



Spring 2024
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THE TRAVELER

Acacia Fraternity, Cornell Chapter

Brotherhood Beyond Borders



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Addressed by President Steven Stein

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Brother Rivera enjoying a night out in Ithaca



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Gabriel Davila (1255)

Venerable Dean

ILR '25

Amherst, Massachusetts

Nathan Francis (1262)

Senior Dean

Biological Sciences '25

Huntington Beach, California

Jacob Siboyeh (1254)

Brotherhood Chair

Computer Science '24

Houston, Texas

Zach Braswell

Live-In Advisor

Cornell Graduate Athletics Intern

Cocoa Beach, Florida

Kevin Rivera (1261)

Junior Dean

Psychology '26

Chicago, Illinois

Derek Lao (1263)

Senior Steward

Biological Sciences '24

Brooklyn, New York

Hasan Ali (1265)

Treasurer

Dyson (AEM) '25

Indiana, Pennsylvania

Joseph Yoo (1266)

Philanthropy Chair

Dyson (AEM) '25

Alpharetta, Georgia



Message from Our Corporation Board President

I am writing this on the eve of my 73rd St. Patrick's Day birthday. I've been Acacia Corp Board President since 1982! Time flies when you're having fun. Cornell Acacia is still in survival mode. We were fortunate enough to have Acacia International's Expansion Coordinator, Sean Garity, living at Acacia for about 2 months. He and Live-In-Advisor Zach Braswell worked tirelessly to help the Actives strategize and develop a sound Rush plan. Things were looking positive until Formal Rush began and then things went horribly wrong rather quickly, due to no fault of Cornell Acacia. About 10 of Cornell's nearly 30 fraternities decided to ignore the rules that everyone agreed to abide by, and they got caught. Most infractions were related to serving alcohol at Rush Functions (and usually to underage Rushees), but there were also some hazing. Cornell's Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) decided to punish ALL houses and cancelled 2 Formal Rush events scheduled to be held at Northcote. Since Formal Rush is only 6 days long, we effectively lost about 1/3 of our scheduled in-house events. Some Rushees got disillusioned by Greek Life because of this and decided to not join any fraternity this year; and others opted to not join Acacia because their friends were no longer interested. The bottom line is Cornell Acacia ended up with 1 signed bid and he ultimately decided not to join because he didn't want to be a 1-man Pledge Class.

Acacia had only three Actives living at Northcote in the Fall, and 2 of them left after graduating in December. Four of our five boarders who resided in the Wing, two of whom were participating in the Meal Plan, moved out at the end of the Fall semester because they were all in 1-semester programs. We hope to have all eight Wing rooms rented out for the Fall 2024 semester to fully cover the rent that the Actives typically would pay. The Corp Board has provided financial assistance (e.g. reduced rent and other subsidies, investing in projects to make Northcote more attractive to new members, etc.) to keep Northcote open. We will make a decision in March 2025 whether or not to continue operations or shut down Northcote. Should the Corp Board decide to shut it down, we need to decide whether or not recolonization is a viable option. These decisions will be based on both the financials (it will still cost at least \$60,000/year to own an empty house) and how many Actives are living in Northcote since numbers are vital to have a successful recruitment. Also, if we were to sell Northcote, would a recolonization result in the loss of Alumni support? A different chapter house would not be part of the memories that all existing alumni have. These will be difficult decisions to make.

The Corp Board is cautiously optimistic that Cornell Acacia will rebound from continued setbacks. The small, yet enthusiastic Brotherhood is still in recruitment mode, and all seem intent on turning things around.

To add insult to injury, we were informed in early February (2/8/2024) that our kitchen range exhaust fan (mounted at the top of an outside plenum that terminates just above Wing flat roof) was very noisy, disturbing Acacia's two closest neighbors. After some back-and-forth communication with the Village of Cayuga Heights Code Enforcement Officer, we learned that the noise ordinance is totally subjective. That means there isn't a decibel level that constitutes a "loud" noise. The Village was unable to measure the loudness, so I purchased a decibel meter and took my own readings. The fan was, indeed, loud (over 92 decibels). Our electrician checked out the fan (the motor was replaced in August 2023), and the fan shaft was rotted, necessitating replacing the fan and motor. The new fan (\$3,322) was ordered on March 1 and was installed (~\$1,000) on March 8. Although it is super quiet, the neighbors still complained. They can still hear the air handler, which comes on whenever the range exhaust fan is turned on. The new fan controller was adjusted, but it was then discovered that the dishwasher exhaust fan had a failing switch that resulted in noise when it was trying to start up. The range exhaust fan's noise drowned out the dishwasher fan's noise, so this came as yet another surprise. The new switch will have been installed in mid-March. Thinking once again that the neighbors were happy turned out to be far from the truth, as our closest neighbor complains if the fan is running after the cook is done for the day, even though it is no longer loud. The residents of Acacia need to get used to the fact that someone needs to ensure that the two exhaust fans are both turned off when the kitchen is not in use. Acacia has bent over backwards to be good (perhaps great) neighbors, but some people simply are never happy and may have short memories. Good grief!

