

TEXAS FIJI

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

Spring 2026

Restoring the Star The Campaign for Buen Retiro

Enhancing Buen Retiro

**Texas Fiji Announces
\$7.5 Million
Capital Campaign**



Since our founding over 140 years ago, Texas Fiji has been an integral part of fraternity/sorority life at The University of Texas and home to generations of brothers. Since Buen Retiro became ours in 1908, more than 3,000 brothers have walked its halls as they developed as men and courageous leaders and forged lasting friendships. Years of use from so many men are evident in the chipped paint on the walls, outdated systems that no longer meet current building codes, and a kitchen that has been outgrown by the membership. It is time to make a change.

Texas Fiji has enjoyed a strong campus presence, with our youngest members committed to philanthropy, community service, academic success, and leadership. To maintain that momentum and ensure that our Fraternity remains competitive at UT, we're thrilled to announce *Restoring the Star – The Campaign for Buen Retiro* to renovate our home into a safe and functional facility that reflects the excellence of our members.

Our goal is to enhance the house while preserving its history and tradition. Improvements include:

An enlarged kitchen to accommodate the number of meals served daily

Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing updates throughout the house

ADA-accessible bath facilities in the basement

Replacements of wall, ceiling, and floor finishes, as well as windows, doors, frames, and hardware on each level

We will coordinate with the Texas Historical Commission to retain key elements like the star window in the front gable and the existing exterior siding on the original building.

This is an exciting time for our brotherhood, and Texas Fiji's alumni leadership is ready to take on this vital project—but we can't do it without you! Early commitments from 129 alumni have raised \$5,754,918. This is an impressive start, and now we need your assistance to reach or exceed our campaign goal of \$7.5 million*. In the coming weeks, you will receive additional information detailing the project, the campaign, and ways in which you can help.

This is a time to reflect on your Fiji experience. Remember how our brotherhood has shaped you and honor that by paying it forward. Investing in Texas Fiji will ensure the next generation of brothers can enjoy the same opportunities we did. We hope you'll join us in writing the next chapter of Texas Fiji's story.

GTBO,
Jason H. Downie '88
Campaign Chairman

**To complete this project as envisioned, we must raise a minimum of \$6.5 million. Anything above that, up to and beyond the official \$7.5 million goal, will be applied to the permanent maintenance endowment to support future renovations.*



Brothers from the 2023 member class at the Phoenix Open.



UNITED AS LEADERS

BROTHERS PURSUE EXCELLENCE AT UT

This spring, Texas Fiji reached an undergraduate membership of 230. In fall 2025, Phi Gamma Delta ranked ninth among all IFC fraternities with a Chapter GPA of 3.56—just above the IFC average of 3.55. Active members posted a 3.51 GPA, while new members achieved a 3.77. Among IFC chapters, active members ranked 10th and the new member class ranked third.

Elliot Lancaster '24 organized several service initiatives, with members serving as coaches and mentors for underprivileged schools in the Austin area. **Nico Deiterichs '23** and **Logan Smith '23** also coordinated community events as philanthropy chairmen for spring 2026.

Grant Peterson '24 was recently elected IFC VP of member development, which is a great honor. **Clayton Murphy '23**, **Lewis Montgomery '23**, and **Andrew Alexander '23** were elected to executive positions on the Texas Cowboys, which is both the oldest men's organization and service organization at the university.

The cabinet's goal for this spring was to increase brotherhood bonds across the entire Chapter, and we accomplished this by creating more events that involved guys from different member classes competing in various activities together. Through this, we have seen major steps in creating a stronger brotherhood across classes, which we hope will lead to lasting connections with alumni from all generations.

GTBO,
Lewis Montgomery '23
President



Freshman support **Charlie Ruvinsky '25**, a member of the UT lacrosse team.



A spring break float trip on the Rio Grande.



Chapter Officers

WHO WILL CARRY THE TORCH?

Send Us Your Member Recommendations

From one generation to the next, our brotherhood endures through those willing to continue our Texas Fiji traditions. Who do you know with the resilience, leadership, and honor to carry our brotherhood's torch into the next generation?

Help us find the young men who will honor our past and shape what comes next. Send their info, including how we should contact them, their hometown and year in school, and why you think they'll fit right in with Phi Gamma Delta, to **Ford Montgomery '24** at ford.montgomery@utexas.edu or (713) 206-7467.

