



# ny delta doings

NY Delta Chapter of Pi Beta Phi at Cornell

Spring 2016 newsletter

## The Future Is Bright for Pi Phi

By Laurel Kruke '08

It's a pleasure to be writing to you with an update from our Alumnae Advisory Committee (AAC). As many of you know (or maybe you didn't know), the college women on the executive board of NY Delta do an amazing job on their own, but they also have a committee of alumnae behind them, providing support and answering questions that may arise. NY Delta's AAC is composed of five women who volunteer their time to make sure the executive board members are able to fulfill the requirements of their positions, and provide the best possible Pi Phi experience for the chapter.

This year, AAC members Liz Lowery and I were able to join the executive board for its annual officer leadership retreat on February 21, 2016. The day was dedicated to planning for the upcoming

year—we did some team-building and had discussions about the support structure for the chapter; we talked about how to best implement Pi Phi's Leading With Values program; we reviewed the budget and discussed how to maximize that budget; we talked about social events and the risk-management policies for Pi Phi and Cornell; we talked about the Pi Beta Phi Foundation and NY Delta's other philanthropic opportunities; and we set goals for the chapter for this calendar year. The retreat was a great success, and I'm personally very excited to work with the executive board and see the goals accomplished this year.

If you are interested in finding out more about what it means to be on AAC, please feel free to contact me at lkruke@gmail.com. I'm happy to answer questions, and put you in touch with the collegiate regional team if you'd like to volunteer.

# ΠΒΦ

## Save the Date!

Join us for a Reunion Weekend Brunch:  
**Saturday, June 11**  
**Tea Time With Pi Phi!**

## Chapter Board

- President  
Katie Murphy '17
- VPA  
Danielle Grossman '16
- VPM  
Samantha Kimichik '17
- VPC  
Kayla Brooks '17
- VPMD  
Kristianna Lea '16
- VP Philanthropy  
Zoe Lee-McDermott '16
- VP Housing  
Eleni Rigas '16
- VP Event Planning  
Michele Wu '16
- VPFD  
Leanne Youstra '17
- VP Finance  
Emma Ackermann '16

## Recruitment Wrap-Up

By Savannah Woodworth '16

This January, we welcomed more than 750 women to 330 Triphammer with the hopes that they would find a place to call home. Recruitment is always such a special time here at NY Delta. It is a time when sisters from all member classes come together to create the best possible experience for the potential new members and continue the Pi Phi legacy.

This year saw some changes as we Panhellenically move toward a "no frills" recruitment. This allowed our recruitment team to work collaboratively with all 13 Panhellenic chapters and come up with ways to make the recruitment process more fair and balanced among all chapters. We are very excited to be at the forefront of all of these changes and to have a hand in forming the future of recruitment at Cornell.

For example, this year we decided to involve women from all member classes into our skit for skit and philanthropy round. This allowed our entire house to come together to create one of the funniest skits to ever be performed at 330 Trip! We had three seniors—Sarah Zdunczyk, Christina Harden, and Bekah Fay—take the lead on creating our skit, and they did an absolutely fantastic job. As many know,

*(continued on page two)*



## Recruitment Wrap-Up

(continued from page one)

we take tremendous pride in our skit here at NY Delta, and this year was no exception!

Personally, my favorite part of recruitment this year was our final preference round. The night before, a group of seniors sat in a circle in our living room and recalled our favorite memories from our years in Pi Phi and told stories of how they have found Pi Phi a source of strength in our time at Cornell. The next morning, we woke up and realized that, although this was our last preference round as undergraduate women, it was just the beginning of our lifetime as Pi Phi sisters.

This year's recruitment would not have been possible and would not have run nearly as smoothly without outgoing Chapter President Caitly Wischermann '16 and Vice President of Membership Lauren Ransohoff '16. Throughout the long days and nights, these women were a constant support and an invaluable resource of sincere friendship and quick thinking.

On Bid Night, we welcomed home 44 fantastic young women into our NY Delta Pi Phi family. I am so excited to see what they will bring to our sisterhood and watch them grow into the leaders and beautiful young women they will become here.



Recruitment chairs Savannah Woodworth and Lauren Ransohoff celebrating the last day of recruitment.

## Spring Philanthropy Fever!

By Zoe Lee-Mcdermot '16

We have tons of events coming up that will provide great opportunities for sisters to come together and make an impact. We are also especially anxious to get our new member class involved in the philanthropy fun!

