansas Gamma Chapter is an accredited Residential Learning Center (RLC) from Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity headquarters. For more information about the RLC and how KU SigEp is leading the way on campus, visit [kusigep.com](http://kusigep.com).

See more Pre-101  
photos online at  
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# PR



# JECT OF THE YEAR

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## W I N N E R

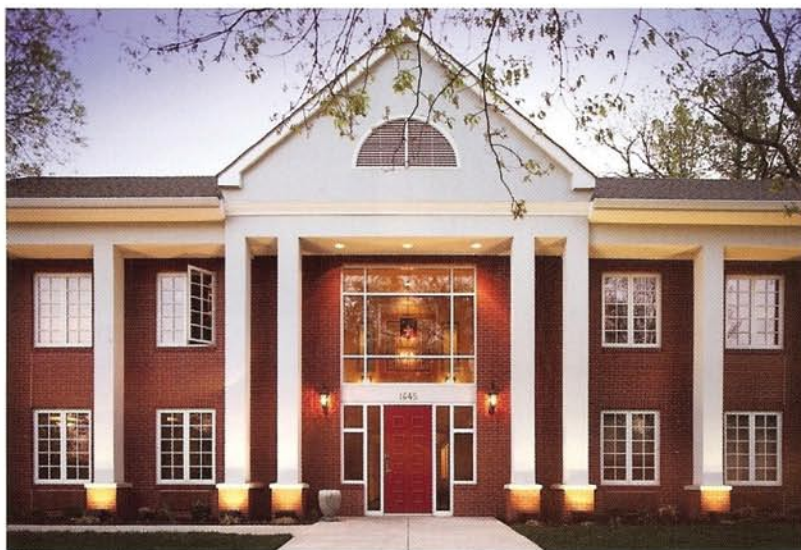
### GENERAL CONTRACTOR (\$1 TO \$5 MILLION)

**B**eginning with an addition in 1983, Rau Construction Company has enjoyed a longstanding professional relationship with Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity House at 1645 Tennessee in Lawrence. They also share a special connection to the chapter in that several of their principals and project managers are "Sig Ep" alumni including the two who worked directly on this major expansion project.

MEP systems were bid out on a performance basis to allow for selection of design/build subcontractors, structural systems were evaluated, and design meetings were held with the City, Historical Society, and neighbors to quickly get the project into the final design and contract drawing stages so construction could commence in the summer of 2008. The project was completed on time and under budget in March 2009.

The newly-renovated house now has an entirely new front facade with brick veneer and EIFS designed to preserve the historic nature of the older surrounding neighborhood. There are 7,000 more square feet to sleep, study and relax, with larger two-person bedrooms, a new technology center with 16 computers, a larger chapter room, a faculty office, and a media room. The entry and living room have a gas fireplace in a formal setting. A new upper patio space overlooks the outdoor courtyard below.

Preserving the history of the Sigma Phi Epsilon House during the expansion presented a



— Emmalee Schaumburg, Schaumburg Photography

### Rau Construction Company Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity Lawrence, Kansas

special challenge. Several unique items were painstakingly disassembled, relocated, stored, and carefully reassembled. Rau took special care in handling a delicate 10-foot square stained glass window with the Sigma Phi Epsilon crest overlooking the historic Lawrence neighborhood at 17th and Tennessee.

With only a 25' x 140' patch of open ground between the house and the street, Rau Construction, utilizing years of experience working on zero lot line projects in the downtown Kansas City area, was able to organize a narrow but effective equipment yard. But this wasn't the only tight squeeze on the project. The design team had to find a way to fit two college students and their possessions into each new 12' x 15' resident room. Rau worked closely with the design team and the fraternity

to develop a new piece of millwork to meet all these requirements. The result was a single unit serving as loft bed, wardrobe closet and shelves, and study area with desktop and computer workstation.

To enhance the level of coordination and communication on the Sigma Phi Epsilon project, Rau utilized web-based project management software. This software streamlined Rau's ability to distribute changes to plans, meeting invitations and agenda, meeting notes, and any other notices.