President
Bruce
Taylor '24

Treasurer
Morgan
Goldman '24

Recording Secretary
Harry
Deane '24

Corresponding Secretary
Read
Liuzzi '24

Historian
Price
Daniel '24

House Managers
Robert
Bridges '24
Elliot
Lancaster '24

Head Rush Captain
Ford
Montgomery '24



Brothers from the 2024 member class on a golfing trip.

House Corporation Board

PRESIDENT

Gary McClure '76

DIRECTORS

Jason Downie '88
Curtis Hutcheson '88
Daniel Madera '04
Tommy Ward '04

Capital Campaign Board

CHAIRMAN

Jason H. Downie '88

PURPLE OWL HOUSE CORPORATION BOARD LIAISON

Gary McClure '76

BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. David A. Ott '64
Bobby Orr Jr. '75
Gene B. Shepherd Jr. '78
Curtis Hutcheson '88
Trey Chambers '89
Ryan D. Moss '92
Robert Engstrom Jr. '95
Corbin W. Ferrell '95
Mark W. Muecke '97
Ryan F. Strawn '00
Steven D. Thompson Jr. '00

A Father-Son Brotherhood

Why John H. Young '61 and John R. Young '87 Donated as a Family

What made Texas Fiji the right Fraternity for each of you?

John H. Young '61: I think I developed many of my beliefs and values being with my pledge brothers—which, in turn, created a life full of close friends.

John R. Young '87: For my father, I think it was also a mix of academics, intramurals, and a pledge class who were from all parts of Texas. He met my mother at the Fiji Island party in Houston the summer of 1961. He also stayed at her house (my grandparents') and met her older brother, **Lenoir Josey '59**, and first cousin, **Robert Ross '62**.

For me, having such a strong family connection helped steer me toward the Fraternity. But, like my father, I was drawn to the men who would make up my pledge class and the brothers I met in Rush. That, along with athletics and academic focus, was a strong draw.

What does being part of the same Fraternity and Chapter mean to you, and how has it strengthened your relationship?

JRY: It gave us a common experience at a key life inflection point and allows us to share something special that few get to experience. We have that same feeling (and pride) with my two sons, **Garrett '23** and **Grant '25**.

Do you have any favorite memories or shared traditions from your Fiji years you'd like to share?

JHY: For me, it was the multiple intramural championships, the first National Football Championship in 1963, the annual house party in Mexico, Roundup and, of course, Texas/OU weekend.

JRY: Traveling for Texas/OU weekend was a highlight for me as well. We both look forward to attending the Norris Pig Dinner this year.



The Young family at the 2026 Norris Pig Dinner. From left: Grant '25, John H. '61, Garrett '23, and John R. '87.

Why did you decide to contribute a family gift to the capital campaign?

JRY: I think we both realized how much being a part of Texas Fiji shaped our lives and provided for us. We learned so much in the formative years of adulthood and have lifelong friends who have celebrated victories with us and picked us up when things were tough. I see the same thing with my sons.

My father and I wanted to give back so others can benefit in the same way we did. I would encourage alumni to think about their experiences and the lasting effects of their brotherhood. Donating to this campaign is a way we can all help preserve the Fraternity so future generations can have similar experiences.

What are your hopes for the future of Texas Fiji and Buen Retiro?

JRY: The Fraternity is a uniquely great place. It takes work and a long-term commitment, however, to maintain it. I hope we are putting it on a path to maintain excellence and to withstand the test of time.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

JRY: I moved into the Chapter House as a sophomore in the spring of 1989 as part of the first group to live there after the previous renovation and campaign—which my father was very active in. It was a tremendous experience that created lifelong friends beyond my pledge class. After 36 years, we need to put the House in a position to serve the larger Fraternity size and classes for decades to come.



You can connect with John H. at jhy@jhyi.com and John R. at john.young@orchardglobal.com.

Thank You, Early Donors

We extend our immense gratitude to the individuals listed below whose generosity has propelled the launch of *Restoring the Star – The Campaign for Buen Retiro*. Your early contributions are the cornerstone of our ambitious goal, setting a powerful precedent for success, and your commitment to our shared values exemplifies the true spirit of brotherhood. We are profoundly grateful for your role in laying the foundation for a vibrant and enduring future.

