President’s Message

Where has the year gone? I trust that you are preparing for the many activities that come with the end of your year in Lambda Sigma: the completion of service and fundraising activities you set as goals for the year and the selection of new members culminating in the Gift of Fellowship.

Service is at the heart of the Lambda Sigma experience. We cannot be true leaders if we are not committed to service to our communities and our fellow students. The national service project of working for and with disadvantaged/at-risk youth is two-fold: it enables us to help and inspire those who do not have the advantages we enjoy while expressing our gratefulness for the many ways our lives are enriched because we have the benefit of a college education and experience. Who knows if one of the youth you work with will be inspired to follow in your footsteps! Make the most of your service projects, regardless of the group you are serving.

The fundraising you undertake also has two purposes: not only do you raise funds so that you can complete the year in good financial condition (leaving some for next year’s group!) but you enjoy the fellowship of those in your chapter, strengthening the bond that you share in Lambda Sigma.

The selection of those that follow you is so important. The choices you make in the selection process determine the future of your chapter. That is why it is imperative that you closely follow the ritual steps as outlined on our website. The impression that you make during the recruitment process determines the quality of the applicants. Having a high-quality group of interested students makes your selection more difficult but also more rewarding as you set the stage by your example for how effective next year’s group will be in making the Lambda Sigma experience one that will make them better as persons as well as members of your institution. Choose wisely!

(continued on page 3)
A Q&A With Our Executive Secretary

Recently Dr. Neal Edman, Executive Secretary for Lambda Sigma, responded to a few questions about his role in, history with, and vision for the organization. Get to know one of our intrepid leaders a bit more below!

Besides working with Lambda Sigma as Executive Secretary, what is your “day job”?

My day job is living in blessed retirement since 2017. That said, any “free” time has been filled by my volunteer work at the New Castle Playhouse where I serve on the Board of Directors, produce plays, and serve as their lead grant writer, among other tasks. I’ve also been in over 20 musicals at the Playhouse since 2001, having played Teyve (Fiddler on the Roof) in two different productions, a highlight for me. I’m also the administrative adviser of the Lambda Chapter at Westminster College, PA. Otherwise, I’ve buried myself in all sorts of home repairs and renovations of our house that was built in 1950. Lowes loves me!

How did you get involved with Lambda Sigma as an organization at your school?

Westminster College had a strong commitment to the success of the chapter since its inception there in the 1970’s. Consequently, the advishorship was actually a formal part of my job description when I came to there in 1988. I’m very glad it was a requirement. At that time, and currently, the chapter had both an administrative advisor for continuity as well as a faculty advisor.

What is your favorite memory of your time with Lambda Sigma’s national board?

There are way too many fond memories to distill into just one, but I’d have to say that it’s the camaraderie, mutual respect, palpable dedication, and commitment that makes our time together so special. They have always been a fun-loving group of people who clearly enjoy what they’re doing. Couple that with how seriously they take the well-being of their students, chapters, and institutions, and you have the perfect match.

Is there something you particularly love about this organization?

Now that I’m retired and no longer work on a campus (which I did for 40 years), what I really love is still having the opportunity to work with students, either from home as Executive Secretary or as advisor to the Lambda chapter. It’s so refreshing and personally invigorating to be able to “hang” with students. They are the reason why I decided to enter the field of higher education administration and teaching. I learn new things from them every day. Hopefully, I can return the favor!

What vision do you have for Lambda Sigma in the next few years?

That’s a great question. Specific to my position as Executive Secretary is to systematize and digitize the way I do things as much as possible. That not only makes my work much less “manual,” but allows me to respond quickly and effectively to the needs of our students, colleagues, and institutions. Streamlining administrative duties can make a lot of people a lot happier. Also, although the organization wants to remain relatively small and agile in order to give our undivided attention to our students and chapters, we can grow in other ways such as offering more in the way of scholarships, leadership education opportunities, and hopefully the creation of Lambda Sigma alumni networks to help our student members in their career pursuits.