Without batting an eye, Rau says that safety reigns supreme. The project team completed the Sig Ep House with zero lost man hours. Rau continues its

partnership with OSHA and The Builders' Association as a participant in the Build Safe Partnership Program (BSPP). Rau also "emphasized the importance of safety as the members of the fraternity occupied the existing portions of the building during construction," noted John Potter, LEED® AP, Architect, Mantel Teter Architects.

"Adding to a sixty year old building, the project had its challenges. Rau Construction successfully navigated through each of these challenges," wrote Tom Gray, Owner's Representative and Construction Committee Chairman. He added, "Even when Sigma Phi Epsilon's ownership group suggested taking a short cut, Rau Construction insisted on taking the time to do it right! Since completion, we have amazingly had no issues with workmanship. Not a single problem!" ▲

# LeadEp Keynote Speaker: Tom Bené

President, Pepsi-Cola North America

## KU SigEp: lifelong experiences and memories

**Tom Bené, '85**, President of Pepsi-Cola North America and KU SigEp Alumnus, paused for a brief interview after delivering the keynote speech at LeadEp 2011.

### *Why did you choose to pledge SigEp?*

I chose to live in a fraternity because I wanted to be a part of a community atmosphere that would allow me to meet a variety of new people, since I was coming to KU from out of state. I chose SigEp because I found in its membership and approach to fraternity life, the appropriate balance of fun and camaraderie along with a variety of other opportunities to build and develop my leadership skills.

### *What were your first impressions of SigEp?*

My first impressions of SigEp were that I had picked the right environment for me. I immediately felt comfortable with the other pledges in my class and I found most of the active members to be supportive of my personal plans and goals, both academically and in the university community. I also knew that this group of brothers would help me to quickly acclimate to KU and all that it had to offer.

### *What is one of your best memories of SigEp?*

Pledge "Walk-out" (which may be a thing of the past) was a real fond memory for me during my freshman year. It was a great bonding experience for us as a pledge class and for me personally. My unique story has to do with the fact that I couldn't go with the rest of the class the first day as I had a commitment with KU athletics, but the class had coordinated an elaborate plan to ensure I could still be a part of the weekend experience. The effort not only caught the active community off guard, which allowed us to successfully "walk-out", but it also showed me personally, just how important the concept of "Team Together, Team



Tom Bené

Apart" was to the fraternity and to my pledge class.

### *How did SigEp help you achieve success in your career?*

So many of the experiences I had during my four years at both the University of Kansas and in the SigEp fraternity have helped to shape the person I am today. There were numerous experiences that I had in the fraternity that reinforced the importance of teamwork, building relationships, accepting responsibility and demonstrating accountability, (not only for myself, but for the good of the team) along with the benefits of creating a collaborative environment, where all can learn and grow.

### *Was there any upper classmen you 'looked up' to?*

There were many upper classmen that I feel like I learned a lot from. In some cases, I saw brothers handle difficult situations and I was in awe of their ability to lead through challenging times and situations. There were others who chose to handle things differently than I may have, but those were learning opportunities for me as well. We had a few larger than life members during my time at SigEp, including **Craig Templeton, Stuart Lowry, Brant Tidwell, Keith Sanders, Steve Graves, John Finocchiaro** to name just a few that I learned a lot about leadership from.

### *Have any traditions evolved with your pledge brothers since your days at SigEp?*

I have been incredibly blessed to have a great group of friends from the SigEp house. While not all in our annual Lake of the Ozarks weekend group are from my pledge class, all are brothers from KU SigEp. Each year, a group of 10 to 15 of us gathers at the Lake of the Ozarks to trade stories, reminisce about the days at KU and SigEp and celebrate the lives that we all enjoy today. This has become one of my most treasured weekends of the year as reinforced by the fact that I have attended for 27 years in a row.

### *What would you tell a new member today who just joined SigEp?*

Take the opportunity to experience all that the fraternity has to offer. Fully explore what SigEp represents, by being an active participant in the house and by taking full advantage of those opportunities to get to know the variety of people and personalities that make up the membership. Challenge yourself to learn, grow and develop as an individual through the numerous activities and opportunities that are available to you through the fraternity.