Acacia still relies on Alumni financial support which has been quite strong lately. However, I am always perplexed and bothered by the fact that the majority of our 600+ alumni choose to NOT even pay their annual dues (which can be done via snail-mail, PayPal www.paypal.com to AcaciaCorpBoard@cornell.edu), or VENMO [venmo.com](http://venmo.com/@Acacia-Fraternity-13) (@Acacia-Fraternity-13). Also, please check out the Cornell Acacia website (<https://www.cornellacacia.org/>) which has undergone a major overhaul. We need your financial assistance, and we need it now. I realize some percentage of you might have financial, personal, or health issues, but not most of you! To those alumni who generously financially support Cornell Acacia, our thanks!

My sincere thanks to the other Cornell Corp Board members, without whom Cornell Acacia would not survive:

Elie Bilmes '10 (1118) - Director

Tom Ricketts '03 (1051) - Director

Hanny Martinovici '06 (1071) – Director (and will not be able to serve another term)

Christian Choi '16 (1195) - Director

Tom Schultz '15 (1181) - Director

Jerry W. Kreider '68 (720) – Ex-Officio

Please email or call me if you have comments, concerns, suggestions, want to get involved, or simply want to say hello. It would be wonderful if I heard from some of you so I know you are as concerned, yet encouraged, as I am about the future of our beloved Acacia. The Mailbag column once again has news to share, so please share your news with us!

Stay safe.

Fraternally,

Steven L. Stein 1973 (787)

[339 E. Miller Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850-9431; cell 607-351-3901; sls8@cornell.edu]

Brother Lao Displaying His Many Talents



The Mailbag Alumni News



Peter S Eisenhut 1965 (664) [11755 Lone Tree Ct, Columbia, MD 21044-4312; eisenhut@comcast.net] has several books for sale on Amazon (<https://amazon.com/author/petereisenhut-usa> also includes a bio of the author).

Warren E Walker 1963 (681) [469 Calle Cadiz, Unit B, Laguna Woods, CA 92637-3959; w.e.walker2022@gmail.com] moved from the Netherlands to Laguna Woods, a small CA retirement community). Brother Walker is continuing his work to improve the world we live in (e.g. he is officer in “Concerned Citizens of Laguna Woods”). He has 3 children and 5 grandchildren. He stays in touch with Jerry Kreider ‘68 (720).

Dr, David A Gorelick 1968 (717) [3316 Old Forest Rd, Baltimore, MD 21208-3101; DavidGorelick1@gmail.com] continues to enjoy semi-retirement: traveling to visit grandchildren, editing the Journal of Cannabis Research, and serving as a member of the Maryland Cannabis Public Health Advisory Council. Visited Israel and Switzerland in October 2023.

Michael J Ciaraldi 1973 (778) [9 Cabot Dr, Shrewsbury, MA 01545-2286; ciaraldi@ciaraldi.com] had to miss 50th Reunion last June due to a medical issue, but hopes to be back on campus in 2028 for the 55th!

Steven L Stein 1973 (787) [339 E Miller Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850-9431; sls8@cornell.edu] celebrated his 73rd birthday. He still works full-time for Cornell from home. His kitchen renovation project is finally nearing completion (over 1 year after demolition began) after contracting with a custom cabinet maker and getting built-in oven installed. Countertops went in a few days later, and the tile guy should be onsite the 3rd week of March.

David R Fischell PhD 1975 (800) [71 Riverlawn Dr, Fair Haven, NJ 07704-3319; drdrf@comcast.net] was looking forward to a family get-together for Christmas. The gathering would be a Cornell reunion, of sorts, with wife, Sarah ’78, daughters Erin ’10, Jen ’13, sons-in-law Ed PhD ’10, and Sam ’08. Davis is anticipating that granddaughters Maria and Hazel will be Cornellians (’37 and ’40, respectively).

Robert C Merritt 1975 (807) [PO Box 279, Auburn, NY 13021-0279; bob@simplexco.com] still running the Simplex Manufacturing business and restoring cars on the weekends. What could be better?