This year we will be co-hosting a spelling bee with Las Senioritas of Sigma Lambda Upsilon as our first philanthropy event of the semester. As two separate organizations, we work together really well in reaching out to different groups of students on the Cornell campus and getting them excited about literacy with the spelling bee. We will be having student contestants, as well as student judges and hosts, with each audience member being pleasantly surprised at how fun a spelling bee can really be. Our organizations mesh well because both of our national philanthropies have to do with literacy, and NY Delta as a house loves getting the opportunity to work with another house in the tri-council community.

Another fast-approaching event is the Champions Are Readers (CAR) program that we run on a weekly basis for a month at a local elementary school. In the past we have worked with kindergarteners at South Hill Elementary, but we are excited to announce that this year we may have the opportunity to work with some older students at South Hill. Being involved in the CAR programs has always been one of the most fun and rewarding volunteer experiences that we have at Pi Beta Phi. We get a chance to see our impact on a first-hand basis. As a sisterhood we always look forward to the month of March so that we get to go



Sophomores Micaela Luders and Tessa Wilson throwing up wings during our fall 2015's Arrowbowl philanthropy event.

to South Hill and interact with the kids in a one-on-one fashion where we can see the difference we make.

As the weather warms up in April, we will be happy to stand in the warmth and proceed with our annual Lollipops for Literacy awareness activity. Sisters will man a table on Ho Plaza for a Friday afternoon and hand out free lollipops with literacy facts taped to them to the passersby. We may also deliver lollipop grams and bouquets so that we can turn this event that raises awareness and money.

Although we have a ton of great stuff planned thus far, we are also excited to hear from our sisters and the new member class as to any suggestions they have. This year we have a newly appointed community service chair, junior Alice Alexandrov, who is responsible for organizing and connecting with the local community of Ithaca with various service projects. We have a ton of exciting things to look forward to at 330 Triphammer, and we can't wait to get started!

## Buongiorno from Italy!

By Stasia Skalbania '16

This semester I am studying abroad in Siena, Italy. I'm taking classes in art history, drawing, Italian cinema, and of course, Italian! Living in Siena has already been an incredibly educational and exciting adventure; I came with only a semester of Italian under my belt, and I already feel as though my understanding of the language is improving.



Siena is a small city about an hour outside of Florence. The city is centered around the Piazza del Campo, a large square that hosts an annual horse race called the Palio. Each "contrada" (neighborhoods within Siena) has a horse in the race and contrade battle for the victory and the glory that contrada carries all year long.

One of my favorite parts of being in Siena is seeing the pride that every

Sieneese citizen takes in his or her contrada. Sieneese are given their contrada based on where they are born, and regardless of where they move, they remain a part of the contrada for life. Each contrada has colors, a symbol and mascot, a fountain, and a community church. The sense of pride and community that the contrada instills in its citizens is charming and so different from anything I've experienced before.

Although the semester has really just begun, Siena is already starting to feel like home. I look forward to a semester filled with culture, history, and of course, lots of great food! *Ciao* for now!

# 215 College Ave: The End of an Era

By **Tianne Nguyen '16**

After being able to live in the Pi Phi house on campus my sophomore year, I knew that I would always want to live with my fellow sisters for the rest of my time at Cornell. Knowing that I could trust my sisters, have fun with them, and have them as a great support system made me believe that they could be the best roommates ever. I have lived with my Pi Phi sisters ever since my sophomore year living in our beautiful house. I chose to live with two other Pi Phis before going abroad as a junior; now I live in our wonderful house at 215 College Avenue with 15 other Pi Phis.

This house has been passed down to Pi Phi seniors at Cornell for the past decade so that seniors can relive that enlightening experience of living in the house. It has been an amazing experience so far, being able to

come home every day from class always having someone to talk to, watch movies or Netflix with in our living room, and even cook elaborate and healthy meals with. Living with my sisters again has been so exciting with each story everyone brings to the dinner table each and every day. Making my last undergraduate memories at Cornell with my sisters will be emotional, but I will always cherish my time here and living with my Pi Phis.

It breaks my heart knowing that 215 College Ave. will not be inhabited by Pi Phi after 2017. But, sadly, all good things must come to an end, and even though Pi Phi will no longer be living at 215 College Ave., I am sure that the strong sisterhood of each upcoming senior member class will find a house that means as much to them as 215 means to us.



Seniors Megan Tsirch, Lauren Ransohoff, Savannah Woodworth, Katie Kennelly, Tianne Ngyuen, Renee Epstein, and Arianna Sandeen on Preference Day during Recruitment.