What is a fun fact about you that our readers may enjoy knowing?

As I mentioned earlier, I was pretty much born on the stage. My parents founded a community theater in my hometown of Poughkeepsie, NY back in 1956. They did just about everything in theater from acting and dancing to directing and producing, so it was nearly impossible for me to avoid it. My first musical comedy role was in a high school production of Oliver when I was eight years old. The school district bussed about five other boys and me from our grade school over to the high school to be in it. It was a hoot! I caught the bug and, to date, I’ve been in well over 50 musicals, as well as directed and produced a whole lot of productions. That’s in addition to playing lots of baseball and blowing my chance to be selected for the Little League All-Star Game back in 1968. I was “auditioning” to be the second baseman. There was a base runner already on first base. The next batter hit a rocket just to my right. I dove for the ball, came up with it, and proceeded to hurl the ball into left field. The look on my would-be manager’s face went from pure joy and astonishment to the face of agony and defeat. And that’s why I stayed in theater.

If you’re ordering for our next banquet, what meal do you have prepared that will make you most content?

Anything with sauerkraut! My wife can’t stand the look or smell of the stuff. We’ve been married for over 38 years, and apparently having a great exhaust system in our house has saved our marriage. Seriously, I love just about all foods; international and American, although I don’t like processed cheese. I’ve seen cows cry when they hear what we’re doing to their milk. I cry with them. Mooooo!

What advice do you have for the Lambda Sigma advisors, presidents, and members out there?

I’ll offer a very simple - and doable - word of advice. As Polonius urged his son, Laertes, in Hamlet, “This above all: to thine own self be true.” Of course, there are lots of different interpretations, but my take is that we should live our lives with a commitment to facts and truth; we nurture self-expression and individuality; we take personal ownership of our decisions and actions; and we do that, which in our heart-of-hearts as leaders, is always for the greater good!
My Experience and Tips as a Chapter Advisor

My name is Vinnie Birkenmeyer and I am the advisor of the Lambda Sigma Beta Eta chapter at Pace University-Pleasantville. I have advised Lambda Sigma for the last 5 years and am also a member of this chapter, serving as chapter president 10 years ago. Lambda Sigma is an organization I have grown to love from seeing what it can do for students in their sophomore year- a very important time during the college experience. I have advised many other organizations; however, because of the structure that Lambda Sigma provides and the unique timing of sophomore year, I believe this organization has the greatest potential for seeing students blossom into leaders on our campuses. But love and admiration for an organization is not enough to effectively advise a chapter.

The role of the advisor for any student organization is important; however, it is critical for this group in particular for the same reasons I stated above that makes Lambda Sigma so rewarding: membership begins at a time when students have not yet had large leadership roles, the lofty ideals of our organization invite new leaders to strive for aggressive goals, our membership is busy in all facets of their lives, and once the leaders feel comfortable, they are preparing to pass off the reigns to a new class of leaders. Because of that, I have relied on a few key tips each year to help set myself up as the best advisor I can be.

First, remember, this is their organization and for most conversations our role is to advise, not manage or supervise. There will be the times when we need to step in more (as mentioned next) but for the most part, we should be helping their ideas come to fruition, not implanting our own. Secondly, we can set up each board for success by overseeing the transition process. An outgoing President is planning induction, wrapping up their term, and finishing a semester. We can make sure there are basic transition documents and meetings set up between the two groups before the school year ends. Lastly, while I let presidents/boards make decisions, I make sure to provide the board with the context of what type of decisions we should be making around what time of year. I do this by using critical resources from Lambda Sigma national office and looking back on my notes from the previous year.

One of my favorite parts about advising Lambda Sigma (specifically the president and their board) is seeing all of the amazing things they do in their junior year, senior year, and beyond. What makes these instances worthwhile are the relationships built while the students were in Lambda Sigma. If you are a chapter president reading this article, I encourage you to think how you can more effectively utilize your chapter advisor, and if you are a chapter advisor I encourage you to think how you can better serve your chapter of Lambda Sigma. I promise the benefits of doing this will last well beyond the end of your year working together.

