

TEXAS★FIJI

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

Spring 2022

Fiji Presses On *Much to Be Thankful for in 2022*

On behalf of the Board of Chapter Advisors, I'm pleased to report that the state of our Chapter is strong. As you can imagine, with a (mostly) COVID-free springtime in Austin, spirits are positive, and things are happening!

READY FOR DINNER?

Save the date for the 2022 Texas Fiji Pig Dinner on Saturday, April 30. The Pig Dinner is the longest continually running, Chapter-based Graduate event in the world of fraternities and sororities. It serves to welcome graduate brothers back to their undergraduate Chapters. I will serve as your emcee, and **Dr. Charles Fraser '76** will be the speaker. Charles is an international

rock star doctor, and we couldn't be more excited to hear from him!

IN MEMORY OF JAKE

In our ongoing efforts to develop a culture of community service at Tau Deuteron—and to instill brotherhood with new pledges and the Chapter at large—Texas Fiji will host a campus-wide philanthropy concert this fall, September 9th (the Friday night before the Alabama game!) in memory of beloved Fiji and UT football player **Jake Ehlinger '19**—all proceeds will go to the *Jake Ehlinger Memorial Scholarship Fund*. We will be reaching out to alumni to help underwrite what promises to be a major inspirational event.

PRESERVING OUR HOME

The Purple Owl House Corporation has retained an architect for the upcoming—and much needed—renovation for Buen Retiro. As the house is a Texas Historic Landmark, it is subject to approval by both the Austin Historic Commission and the Texas Historic Commission. We are trying to secure state tax credits to help cover the renovation expenses in addition to launching a fundraising campaign to preserve this treasure for future generations of Fijis.

THANK YOU, BROTHERS

I'm so grateful for the BCA partners who have served Fiji over the past

couple of years, especially: **Mark Winter '79**, **Gene Shepherd '78**, **Bryan Campbell '78**, **DeWitt '76** and **Scott Waltmon '83**, and **Bob Butchofsky '80**. Special thanks go to **Paul Hains '83**, our section chief; **Ben Fortson '16**, our Purple Legionnaire; and **Gary McClure '76** with our house corporation. Please let me know if you'd like to be part of this stellar group!

After all these years ... still glad to be one!

GTBO,
Rev. Stephen Kinney, Ph.D '74
Head of the BCA
swk.kinney@gmail.com



Honoring Chuck Fraser '76

How honored we are to have **Dr. Charles "Chuck" Fraser '76** as our speaker for this year's Pig Dinner on April 30! Raised in Midland, Chuck is a Texas Fiji and a member of UT's varsity tennis team. He currently serves as the medical director and surgeon of the Texas Center for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease at Dell Children's Medical Center.

Dr. Fraser was always a rising star in the medical profession. In 2002, his team developed the first pediatric lung-transplant program, which grew to become the largest in the nation; in 2005, he performed the first successful pediatric heart/lung transplant in the Southwest; by 2011, he was the surgeon-in-chief of Texas Children's Hospital. He has saved countless lives!

In 2018, Dr. Fraser was recruited to the University of Texas to develop an integrated center focused on pediatric and congenital cardiac care. He has published over 300 journal articles, chapters, and textbooks in medical literature and has performed over 18,000 congenital cardiac repair surgeries in children.

This is a Pig Dinner you won't want to miss. Thank you, Chuck!



Making a Difference

Texas Fiji Stays Involved in the Community



Cole Jackson '20 and Gregor Smith '20 volunteer with Hands on Housing.



The pledge class of 2019 stopping for lunch at the end of the Boquillas Canyon during the annual canoe trip at Big Bend National Park.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as the president of Texas Fiji for the 2021-22 academic year. I could not have done this without the amazing help and guidance from my cabinet, **Stephen Kinney '74**, Business Manager Betsy Clements, Purple Legionnaire **Ben Fortson '16**, and the rest of the Chapter. Since last April, it has been an eventful past 12 months, and I am grateful to have had such an amazing team helping me along the way. Our Chapter is very proud to share that we continued our push for community service and involvement on campus, and we have some exciting new projects as well.

Texas Fiji had a successful year with our community service and philanthropy initiatives. We raised over \$23,000 for the B+ Foundation and over \$10,000 for Hurricane Ida relief efforts. Brothers continued volunteering at the Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, and the Feed My People initiative at the United Methodist Church. We also repaired and painted homes for the elderly and disabled clients in the Hands



Texas Fiji is proud to have several brothers involved with IFC this year!

on Housing program by Interfaith Action of Central Texas.

Our members remain active on campus too! **Trey Ashmore '20** serves as the executive vice president of finance for the Interfraternity Council, and **Cade Crawford '19** is VP of IFC relations. In addition, **Braxton Robison '20** is part of UT's Navy ROTC program; Eli Bahkt '19 is president for the Reformed University Fellowship; and **Sam Zapalac '20** is vice president of the Texas Future Investors group.

This fall we are excited to announce we will host a philanthropy event in memory of **Jake Ehlinger '19**. The date has been set for September 9th on the Friday before we take on Alabama in DKR.

George Masterson '18 and I have been working on a networking website for Texas Fiji actives and alumni to connect for job opportunities. This website would provide a unique channel for unprecedented and exclusive communication between alumni and active members. We will have more details on this as the process develops.

Looking forward to seeing y'all on April 30 for Pig Dinner!

GTBO,
Reed Andersen '19
President
jamesreed@gmail.com



Texas Fiji Benefit Concert in September

*Support the Jake Ehlinger
Memorial Scholarship Fund*



I'm grateful for the opportunity to have served as philanthropy chairman this year. To get a feel for the kinds of service projects we've done this past year, please see Reed's article on page 2. In this brief blurb, however, I want to announce that, on September 9, we're having a concert benefiting the Jake Ehlinger Memorial Scholarship Fund. We were devastated by the untimely passing of **Jake Ehlinger '19** on May 6, 2021, and as the Ehlinger family has requested, we are directing donations to this scholarship fund founded in his name.

With a capacity of 1,500 people, we ask all who are able to give generously and purchase t-shirts. If we can get underwriters to cover the costs, then 100% of the proceeds from this event will go to the scholarship fund.

GTBO,
Josh Miller '19
Philanthropy Chairman

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We Want to Hear from You!

Tell us what you're up to!

How have you lent a hand in your community lately?

Do you have any career highlights or family updates you'd like to share with your Texas Fiji brothers?

How have you gotten by during the pandemic?

Have you reached out to any brothers for support during times of uncertainty?

Share your story, and it may appear in a future issue of Texas Fiji!

Submissions can be sent to our communications coordinator at aalbrych@penningtonco.com.

Now more than ever, it's important to stay connected to our Fiji brothers.

We hope you have a safe, healthy, and happy year to come.

Alumni News

Charles Spence '96 is the founder and owner of Rosewood Gulf Coast Chophouse (rosewoodatx.com) located in the historic 1980s home in East Austin. His son, Callan, is a junior in high school who may attend UT and go into recruitment next year; he would enter as a double Fiji legacy. Chas lives in Austin, Texas. Email: chasspence@gmail.com

TEXAS FIJI

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SAVE THE DATES

Texas Fiji Pig Dinner
April 30, 2022

Jake Ehlinger
Memorial Scholarship
Benefit Concert
September 9, 2022

More details on front page and inside!