# Exciting Alumnae Events This Spring!

By **Olivia Matticoli '17**

It feels like winter in Ithaca is finally on the way out, as we begin to plan some exciting alumnae events for this spring semester! Our biggest event for this semester will be our annual Founder's Day celebratory brunch and cookie shine. We hope to welcome the Rochester Alumnae Club and any and all NY Delta sisters to enjoy a beautiful brunch prepared by our chef, Dickyi, and countless cookies and sweets to go around. Founder's Day is an annual opportunity for Pi Phis nationwide to recognize and celebrate the incredible women who founded our sorority, and we are so excited to be able to invite alumnae into our home to share this special day with our chapter. We love having alumnae present for our Founder's Day festivities, as they



Alumnae Cathy Tokman, Nicole Jibrine, Ellen Kaminski, and Bethany Douglas enjoying a snow day in NYC this winter.

are able to share their invaluable experiences as Pi Phis beyond their collegiate careers. We love learning from one another and being able to share our unique Pi Phi experiences! We have yet to set the date, but be on the lookout for a formal invitation soon!

The spring semester is also an important time to build a strong young alumnae base with our seniors graduating this May. Our senior transitions officer will hold events and programming to advise our sisters on how to stay involved with Pi Phi after they graduate. We are very proud of the positive involvement we have seen in our young alumnae in recent years and of how close are alumnae are. It goes to show how Pi Phi is truly for life, and we love seeing how special lifelong commitment is to our chapter.

Lastly, we are excited to host our annual Alumnae Brunch during Reunion Weekend in June. Last year was an incredible success, and it was truly a pleasure to meet and chat with so many women about their time in Pi Beta Phi at Cornell. We will have snacks and beverages at our house at 330 Triphammer and hope to see many more sisters reconnect over composite photos and scrapbooks after many years.

Don't forget to find us on Facebook at "New York Delta Pi Beta Phi Alumnae" to learn about upcoming alumnae events hosted by the New York Delta Chapter and catch up with fellow Pi Phis across the country and graduating classes. NY Delta is proud to have such strong alumnae who continue to help one another grow after graduation.

# *Sisters Squared: When Your Biological Sister Becomes Your Sorority Sister*

By **Marielle Ravosa '17**

Sisters are complicated: at times, your sister can be your absolute best friend, while at other times, it's difficult being around her. Most people only have the pleasure of interacting with their siblings while at home. However, I get to attend college with mine—and we fortunately became Pi Phi sisters, because being biological sisters at the same university just wasn't enough.

Thus far, going to college with my sister has been one of the most incredible experiences; it has brought us much closer together and I can't imagine attending school without her. There is nothing like having her there through the ups and downs of college, and knowing that she'll be there for you after a short four years. College can be an overwhelming process, and we all find ourselves missing home every now and then. Having a sister with you at school makes the whole process a lot less intimidating—and a lot more like home. What could be better than that?

The most exciting night that we've had so far has been Bid Night, which is the night that all freshmen who participated in recruitment find out what sorority they've been invited to join. My sister went into recruitment with an

*(continued on page four)*

# our alumnae share their news

**Jean (Zenner) Kaelber '44** writes, "Aging is what I'm doing, as gracefully as I can with a walker, otherwise I would sit! Delighted with five great-grands. Travels are out since '14, but this La Posada gives us much to enjoy, just like 'home!'" Drop her a note at 635 S. Park Centre Ave., #1216, Green Valley, AZ 85614; or [geojean.k@gmail.com](mailto:geojean.k@gmail.com).

**Carolyn (Hill) Rogers '59** writes that "2015 was a very busy year! Grandson Chris graduated from Cornell with a bachelor's in biochemical engineering in May, then with a master's on December 19. Shirtsleeve weather in Ithaca—two beautiful ceremonies. His sister, Amanda, graduated from Hopkinton, Massachusetts, high school and is a freshman at Lehigh University. Granddaughter Devon graduated high school and is attending Seton Hall; Nicole, her sis, entered high school and is an honor student. They all are, actually! My newest granddaughter, Hazel Ann, was born this December 5 and lives in South Portland, Maine. A real unexpected joy! Playing bridge regularly with Pi Phis from the Manchester-area alumnae club. We range from ages 65 to 90, and enjoy every minute. Golden Arrows were honored at a luncheon in November (the first one). I have my 60th Bangor, Maine, high school reunion in August." Catch up with her at 77 Buttonwood Rd., Hebron, CT 06248; or [chillrog@aol.com](mailto:chillrog@aol.com).

