

TEXAS FIJI

The Longhorn Fiji – The University of Texas at Austin
Established 1883

Fall 2024

FOSTERING LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Update from the BCA

Texas Fiji is proud to introduce its newest pledge class, which contains a diverse group of representatives from 12 cities of various sizes. This blend of backgrounds is bringing fresh perspectives and energy to our brotherhood, and as always, it's exciting to welcome new brothers who embody the values of fellowship, service, and leadership that define Fiji.

Looking ahead, one of our key focuses is maintaining a balance between accountability and enjoyment. We want our returning and new members to fully embrace their college experience and have fun while growing into men of integrity and responsibility. We are committed to creating an environment where personal growth and camaraderie thrive together.

Beyond campus, we are also exploring ways to strengthen the bonds between alumni and the Chapter and among alumni themselves. Expanding our network is a top priority, and through mentorship, career opportunities, and social events, we aim to ensure that Fijis—whether recent graduates or long-time alumni—stay connected. Being a Texas Fiji is a lifelong privilege, “not for college days alone.” Strengthening these relationships is key to fostering personal and professional growth, and we look forward to sharing more about our specific strategies to achieve this in the coming months.

Service remains central to our mission. Last year, our new members contributed over 1,000 volunteer hours through partnerships with organizations such as Feed My People at First United Methodist Church, the Central Texas Food Bank, and the Neighborhood Longhorns Program. We take great pride in our dedication to service and are constantly seeking new ways to give back to the community.

Texas Fiji has a proud history of brotherhood, leadership, and service. As we continue to



*Some of our Fijis are Texas Silver Spurs!
Back, from left: Malcom Downie '21,
Will “Memo” Putman '22, William Watson '21,
Bradley Baay '21, Christopher Scott '21,
Rick McBroom '22, Brady Lamme '21, and
Adam Russell '22. Front: Rowels Pete
McConn '22 and Bond Temple '22.*

build on our 140-year legacy, we are excited about what the future holds. The bonds of brotherhood, commitment to growth, and dedication to serving our community have never been stronger.

Thank you for your continued support! Alumni involvement ensures that Texas Fiji remains a force for good—on campus, in our communities, and in the lives of our members.

GTBO,
The Rev. John Newton '00
Head of the BCA
jwnewt@gmail.com

SERVING THOSE IN NEED

Tom Rachal '79 on Working with Special Needs Families

Becoming a Fiji taught **Tom Rachal '79** the importance of trusted friends who would do anything to help you. Tom's hometown friends, **Kevin Snodgrass '78**, **Mark Hayes '78**, and **John Keith '75**, encouraged him to go through Rush, and from the moment he found Texas Fiji, he knew it was the right choice. “To this day, our pledge class is made up of great guys who truly care about the well-being of each brother and their families.”



Tom has been fortunate over the years to have a successful career. “However, my true blessings in life are my loving wife, Denise, and my son, Sam,” he said. “Sam has special needs, and his love for life and music has truly inspired many lives.”

Tom's family and Fraternity brothers consistently reaffirm his faith and his belief in the power of prayer. “Sam lives life to the fullest and instantly makes friends when he meets you. He sees life in a simpler way—a trait I wish I could adopt. No one can understand the brain of a child on the autism spectrum; all I know is that Sam has a caring and loving soul.”

Where Special Children Shine

To support kids like Sam (and their families), Tom has been the board chairman for Rays of Light, a Dallas-based nonprofit, since 2009. Rays of Light provides free respite care for families with special needs children, entertaining the kids and their siblings while the parents enjoy an evening to themselves. On Friday nights, the kids enjoy four hours of care featuring movies, a gym and computer room, puppet shows,

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Alumni News

Check out what some of our Texas Fiji alumni have been up to!

Judd Miller Jr. '51 and Patricia live on their ranch near Cuero, Texas. Judd raises Brangus cattle and has axis and white tail deer. "Life is good!" Email: judd@nodial.net

Daniel G. Davis '66 is still trying criminal cases in Beverly Hills, Texas. His children, Parker and Natalie, live in Tampa and Palm Beach, respectively. Daniel and wife Jill are shopping for a second home in Florida, and "like everyone else, I've lost a real 25 pounds and obeyed Jill for 35 years." Email: danielgdavislaw@gmail.com

David F. Motheral Jr. '69 is working with city leaders on future development plans for the near south side and medical district of downtown Ft. Worth. He's also working on long-term planning of Ft. Worth housing growth and transportation plans for massing growth of the metroplex. Email: david.motheral@motheraldev.com

Bruce R. Hotze Sr. '71 is happy in Houston, Texas, on the St. Dominic Village Board of Directors. He has six married children and 19 grandchildren. Email: bhotzemind@aol.com



The 1974 pledge class celebrates their 50th reunion at Buen Retiro.