David J Sangree 1984 (917) [1052 Maple Cliff Dr, Lakewood, OH 44107-1252; dsangree@hladvisors.com] visited the house in late April 2023 when he came to up for Hotel Ezra Cornell. The house looked very nice and hopes the membership can grow this year.

Thomas J Balcerski PhD 2005 (1063) [29 Kathleen Dr, #9C, Willimantic, CT 06226; tjb36@cornell.edu] moved to Cos Cob, CT after a year as the Ray Allen Billington Professor at Occidental College in Los Angeles. Started his new position as Director of the Center for Connecticut Studies and editor of the journal Connecticut History Review. Attended Tom Schultz's wedding in September and recently saw Paul Molnar 1998 (1014), Dave Rimshnick 2005 (1062), and Ray Wang 1997 (1009) for wine tasting on Long Island.



Annual Corporation Board Meeting

Saturday, May 11, 2024, at 1:00 pm

The Annual Meeting of the Cornell Chapter of Acacia Fraternity, Inc. will be Saturday, May 11, 2024, at 1:00 pm, at **Acacia Fraternity, 318 Highland Road, Ithaca, NY 14850**. Cornell Acacias are encouraged to attend the **event in-person**, but we will also have a Zoom meeting:



<https://cornell.zoom.us/j/99593278671?pwd=cmNhQldUbDdUeU1uUW1DUjl2bFRjQT09>

Honor Roll

Donor	Roll #	Class	Pledge Year
Lane J Abrams	915	1984	1981
Thomas J Balcerski Ph.D. *	1063	2005	2002
Stewart L Burger *	738	1970	1967
Martin S Cardinali	918	1984	1981
James E Carlson	946	1988	1987
William L Dearcop	648	1962	1960
Peter S Eisenhunt	664	1965	1961
Philip Engler	739	1970	1967
John Mathias Ertl	1148	2011	2009
David R Fischell PhD *	800	1975	1972
Paul B Goldberg *	755	1971	1968
David A Gorelick	717	1968	1965
John M Graham	883	1981	1978
William B Hairston III *	873	1980	1977
Matthew S Harris	1042	2002	2000
Carl H Herzog *	711	1966	1965
Charles S Hong	1043	2001	2000
Alan L Jette	895	1982	1979
William L Keltz	632	1961	1958
Thomas E Kocovsky Jr. *	730	1969	1966
Dale A La Shomb	781	1973	1970
Allen M Male	643	1962	1959
Mark F Maltenfort	831	1977	1974
Roman Markh	1072	2006	2003
Daniel R Merrill Ph.D.	907	1983	1980
Robert C Merritt *	807	1975	1973
Stanley R Niman *	783	1973	1970
Todd Peskin *	994	1995	1993

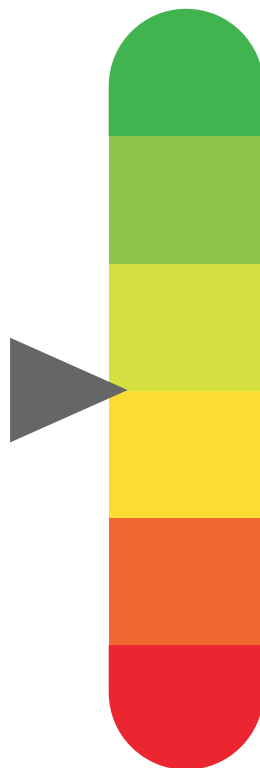
Honor Roll

Donor	Roll #	Class	Pledge Year
Alan J Pue	785	1973	1970
Thomas L Ricketts *	1051	2003	2000
David J Sangree	917	1984	1981
Mark A Schaten MD	923	1984	1981
Bruce G Schneider *	842	1978	1975
Thomas W Schultz	1181	2015	2012
Frederick W Tierney Jr. *	763	1971	1968
John M Walsh III	603	1958	1955

70 DONORS

25 BROTHER TREE LEAF
RECOGNITIONS

* AFTER NAME INDICATES
BROTHER TREE LEAF
RECOGNITION



Brother Davila and Ali Celebrating St. Patrick's Day



Chapter Eternal

Let us now honor and acknowledge the lives of the brother alumni who recently passed away into the Chapter Eternal.

John A Maciag '75, BArch '76 (802) – 11/1/2023

Architect, avid Gladiolus gardener known for his massive gardens; active in professional, religious, and alumni affairs.

Venerably Speaking



Gabriel Davila (1255) '25
Venerable Dean



Dear Alumni,

This semester has been a true test of our fraternity's resilience and determination. Despite encountering numerous challenges, particularly during rush, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to upholding the values and traditions of our brotherhood.