### *Tell us about your responsibility in your current position at Pepsi?*

I am currently the President of Purchase, New York-based PepsiCo's Foodservice Division. In this role I have responsibility for leading PepsiCo's business across all foodservice channels, including sales, operations, customer marketing and channel development across both the United States and Canada. PepsiCo's Foodservice business is comprised of PepsiCo's Food and Beverage portfolio of brands, including Frito-Lay, Quaker Oats, Pepsi-Cola, Gatorade and Tropicana.

### *What are KU's chances of winning the NCAA Championship this year?*

I like KU's chances of getting to the NCAA Final Four and being a contender for the NCAA Championship! Overall, they look solid and Coach Self has them working well together as a team. Go Jayhawks!!



## LeadEP:<sup>TM</sup> A life-changing experience

LeadEP<sup>TM</sup> 2011 was held on Sunday, Feb 13 at the Kansas Union. LeadEP, a one day Leadership and Development workshop, is designed exclusively for members of KU SigEp. The workshop is hosted by alumni volunteers. It focuses on leadership, community service, academic success, and preparation for the job search and professional career.

**Tom Bené**, President of Pepsi-Cola North America, served as LeadEP's Keynote Speaker. Bené, a KU SigEp Alumnus, provided detailed career advice while emphasizing how important the SigEp experience was in preparing him for his successful career with PepsiCo.

As a part of LeadEP, an extensive Resumé & Interviewing Skills Seminar, hosted by professional recruiters, was available for Juniors and Seniors. SigEp Junior **Nick Alexander** commented that "it was great to hear what a professional recruiter thinks are the best resume formats, and to hear the great tips on how to best prepare for a job interview."

All members participated in four different 15-minute mock job interviews, staged by alumni volunteers. Each interview was followed by a debriefing that provided members interviewing feedback and advice.

LeadEP also featured a Campus Involvement Fair that featured twenty-six campus organizations in a trade show format, allowing members to visit with each organization to determine the various involvement opportunities. The Campus Involvement Fair was followed by the LeadEP Career Fair, featuring companies like Apex Products, Burns & McDonnell, Cardinal Health, Cerner, Hallmark, HNTB, KU Lied Center, PepsiCo, Perceptive Software, Sporting Kansas City, Sprint, and State Street. The LeadEP Career Fair allowed SigEp members the opportunity to meet directly with some of the top area employers.

**Michael Dalbom**, Co-Advisor for LeadEP said "LeadEP is a one-of-a-kind unique program for SigEp members, bringing alumni volunteers, student organizations, and real world businesses directly to our members to learn from." Co-Advisor **Dave Friederichs** described LeadEP as a "life-changing experience for our members."

SIGMA PHI EPSILON FRATERNITY  
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS



campus

chapter

community

career



*"I'm very impressed  
with the programming  
I'm seeing at KU SigEp"*

~Tom Bené, President, Pepsi-Cola North America





1: KU SigEp juniors, Nick Alexander and Cole Helbert speak with members of the KU Student Alumni Association club about how to get involved with their organization.

2: Chapter Counselor Mark Allen conducts a leadership seminar for freshmen and sophomores at LeadEp.

3: KU SigEp alumnus conducts mock interviews with SigEp undergraduates to help them prepare for the job interview process towards graduation.

4: Amy Long, KU Asst Director for Student Involvement and Leadership Center speaks to KU SigEp's about involvement and leadership on campus.

5: Brian File (foreground) listens to Tom Bené deliver the keynote speech.

6: Charlie Farha, Bryan Thomas and Jim Gray, alumni from the 80s, reunite at LeadEp during a break between mock interview sessions.

7: Michael Dalbom, LeadEp Co-Advisor, Tom Bené, President of Pepsi-Cola North America, Dave Friederichs, LeadEp Co-Advisor and Russ Waltz, Faculty Fellow at KU SigEp pause for a picture at LeadEp 2011.

8: In the Kansas Union Ballroom, KU SigEp alumnus Tom Bené delivers the keynote speech to the SigEp undergraduate chapter. Tom talked about the importance holding leadership positions in the chapter and on campus as well as having a strong academic record to help you succeed in your career after you leave KU.