If you are looking for the opportunity to add your name to our growing list of donors, please keep an eye out for upcoming information. We can't wait to have as many brothers as possible on our list!

Donors of \$2,500 and above will be recognized in appropriate giving categories in all campaign publications unless otherwise requested. Pledges of \$5,000 and above will be displayed on a permanent donor plaque at the house. If there is an error in your listing, we sincerely apologize. Please contact our campaign coordinator at jwhite@penningtonco.com to submit corrections.

Buen Retiro Society *(\$500,000 and above)*

Scott Petty Jr. '55

Buen Fiesta Society *(\$250,000 to \$499,999)*

Tau Deuteron Chapter
Young Family Gift
John H. Young '61
John R. Young '87
Garrett Young '23
Grant Young '25
David A. Ott '64
Gary McClure '76
Downie Family Gift
Jason H. Downie '88
Michael Downie '19
Malcolm Downie '21

1883 Society *(\$100,000 to \$249,999)*

Baker Montgomery Family
Mark Johnson '87 Memorial Gift
Oldham Family Gift
Steve Oldham '87
David Oldham '23
Robert L. Rogers '87
John R. Young '87
C. Preston Butcher Jr. '57
Engstrom Family Gift
Randall Engstrom '69
Robert Engstrom '95
Canon Family Gift
Robert Canon '72
Robbie Canon '09
Max Canon '13
Orr Family Gift
Robert C. Orr Jr. '75
John Collins Orr '14
Shepherd Family Gift
Gene Shepherd '78
Ben Shepherd '23
Butter Family Gift
Zane R. Butter '81
Zane R. Butter Jr. '10
William A. Butter '14
Moss Family Gift
Ryan Moss '92
Bennett Moss '24
Spencer Moss '24
Ashley and Rad Weaver '94

Black Diamond Circle *(\$50,000 to \$99,999)*

Ernest H. Cockrell '63
In memory of
David Roark
Moore Family Gift
Ardon Moore '07
Tucker Moore '07
Hudson Moore '08
Preston Moore '11
Rasmussen Family Gift
Hal Rasmussen '77
Christopher Rasmussen '10
Matthew Rasmussen '15
Drew Greene '79
Townes Family Gift
T. Keller Towns '79
T. Keller Towns Jr. '12
Grady W. Roberts '85
Reid S. Walker '86
McCabe Family Gift
Brian McCabe '88
Owen McCabe '22
Christopher Crow '89 and
Rhodes Crow '22
Kent Wallace '89
Ty Thaggard '91
Walton Family Gift
Gantt H. Walton '92
Harrison Walton '22
The Fox Family
Buck Shapiro '96
David K. Mauze '97
Mark W. Muecke '97
Ryan Springmeyer '02

White Star Circle *(\$25,000 to \$49,999)*

Roche Family Gift
David Roche
Campbell Roche '04
Jackson Roche '08
Bruce H. C. Hill '73
Tim B. Blonkivist '75
Rodman Family Gift
Robert E. Rodman '75
Thomas E. Rodman Jr. '76
James A. Rodman '78
Chris Rodman '10
Matt Rodman '12
James Rodman '13

Uhl Family Gift
Arthur Uhl III '77
James Uhl '11
Scott Uhl '14
Bob Butchofsky '80
William T. Griffin Jr. '83 and
William T. Griffin III
Kennedy Family Gift
W.D. "Bill" Kennedy '37
Fred Kennedy '85
Patrick Kennedy '20
William "Bill" Miller '85
Proctor Family Gift
In memory of
Venable B. Proctor
Bland Proctor '85
Barclay Proctor '14
William Proctor '17
Fred Proctor '17
Shepherd Family Gift
John Shepherd '85
Jack Shepherd '17
James Shepherd '19
Doug S. Wall '85
Nelson Family Gift
John C. Nelson '86
Jack C. Nelson '22
Andrew P. Nelson '25
Chad Auler '88 and
Charles Auler '19
Grigsby Family Gift
Mike Grigsby '88
Clark Grigsby '19
Bates Grigsby '21
Hutcheson Family Gift
Curtis Hutcheson '88
Thad Hutcheson '19
Jay P. Brown '89
Butter Family Gift
Stephen Butter '89
Trey Butter '21
Chambers Family Gift
Trey Chambers '89
Barrett Chambers '17
Blake Chambers '19
Bryce Chambers '23
Bill Dillard '89
Elliott Family Gift
Brad Elliott '89
Ford Elliott '19
Duke Elliott '21