While it is with regret that we report not securing any pledges this semester, we recognize the importance of learning from our experiences. We acknowledge areas where we can improve our recruitment strategies and are fully committed to implementing necessary changes to ensure a more successful rush in the future.

In the face of recruitment setbacks, our dedication to philanthropy and community involvement has never wavered. Throughout the semester, we have seen a couple brothers step up in big ways: constantly pushing us to volunteer more, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to giving back and making a positive impact in our community. We also hope that by engaging in this way more often, we can raise our profile on campus to help our recruitment efforts.

Moreover, we prioritized strengthening brotherhood through a diverse array of weekly social events. These gatherings provided invaluable opportunities for bonding, fostering deeper connections among our members, and creating enduring memories that will last a lifetime. Additionally, we have already had one brotherhood trip to visit Acacia Ottawa, and another one planned for Spring Break in Berlin.

As we look towards the future, one of our primary objectives is to increase occupancy in our chapter house. By maximizing our living space, we aim to create a more cohesive and supportive environment for our brothers, thereby enhancing the overall fraternity experience. We already have three brothers confirmed to move in next semester, with another moving in for a post-grad year, contingent on finding work in his field in Ithaca.

At Cornell, it's normal to see people absolutely pour themselves into their work, their activities, or their scholarship. But, the truth is that most fraternity men never hold a leadership position or contribute to their fraternity beyond being present at events. I finished my IFC executive board role after 13 months on March 5th, and this is my second semester as president of Acacia, and I can proudly say that by pouring myself into Cornell Acacia, I've been rewarded with friends and memories in and outside of Northcote that will shape what college was to me. I lived as a sophomore in Northcote, now I live in as a junior, and next year I'll live here as a senior. Anyone who knows me knows that I'm Gabriel Davila, Cornell Acacia President; and that person I am today and the great college experiences I've had wouldn't have been possible without our brotherhood.

In conclusion, we extend our sincerest gratitude to you, our esteemed alumni, for your unwavering support and guidance. Your continued dedication to our fraternity is instrumental as we navigate the complexities of university life and strive for excellence in all endeavors. We seek everyday to be men worthy of the Acacia name, colors, and creed.

In Brotherhood,

Gabriel Davila
Cornell Acacia President

Acacia

Senior Dean

Nathan Francis (1262) '25

Cornell Acacia faced an unexpected challenge posed by the university during the spring rush cycle, which unfortunately resulted in our recruitment efforts yielding no new members. While this is a devastating setback, I remain undeniably optimistic about our future. This period has prompted us to channel our energies inward, reinforcing the bonds within our brotherhood and honing our collective skills. We have turned what could have been a period of stagnation into one of substantial internal growth and strengthening.

Despite our lack of success in recruitment, we did not let this hinder our progress. Instead, we found a silver lining by enhancing our networking efforts. We reached out to our Carleton and RPI chapters, fostering connections that had been previously overlooked. This effort not only expanded our network as a brotherhood, but also allowed us to exchange valuable insights and strategies, enriching our organization's knowledge base.

These connections have laid a foundation for collaboration that promises to bring fresh perspectives and ideas, fueling our optimism for the future. Our resilience and adaptability in the face of challenges have shown us that success is not solely measured by numbers. This semester, though devoid of new recruits, was anything but unproductive. It underscored the importance of looking beyond conventional measures of growth and finding value in the strength and quality of our brotherhood.

Jacob Siboyeh (1254) '24

It has been a fantastic semester at Acacia. From all the house dinners to the constant competitive Mario Kart games, this semester has been a blast. We even got to connect with so many more Acacians. We visited the Carleton chapter up in Canada and also watched the Cornell vs RPI game with the RPI brothers. It was an amazing experience to meet all the brothers at different schools. As I prepare to graduate this semester, I am filled with excitement for the next chapter in Boston. Yet, it is sort of bittersweet. Part of me is quite sad to leave this community. As I look forward to new adventures, I carry with me the spirit of Acacia, ready to embrace the future while holding dear what I value most.

Derek Lao (1263) '24

This semester at Acacia has really enriched my experience at Cornell. I look forward to enjoying dinner at the house every night and playing the occasional game of Fortnite with the brothers in the common room. Our chef Dave is a master, and I enjoy spending time with him learning in the kitchen. We even visited the Acacia chapter in Ottawa over break and had a great time connecting with our wider group of brothers. This last semester has been grueling with medical school applications, but the Acacia house has been a welcome sanctuary! I feel that everyone here has my back and helped me so much through my journey. I'm going to miss Acacia, and know I will look back on my time here with nostalgia.