# SigEp

## Alumni Golf Tournament Benefitting The Ali Kemp T.A.K.E. Defense Training Foundation

The KU SigEp Alumni Golf tournament was held this past fall at Falcon Ridge Golf Course in Lenexa, Ks. Over 60 alumni and guests participated in the event which benefitted The Ali Kemp T.A.K.E. Defense Training Foundation (KU SigEp's official philanthropy). **Roger Kemp**, father of Ali Kemp is a SigEp alumnus and proud supporter of SigEp and all that it has to offer. Proceeds from the golf tournament supported T.A.K.E. Foundation as well as the KU SigEp Scholarship program.







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photos online at  
**[kusigep.com](http://kusigep.com)**



## KU SIGEP ESTABLISHES NEW MENTORING PROGRAM

# CareerEp—Professional Networking and Leadership



KU SigEp alumni from Lawrence and Kansas City attended the 1st Annual 'CareerEp' Networking and Leadership Dinner. Alumni paired up with undergraduates who were interested in entering and learning more about different professions and career paths. Professionals in sales, marketing, legal, health-care, finance, real estate, banking, broadcast journalism and construction had dinner with SigEp undergraduates and answered questions about their chosen profession. CareerEp is a NEW SigEp program which helps pair undergrads with a SigEp alumni mentor in their future career field.



Top left: Jason Purinton, '97, speaks with undergraduates about a career in finance. Kyle Turbitt (inset, center) meets alumni from the banking industry. Gordon Reiz, (above, right) speaks with alumni about opportunities in marketing. Left: Chapter and Alumni board in front of SigEp chapter house before CareerEp dinner.

## KU Provost speaks to SigEp about importance of strong academics

Dr. Marisa Roney, KU's Vice Provost for Student Success at KU spoke at the SigEp house during a formal dinner about the importance of having a strong academic performance. "Employers today are looking for well-balanced individuals who not only demonstrate leadership qualities, but also who can show a strong academic record," said Dr. Roney.



## Scholarship Dinner



KU SigEp members proudly displayed scholarship checks received at the fall Scholarship Dinner, one of three scholarship dinners each year recognizing academic excellence. SigEp Scholarships are supported by alumni and parent donations, and by endowed scholarships granted through the KU SigEp Scholarship Fund at KU Endowment.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

# Building Balanced Leaders

By Kevin Tomasu, Chapter President

Sigma Phi Epsilon at the University of Kansas continued to strive for excellence in building balanced men throughout the Fall 2010 semester. With the assistance of our chapter advisers and university staff members, KU SigEp has and will continue to implement programs to provide our members with the opportunity to succeed academically, gain philanthropic experience, compete at the highest level in intramurals, and obtain knowledge on how to prosper in life after college.

First, KU SigEp stresses to all fraternity members the importance of holding academics as the top priority throughout college. With that in mind, we currently provide our members with a number of academic resources and programs.

First, KU SigEp stresses to all fraternity members the importance of holding academics as the top priority throughout college. With that in mind, we currently provide our members with a number of academic resources and programs. **Russell Waltz** and **Kyle Richards**, current SigEp Faculty Fellows and university staff members, provide our members with tutoring, essay writing assistance, and overall academic advising. Furthermore, KU SigEp also currently employs both a mathematics and chemistry tutor who assist our members twice weekly. New members are provided with effective time management strategies from our scholarship committee as well as the university Academic Achievement and Access Center. The cumulative chapter GPA during the spring 2010 semester was 3.09, and KU SigEp hopes to continue improving academically.

As I mentioned earlier, our main focus is building balanced men prepared to enter the greater community. Hence, we strongly encourage strong campus involvement from our members. Involvement on campus is a very important aspect of college life, and many KU SigEp members understand that truth and strive to have an impact on campus. Seven current KU SigEp members hold positions as undergraduate student senators at the University of Kansas. Moreover, two of our members serve as Interfraternity Council (IFC) executive board members at KU. In fact, **Jay Trump** was elected to serve as IFC President in November. Many more of our current members also hold various council and executive board positions in on-campus

organizations such as UNICEF, KU band, Marketing Club, the University Affairs Committee, Entrepreneurship Club, Project Lively, Greek Ambassadors, and more.