Chapter Advisor John Newton '00 and President Brady Lamme '21 accept Sorority and Fraternity Life awards from the Dean of Students Office.



Theodore "Ted" Hager '53 celebrates his 90th birthday with a Fiji cake.

SERVING THOSE IN NEED

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face painting, and the company of specially trained service dogs. They even host monthly birthday parties, ensuring every child gets a special celebration.

"Approximately 75 percent of our families are financially disadvantaged and cannot afford childcare—especially for a child with special needs," Tom explained. "In addition, many of our kids are raised by a single parent." The organization has two Dallas locations: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church and White Rock United Methodist Church. On any given Friday night, they can have up to 40 to 50 kids at either location. Rays of Light, since their beginning, has been committed to never charging their special families for respite care.

Tom attributes the nonprofit's success to the best staff and volunteers in the world. "I'm always amazed seeing kids coming through the door, watching their faces light up with excitement and pure joy," he said. "Special kids often do not get the attention they deserve; at Rays of Light, each child has one or two volunteers! The children are the center of attention, and they feel loved."

Lives of Service

In recent years, Tom's pledge class has started holding reunions, and he gets to see many brothers during football season as well. "Each time I see them, we quickly return to all the fun college memories. It blows my mind how much we still remember after all these years!" Tom is thankful not only for his brothers' friendship and company, but also for the support they have shown Rays of Life. Many donate to the organization and also attend its annual gala.



Tom's son, Sam (center), at Rays of Light's annual gala with volunteers from St. Mark's School of Texas.

"It is always better to give than to receive. Don't make your business career your greatest achievement in life," Tom said. "Find a cause and put your heart and soul into helping those who cannot help themselves."

Rays of Light's next gala will be at Gilley's in downtown Dallas on April 25, 2025. For more information, Tom encourages brothers to visit RaysofLightDallas.org. You can also connect with Tom at tom.rachal@bulwark.com.



MAKING YOU PROUD

Undergraduates Share Recent Successes



Texas Fiji says hello from the Texas Cowboys! Back, from left: Rhodes Crow '22, Keller Horlock '21, Robert Sweet '21 Camden Roy '21, and Alex Gottsegen '22. Front: Rhett Anderson '23, Ryan Spier '22, and Charlie Stephens '22.

When I joined Fiji in spring 2022, it wasn't the Fraternity's accolades or esteemed reputation that drew me in. Rather, it was the deep sense of brotherhood that truly resonated with me. I looked beyond the external achievements and prestige and instead focused on the genuine connections among members. It was clear to me that within the walls of Buen Retiro, I would find not only lifelong friends but also a true home away from home.

This year, we've continued to make significant strides in philanthropy. So far, we've raised an impressive \$17,000 for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, specifically TumorGlow, and we're on track to meet our goal of \$35,000 by year's end. Furthermore, we raised over \$15,000 for our annual Jake Ehlinger fundraiser (to honor the late **Jake Ehlinger '19**). We appreciate the support from the Ehlingers and everyone who made this event happen!

We've also committed over 250 hours thus far to organizations like the Neighborhood Longhorn Program, Central Foodbank, and UT Greek Day of Service. This level of support speaks volumes about the commitment of our brothers to giving back and making a difference in our community.

Academically, we've set the bar high. As a group, we've maintained a GPA of 3.49, demonstrating the strong dedication to excellence within our Chapter. Balancing academic rigor with the demands of campus



Carter Hooten '21 competes in the Collegiate Water Ski National Championships, where he finished third overall. He also serves as president of the team.

involvement is no easy task, but it's something Fiji has consistently excelled at.

One of the highlights of this year was recognizing the outstanding achievements of several brothers through our scholarship program. The Scott Austin Turner Scholarship was awarded to **Reid Turlington '22** and **Ryan Spier '22** for their dedication and hard work, both inside and outside of the classroom. Additionally, **Rick McBroom '22** was honored with the Jake Ellingher Memorial Scholarship, a tribute to his leadership and character.

Beyond academics and philanthropy, our brothers continue to be deeply involved across campus, contributing to a wide range of events and organizations. **John '22** and **Jude Trahan '22** represent the IFC as executive board members. **Sellers Squire '23** brings together the UT fly fishing community as the president of the organization.

As we look ahead, I am confident that the dedication and camaraderie within our brotherhood will continue to drive our success and leave a lasting impact on both the university and the broader community.