J. McCart '89
In honor of
Justin Gifford '89
William S. McFarren '89
Tamir Mosharrafa '89
Norman Family Gift
Scott Norman '89
Jack Norman '18
Ben Norman '21
Mike Oldham '89
Sampson Family Gift
Edward Sampson '89
Hilton Sampson '25
RJ Sell '89
In memory of
Justin Gifford '89
W. Davis Paddock '90
Paul A. Cohen '91
Jeff Montgomery '91
John A. Colglazier Jr. '92
Will H. Marsh '92
John M. True '93
Carr Family Gift
Scott Carr '94
Jack Carr '23
Robert A. Dullnig '94
Corby Ferrell '95
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Robb I. Parks '95
Josh L. Galatzan '96
Charles P. Hill '96
Jeff W. Matthews '96
Bert J. Crouch '97
Matt Klein '97
Lewis E. Brown III '98
Scott Gardner '98
Daniel G. Zoch '99
Rogan B. Giles III '00
Will B. Hardeman '00
Ryan Strawn '00
Steven D. Thompson Jr. '00
Will Walters '00
McNamara Brothers
Sechler Family Gift
Grant Sechler '15
Reed Sechler '18
Mark Sechler '21
Swanson Family Gift
Will Swanson '23

Chain Link Circle *(\$15,000 to \$24,999)*

DeWitt Waltmon Jr. '76
Jacobe Family Gift
Jeffrey M. Jacobe '90
Jeffrey Jacobe '24
C. Todd Ragland '90
Brandon K. Holcomb '92
Taylor Curtis '94
Warren R. Williamson Jr. '05

Purple Owl Circle *(\$10,000 to \$14,999)*

Charles D. Fraser Jr., M.D. '76
T. Grant Johnson '78
Robert T. Ray '78
Duke Family Gift
David Duke '84
Will Duke '13
Matt Duke '16
Michael V. O'Shell '84
Mike Alessio '87
Dale A. Smith '89
Laurens B. Fish III '90
Patrick "Wheels" Smith '92
John W. Fainter III '93
Brian R. Bacharach '97
Joe F. Flack III '98

300 W. 27th Street Club *(\$5,000 to \$9,999)*

Beth & Drew Cozby
Mason Family Gift
James F. Mason '57
James F. Mason, Jr. '97
Jackson B. Hopper '77
Christopher P. Renaud '77 and
Christopher P. Renaud Jr.
Kelly and Douglas Kuni '78
Peter K. Taaffe '89
Kyle D. Turlington '92
Ryan H. Taaffe '93
Eric P. Berlin '97
Daniel Madera '04

Tau Deuteron Club *(\$2,500 to \$4,999)*

Anonymous
David Herndon '65
John W. Newton III '71
M. Spencer Rigney '76
Brian K. Gammill '78

Campaign Status at a Glance

As of May 6, 2026

\$7.5 Million
CAMPAIGN GOAL

\$5,754,918
TOTAL RAISED

129
DONORS

Restoring the Star

The Campaign for Buen Retiro

Open this newsletter to page 1 for exciting news about the future of our historic Buen Retiro!



A rendering of the proposed entryway.

More renderings below! →

TEXAS ★ FIJI

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← BEDROOM



← KITCHEN

Alumni News

Bob Buchek '69 is part of a Texas Fiji alumni group from San Antonio and Austin that meets for lunch on the third Thursday of every month. He lives in San Antonio, Texas. Email: bobbuchek@gmail.com

Albert M. Gutierrez '88 was appointed to the St. Mary's University Board of Trustees for a two-year term. He has four children: Andrea attends UT Southwestern Medical School, Sofia is at Tulane Law School, Ava is earning her master's in accounting at Tulane, and Thomas is a freshman at Tulane. Albert lives in San Antonio, Texas. Email: amg@pmbglaw.com

Peter Kaldis '02 won the 2025 net class golf championship at Big Easy Ranch. He lives in Houston, Texas. Email: pkaldis@gmail.com