Giving back to the greater community through various philanthropic events and service projects has also been one of our main focuses. **Dan Bjornson** currently serves as president for Project Lively, an on-campus organization focused on providing assistance to elderly citizens around Lawrence. All of our members have participated in Project Lively service projects throughout the fall 2010 semester which revolved around performing yard work and odd jobs for Lawrence citizens. Our chapter also partnered with Alpha Gamma Delta sorority in hosting a



KU SigEps cook out on a Friday afternoon.

date auction in October in which members of both organizations were auctioned off to the public for a date. All of the proceeds were donated to diabetic research camps dedicated to finding a cure to diabetes. Additionally, KU SigEp members are actively involved in feeding the homeless at local soup kitchens including Jubilee Café in Lawrence. Our members have also been actively involved in the local school system throughout 2010 by providing assistance in educational programs at New York Elementary, also located in Lawrence. Finally, we will host our annual Ali Kemp T.A.K.E. Defense Class, a self-defense class for all of the women enrolled at KU, this spring.

In addition to holding high value for academics, on-campus involvement, and philanthropy, we also enjoy representing SigEp in competitive intramurals at KU. KU SigEp was fortunate enough to win the outdoor soccer championship last spring. With all of our starting players and key reserves returning, we are poised to make a run at another championship this spring. Moreover, our football placed second in intramural football this past fall, and we should have a good shot at advancing far into the basketball playoffs this winter. Intramurals provides our members an additional way to stay in shape during college while having fun.

## Thank you, SigEp volunteers!

### KANSAS GAMMA ALUMNI & VOLUNTEER CORPORATION

**Brian Tamasi**  
President

**Michael Dalbom**  
Vice President

**Sean Goodale**  
Treasurer

**Steve Burchstead**  
Secretary

**Mark Allen**  
Chapter Counselor

**Russ Waltz, Ph.D.** Candidate  
Faculty Fellow

### AVC Members

**Jeff Alderman**

**Paul Burmaster**

**Dave Frederichs**

**Tom Gray**

**Michael Konen**

**Dale Seufferling**

**Gordon Thorn**



Please send all tax deductible donations to:

**Kansas Gamma Alumni Association**  
P.O. Box 7050  
Overland Park, KS 66207-0050

Your donation goes towards improving SigEp and we will mail you a receipt!

**Help us continue to build balanced leaders at KU SigEp by making a donation today!**





## Backyard Renovation complete...thanks to alumni donors!

KU SigEp's \$100K backyard renovation is complete! A small group of alumni donors provided the financial support to make this project a reality. "The backyard was renovated in 1974, and hadn't been updated since," said Project Coordinator **Tom Gray**. "The backyard was not at all functional, and it looked pretty bad. Since most people enter the SigEp House through the back door, we were definitely not making a good first impression to our guests! This was an improvement that really needed to be made. We thank the alumni donors that stepped forward to make this possible." The new design features planter boxes that also provide seating. Additionally, there is a greatly expanded deck area and an expanded basketball court with sport court. **Gordon Reiz**, Vice President of Programming said: "By having a renovated backyard, with a brand new basketball court, and an attractive area to take guests, I think there is a much greater sense of pride among our members. We all love it and are very appreciative of those that made this happen!" Special thanks to **Dale and Marianne Seufferling** for their support of the extensive landscaping that was included as part of the project.



See more renovation photos  
online at [kusigep.com](http://kusigep.com)





# 

By "Brothers of Nick and Dave"