GTBO,
George Eubank '22
Chapter President
georgemeubank@gmail.com
(832) 808-1841



Welcome, New Members

Austin Ault | San Marcos, Texas
Chap Bandy | Houston, Texas
Robert Bridges | Austin, Texas
Rob Britton | Houston, Texas
Casey Broussard | Beaumont, Texas
Park Burroughs | Houston, Texas
Cooper Casola | Dallas, Texas
Harris Cockrell | Houston, Texas
Victor Condrey | Fort Worth, Texas
Clark Cozby | Dallas, Texas
Jackson Crosswell | Houston, Texas
Teeg Crumley | Fort Worth, Texas
Cooper Cutler | Dallas, Texas
Price Daniel | Austin, Texas
Wilder Davenport | Austin, Texas
Harry Deane | Austin, Texas
Andrew Edwards | Fort Worth, Texas
Sam Emery | Dallas, Texas
Owen Flemming | Houston, Texas
Tanner Fortney | Houston, Texas
Gray Gammil | Houston, Texas
Will Gibbens | New Orleans, La.
Morgan Goldman | Fort Worth, Texas
Witt Greer | Austin, Texas
Hudson Groth | Dallas, Texas
Jack Hempling | Austin, Texas
Boyd Holcomb | Houston, Texas
Cambell Jackson | Dallas, Texas
Jeffrey Jacobe | Houston, Texas
Walker Jeffers | Austin, Texas
Gates Jenkins | Beaumont, Texas
Thomson Knight | Houston, Texas
Fred Labatt | San Antonio, Texas
Elliott Lancaster | Connecticut
Thomas Langston | Longview, Texas
Jake Lardie | Austin, Texas
Will Lenhart | Longview, Texas
Read Liuzzi | Houston, Texas
Heid Manning | New Orleans, La.
Mercer McDougal | Dallas, Texas
Brady McGee | Houston, Texas
Matthew McGreevy | Houston, Texas
Ford Montgomery | Houston, Texas
Bennett Moss | Dallas, Texas
Spencer Moss | Dallas, Texas
Bradley O'Donnell | Houston, Texas
Oliver Oldham | Houston, Texas
Grant Petersen | Houston, Texas
Henry Richter | Dallas, Texas
Charlie Rives | Austin, Texas
Cullen Runnells | San Antonio, Texas
Harris Sands | Dallas, Texas
Shep Simons | Houston, Texas
Luke Smith | Amarillo, Texas
Reagan Street | Austin, Texas
Max Swartzendruber | Dallas, Texas
Bruce Taylor | Memphis, Tenn.
Cullen Walton | Houston, Texas
George Watler | Fort Worth, Texas
Chase Wills | Dallas, Texas

Congratulations, Pig Dinner Winners!



Jake Ehlinger Memorial Scholarship Award
Rick McBroom '22

Scott Austin Turner Memorial Scholarship
Ryan Spier '22
Reid Turlington '22

The Samuel Beatty Wilson Leadership Award
Brady Lamme '21

Richard Spencer Lewis Philanthropy Award
Harrison Witcher '22

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Give Online Today

Texas Fiji thrives thanks to the generous donations of alumni like you. A gift to the recruitment fund today ensures that our Chapter continues to grow and succeed on campus for years to come.

Scan the QR code to visit our giving hub at texasfiji.causevox.com today. Thank you!



We Asked New Members

Why Texas Fiji?

"Academics were important to me, so meeting collegians who focused on school made the Chapter the clear choice for me. It was obvious the values of the Fraternity aligned with my own." –**Robert Britton '24**

"After going through recruitment, I realized that Texas Fiji's emphasis on academics and development of leadership skills was exactly what I was looking for in a Fraternity. After I met a few members and saw how genuine, down to earth, and hard working they are, I knew I had found the place for me." –**Teeg Crumley '24**

HELP TEXAS FIJI GROW!

Submit a Recruitment Referral

If you know a current or incoming student who could be a good fit for our brotherhood, recommend them today! Send their name, hometown, high school, and contact information to Head Recruitment Captain **Alex Gottsegen '22** at alex.gottsegen1@gmail.com. Thank you!

Chapter Goals

1

Build a comprehensive Chapter portal to strengthen our network. Contact **Tucker Sachs '22** at (214) 909-9630 with any questions or suggestions.

2

Earn more than 1,200 hours and raise more than \$40,000 for our philanthropic causes.

3

Create leadership opportunities within the Fraternity and encourage members to take on roles within the Chapter and in other organizations.