President’s Message (continued from page 1)

The Gift of Fellowship is a very public way you can demonstrate your chapter’s excellence on your campus: it signifies the end of one year and the promise that comes with the induction of a new generation of members. Be sure to invite family and friends of your out-going and in-coming members – but also invite your institution’s president, deans, and faculty members who have made a difference in your life. Perhaps ask each out-going member to invite a faculty or staff member who has been a mentor or has been particularly helpful so that s/he may witness the successful completion of your year in Lambda Sigma as well as greet next year’s group.

This is also a time for current officers to ensure that next year’s officers are receiving what they need to be successful in carrying out the legacy that you leave them. That means that you must have the record of what you have done –prepared in an orderly and understandable way – so that the new officers do not have to guess about what has to be done. If you received excellent records you understand how much they were of help to you. If you didn’t receive excellent records you know how much extra work you had to do to make this year a success. Help them how you wanted to be helped as you started the year.

Finally, on behalf of our hard-working National Board, thanks to all who read this for what you have done to make this year one that had an impact on others. As advisors, officers, and members, you are appreciated for the efforts you made to make this a memorable year.
Student Leaders

Lambda Sigma National Honor Society is overflowing with amazing student leaders at chapters spread across the country. In this edition of The Diamond we’d like to highlight just a sample of these students, both past and present members, who exemplify the four pillars of the organization.

Iota Chapter’s Asia Harden is the Public Relations Chair for Ole Miss, and she has taken their chapter to the next level on social media. She came up with an idea to feature a “Member of the Week” on their media pages, which helps members get to know each other better. She also made a video of members giving freshmen advice, which has received several thousand views. Through Asia’s efforts the Iota Chapter has become more visible on their campus.

Matthew Lee is a Biology major at Alvernia University and a member of the Beta Mu Chapter there. He is heavily involved as a resident assistant, tour guide, and peer notetaker. Matthew is also a student-athlete, as he plays on the Alvernia men’s soccer team. That involvement has not stopped him from contributing to the volunteer efforts of the Beta Mu chapter, either, as he tutors students at Milmont Elementary School in Reading, PA. There he has built strong relationships with at-risk students, where several students want to follow in Matthew’s footsteps and become student-athletes, as well! Matthew intends on becoming a Physician’s Assistant one day, where he can continue helping others.

At Louisiana Tech University’s Chi Chapter, their past three presidents have set an impressive bar for excellence. Ben Rice, 2015-16 chapter president, became involved with Student Government and served as SGA president for LA Tech after the end of his term over Lambda Sigma. He claims it to be “truly one of the best years of [his] life,” as he was able to represent students on campus and at the state capitol to fight for higher-ed funding. He graduated with a 3.98 in English and Spanish from the honors college, and is now teaching English in Cataphora, Spain for the 2018-19 school year. Ben plans to return in the spring in preparation for law school next fall. The stellar student was chosen as an Alpha Affiliate for Sigma Nu last year (one of the top ten graduating seniors in the national fraternity) and as the Tenets of Tech award recipient for the top male graduate of the university. Ben whole-heartedly contributes the starting point of his college success to Lambda Sigma.

One of Alpha Phi’s honorable members, Catie Hodges, has dedicated herself to being ambitious, successful, and a leader in her community. She is a triple major in health science, biology, and chemistry with a minor in forensic science. She is known throughout campus as being involved in almost every club and is very friendly to students, faculty, and high schoolers who are touring Ferrum College’s campus. Catie is the President of two clubs, part of multiple honor societies, and has made Dean’s List every semester. She volunteers with youth at her church, at blood drives on campus, and a volunteer at Franklin Memorial Hospital. Catie embodies the four pillars of Lambda Sigma and will continue to progress in leadership and service as she comes closer to graduating and furthering her goals in becoming the best version of herself.