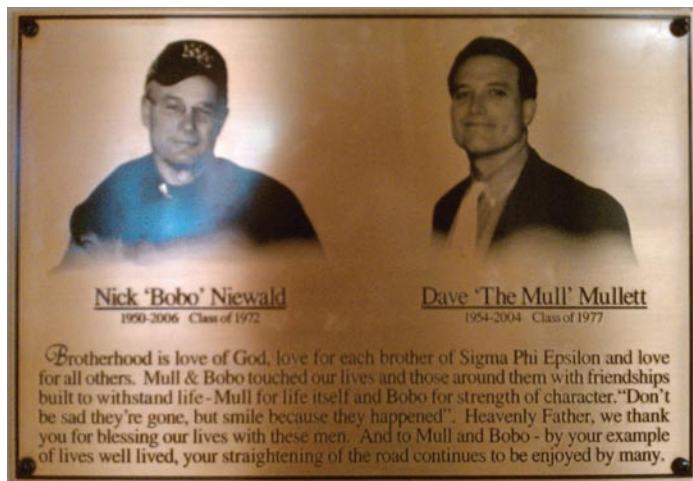
Two legendary brothers that died too soon, Nick Niewald '72 (1950-2006) and Dave Mullett '77 (1954-2004) were honored by their brothers in October 2010 in a ceremony at the Chapter House. A bronze plaque with etched pictures honoring Nick and Dave was presented, and will be displayed permanently at the Chapter house. Current undergraduates enjoyed hearing stories about "Bobo" and "Mull" and were encouraged to take the vows and ideals of brotherhood seriously.

In attendance from the Niewald family were Nick's wife Demaris, son Andrew, and grandson Nick. From the Mullet family were Dave's mother Ann, and brothers John and Fred Mullett. Among the classmates in attendance were: Mike Cavender, Dan Church, Bruce Ecton, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Andy Forbes, Chris Forbes, Dave Gatchell, Tom Gray, Terry Kilroy, Dan Scherrer, and Dave Wood.

The event allowed us to rekindle old friendships and revisit those great experiences shared in the SigEp house. As brothers who have now been away from SigEp for over 35 years, it didn't take long to realize that our SigEp brotherhood has stood the test of time. God bless Nick Niewald and Dave Mullett. And, God bless Sigma Phi Epsilon.



Top: Alumni, family and undergraduates gather to honor Brothers Niewald and Mullett at the plaque dedication in the chapter house. Inset: Chris Forbes speaks at the dedication. Center: Dan Church, Dave Wood, Terry Kilroy share memories from undergraduate days. Left: Demaris, Nick, and Andrew Niewald.



### 

*"Brotherhood is love of God, love for each brother of Sigma Phi Epsilon and love for all others. Mull & Bobo touched our lives and those around them with friendships built to withstand life—Mull for life itself and Bobo for strength of character. "Don't be sad they're gone, but smile because they happened." Heavenly Father, we thank you for blessing our lives with these men. And to Mull and Bobo—by your example of lives well lived, your straightening of the road continues to be enjoyed by many."*





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**Kansas Gamma Chapter**

Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity

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## **KU SigEps: VIPs at Kona Grill event!**

Marc Buehler, CEO of Kona Grill and KU SigEp Alumnus, hosted a large group of KU SigEps at Kona Grill's VIP Grand Opening Event at Kansas City's Country Club Plaza. SigEp Junior **Keaton Andra** said, "It was really cool how nice Marc Buehler was to us, and how much time he spent talking to us. He's the CEO of the company, with a lot of people to see, but he made time to talk to at length to each and every one of us. We all thought he was a very impressive, and a very inspiring guy to meet."

## **ATTENTION KANSAS CITY ALUMNI:**

**Purchase PGA Midwest Classic  
Nationwide Golf Tournament  
Tickets Today!**

### **Proceeds benefit KU SigEp!**

KU SigEp has teamed up with The Kansas City Crusaders to sell tickets to the Midwest Golf Classic, a Nationwide Tour Golf tournament held in Kansas City. The Kansas City Crusaders is a nonprofit organization that is hosting the 2011 Midwest Classic. The tournament will be held August 18-21, 2011 at The Nicklaus Golf Club at Lions Gate, in Overland Park, Kansas. Each ticket will cost \$25 and includes a single admission weekend grounds pass. 100% of the ticket revenue going to KU SigEp's Scholarship Fund. This is a great opportunity to attend the Nationwide Golf Tournament and support KU SigEp! Purchase your tickets today!

**For ticket information,  
visit: [www.kusigep.com](http://www.kusigep.com)**

(click on Nationwide Golf Tournament)

**For more information about the PGA  
Midwest Classic Nationwide Golf Tour,  
visit: [www.pgatour.com/h/schedule](http://www.pgatour.com/h/schedule)**