"It was a pleasure visiting the Pi Phi house at my 55th Reunion last June," writes **Carolyn (Carlson) Blake '60**. "The house looked lovely and the actives were very hospitable. The class of '60 enjoyed a great reunion, though **Syd Clark Menger '60** and I were the only Pi Phis

there. With grandchildren heading to college was hoping for a Pi Phi, but so far Kappa and Tri Delt are the choices. I'm still president (by default) of our small Bergen County alumnae club. Singing in a choir at church and also Ridgewood Choral Group keep me busy." Write to Carolyn at 111 Midwood Ave., Allendale, NJ 07101; or [ccllake38@aol.com](mailto:ccllake38@aol.com).

**Natasha (Soroka) Green '65** writes, "After living for decades in the sleepy village of Sewickley, Pennsylvania, just north of Pittsburgh, I am making a permanent move to the Big Island of Hawaii. I'll be on a small coffee plantation with a view of the Pacific. My new address is: 74-5719 Mamalahoa Hwy., Holualoa, HI 96725; or [natashasorokagreen@gmail.com](mailto:natashasorokagreen@gmail.com). Let me know if there is a local Hawaii chapter! Sounds like our Triphammer chapter is thriving!"

"My first six months of phased retirement has been a delight!" writes **Susan Murphy '73**. "Saw a lot of **Wendy McKee Wuest '74** and husband Bob this summer while they were at Skaneateles Lake; spent almost a week in North Carolina with **Sherri Koenig Steuwer '73** and **Mary Antenen McIlroy '72** trying to improve our golf game!" Get in touch with Susan at 49 Eastlake Rd., Ithaca, NY 14851; or [shm1@cornell.edu](mailto:shm1@cornell.edu).

"No earth-shattering news," writes **Debbie (Lyon) Fister '74**. "Grandson Aidan gets cuter by the day. Wish we could see him more often. Two new alpacas due next fall. Otherwise, I am busy editing, felting, knitting, or spinning." Keep in touch with Debbie by writing to 54 Sherwood Dr., Brockport, NY 14420; or [yarngirl1952@gmail.com](mailto:yarngirl1952@gmail.com).

**Cynthia "Cindy" Powell '76** spent a beach week at Corolla, North Carolina, in October with **Lynette (Turner) Prosser '77** and her family. "I am getting ready for a sabbatical leave next semester from UNC, and will be able to continue my genomic research work and collaborations as a visiting scholar at RTI International in RTP, North Carolina. Hoping to get back for the 40th Reunion and that other '76 Pi Phis will be able to make it. Can't really be our 40th?" Write to Cindy at 109 Bayview Dr., Chapel Hill, NC 27516; or send email to [powellcm@med.unc.edu](mailto:powellcm@med.unc.edu).

**Laura (Dake) Roche '81** writes, "We had a great time at a reunion kick-off wine tasting in New York City, catching up with **Doreen Robinson '80** and **Alyssa (Alia) Malanga '81**. I'm a reunion co-chair—looking forward to seeing everybody in June! (177 Steel Rd., West Hartford, CT 06118; or [ldakerocche@aol.com](mailto:ldakerocche@aol.com))

**Melisande "Meli" Valdes '88** writes, "It has been several years now that I have been living back at home in New York City with family, where I grew up, because of a family member's illness. She needed me, so home I went—first in the summer of 2009, when we traveled a bit to try some treatments, and ended up back at home again at good ol' Weill Cornell Medical Center/NY Presbyterian Hospital for her care/treatments. I apologize that I have had to lay low and be totally focused on family and health challenges. Hoping everyone is well!" Send her a note at 220 E. 63rd St., Apt. 7-D, New York, NY 10065; or [melisandevaldes@outlook.com](mailto:melisandevaldes@outlook.com).

## deceased

*We regret to announce the deaths of:*

**Emily G. (Ockenfels) Thomas '35**  
November 26, 2015

**Ruth M. (Mason) Phillips '37**  
September 21, 2015

**Gretchen (Eichorn) Facq '44**  
September 26, 2015

**Jacqueline F. (Fulton) Smith '50**  
September 9, 2015

**Judy (Lautensack) Paragamian '83**  
September 14, 2015

**Karen E. Brewer '94**  
December 21, 2014

## Sisters Squared: When Your Biological Sister Becomes Your Sorority Sister



(continued from page three)

open mind and wanted to find a sorority where she felt best at home, so I was unsure of where she would end up. However, I remember hearing my sister's name being read off of our bid list and running to give her a hug when she walked into the Pi Phi house later that night. I'm so excited to have her be a member of our house!

I'm looking forward to attending chapter meetings together, getting meals at the sorority house, spending time bonding at events, and having her experience sisterhood in another sense. It's going to be an amazing experience to have my biological sister become my sorority sister, and I believe that it will further strengthen our relationship.