Kevin Rivera (1261) '26

Despite my absence from Acacia over the past year, the fraternity brothers have been an unwavering source of support. During this time away, I have dedicated myself to working in Chicago, focusing on the development of children and promoting trauma-informed care for parents. This experience has provided me with a deeper understanding of my studies and has shaped my future career aspirations. It has been an enriching opportunity, and I am eager to share the knowledge I have gained with my fraternity brothers in meaningful ways.

Even though I have been physically distant, I remain connected to the activities and happenings within the Chapter. I am reassured that my perspectives and contributions are valued and respected. The bond we share as a fraternity family remains strong, and I look forward to rejoining Acacia with renewed enthusiasm and dedication.

Hasan Ali (1265) '25

As a member of Acacia fraternity, I have had the privilege of experiencing the true essence of brotherhood. Within our fraternity, I have encountered a diverse group of individuals, each with their own unique interests and passions. From strategy games to table tennis to cooking, these interactions have not only enriched my college experience but have also contributed to my personal growth. Engaging with such a diverse group has taught me the value of empathy, understanding, and acceptance, qualities that are essential for effective leadership.

Stepping into a leadership role within Acacia has been both challenging and rewarding. Leading a fraternity means working closely with others, understanding their perspectives, and finding common ground. It requires a willingness to compromise and the ability to inspire and motivate other. Through this experience, I have learned the importance of effective communication and teamwork. Building consensus and getting

buy-in from fraternity members for various initiatives has been a valuable lesson in leadership that I will carry with me beyond college.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my leadership journey has been serving as the fraternity's treasurer. In this role, I have had the opportunity to learn about finance firsthand. From managing billing processes to overseeing the organization's finances, I have gained valuable skills that will benefit me in my future endeavors. Understanding the financial aspects of running an organization has given me a deeper appreciation for the importance of fiscal responsibility and strategic planning.

In conclusion, my experience in Acacia fraternity has been a transformative journey of personal and professional growth. The bonds of brotherhood, the challenges of leadership, and the lessons in finance have all played a significant role in shaping me into the person I am today. I am grateful for the opportunities and experiences that Acacia has provided me, and I look forward to continuing to grow and learn as a member of this remarkable fraternity.

Joseph Yoo (1266) '25

Joining Acacia fraternity last semester was just the beginning of an incredible journey, and I couldn't be more excited to dive even deeper into our brotherhood this semester! I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to be more involved in the social scene, making unforgettable memories and forging lifelong friendships with my brothers. As I step into the role of the new philanthropy chair, I'm eager to lead meaningful initiatives that make a positive impact on our community while bringing us closer together. Here's to embracing every moment, creating endless opportunities for fun, growth, and brotherhood in Acacia!

Being deeply involved in Korean traditional drumming has been an incredibly rewarding journey, allowing me to connect with my cultural roots while honing my skills as a percussionist. As the director of a hackathon organization, I've had the privilege of spearheading innovative initiatives that bring together passionate individuals to solve real-world problems through technology. Serving as the vice president of finance for CU Tonight, a late-night event funding commission, has provided me with invaluable leadership experience, as I work tirelessly to allocate resources effectively and ensure memorable experiences for our university community. These diverse roles have not only shaped my character but also instilled in me a profound sense of purpose and dedication to making a meaningful impact in every endeavor I pursue.

How to Contribute

Northcote has been and will continue being the home of all 1266 of us brothers. If you would ever like to make a contribution to the house, it could be done so in 3 simple ways!



Through Mail

STEP 1: Make a check out to the **Acacia Fraternity Inc**

STEP 2: Mail the check to: **Cornell Acacia**
318 Highland Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850

STEP 3 (Optional):

Say Hi! Attach a short letter about yourself and what you've been up to lately; we will make sure to add it in the alumni mailbag section of the next Traveler!

Online

PayPal:

Step 1: Choose the 'Send to friends and family in the US' option

Step 2: Address the payment to:
AcaciaCorpBoard@cornell.edu

Venmo:

Step 1: Address the payment to:
@Acacia-Fraternity-13

Brothers Francis and Davila Celebrating the Latter's 20th Birthday



Stunning View From Northcote

Brothers of the RPI Chapter Visiting Northcote



Brother Lao Showing Off His Excellent Job During Cleanups



Brother Siboyeh Riding the Bull



Candid Photo of Brothers Lao, Yoo, and Siboyeh



Brother Davila Pictured Sleeping Through His Birthday Celebration



Brother Lao Excitingly Cooking Pasta for the Chapter





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