Working as a student recruiter for the past two years, Marshall Schoth, 2016 president, was awarded the title Mr. Louisiana Tech in 2017. He is a published poet in LA Tech’s College of Liberal Arts Publication, The Quatrain, and, since then, has been a regular writer for the on-campus engineering and science magazine. Over the course of two previous summers Marshall has completed internships at both ExxonMobil Chemical Company in Baton Rouge, LA and GE Oil & Gas in Houston, TX. After graduation Marshall will work for ExxonMobil at their campus in Houston, Texas in the drilling and subsurface area of the corporation. He will spend time in the office and on oil rigs around the world.

After finishing the summer as an Orientation Student Leader, Fox Faircloth, 2017-18 chapter president, was appointed a supreme court justice and as the chief of staff for SGA. She plans to graduate in an impressive three years, this upcoming spring of 2019, with an undergraduate degree in business management. Fox is presently enrolled in the concurrent MBA program for LA Tech’s College of Business and aspires to finish in the summer of 2020. For her continuous hard work surrounding the business department she was just awarded the Outstanding Senior Scholar award.
We Built A Shed!

A dozen Lambda Sigma students from the Alpha Chapter braved the chilly Pittsburgh cold, all excited to serve at the Annual Pitt Make a Difference Day (PMADD). Little did we know that while working for Amizade, a global service organization that connects students to service trips abroad, we would spend the day growing as student leaders, becoming closer friends, and building a fully functional SHED! The organization had been meaning to rebuild the shed for a while, but as we walked outside we were shocked: all the pieces of the sides of the shed were sprawled across the ground, there were no tools, and the instruction book was tattered. Seeing this, everyone became energized. We all took on specific roles and went out of our comfort zones to interact with people we had not worked with prior. Throughout the process we got creative in tackling this challenge, such as designing our own makeshift hammer and screwdriver, and rebuilding a portion of the shed because the pieces were bent. Even as the clock struck noon and signaled the end of our service time, we chose to stay until we finished what we set out to do!

Reflecting on this experience we all agreed that this was one of the best team building exercises we had ever done. We all shared a common spirit of discovery and conceptualization that day. We worked together to build something that we didn’t initially think possible. It made me realize that service can come in many forms, and it is always important to contribute to what an organization actually needs instead of what we picture they need. To date this remains our favorite service activity because not only did we contribute to our community in an innovative way, but we also became closer friends.

Rashel Bajaj, President
Alpha Chapter

Lambda Sigma National Honor Society
Mission Statement

Lambda Sigma Society, a national honor society for second year students, is dedicated to the purpose of fostering leadership, scholarship, fellowship, and service among its members as they promote the interests of the colleges and universities they represent.

Book Buddies

Prior to the month of February, Jackson State University’s Beta Xi Chapter of Lambda Sigma reached out to a local elementary school to initiate a “Book Buddy” project where a few JSU students would be able to read and spend quality time with our youth counterparts. On February 13, the Beta Xi Chapter successfully hosted an early Valentine’s Day themed “Book Buddy” project at McWillie Elementary School—a cherished connection made through E-Board members who attended the elementary school in their prior years. Upon arrival to the classroom, the select group of students were enthusiastic about being able to connect with college students, just as we were to greet them.

The activities of the hour consisted of reading some of the students’ favorite books while having conversations about how their personal experiences related to the story. We then proceeded to create Valentine’s Day hats, some of which would be gifted to their mothers—as claimed by a few of the students. Leaving the first grade class to be as creative as they wished, materials used included markers, heart shaped foam stickers, and pipe cleaners.

President of Beta Xi Ja’Nasa Hardy-Hardin reflected on her experience stating, “As someone who loves to read, I enjoyed being able to read what the children were interested in. I also enjoyed watching the kids explore their own creativity while we did the arts and crafts activity.” Treasurer Brittany Thompson added, “I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the children and being able to read to them, which made me reminiscent of when I wanted to teach children of that age group. Being able to be a role model for that small amount of time made me feel privileged to be a member of Lambda Sigma and a student at JSU.”

Kassidy Neal, Editor
Beta Xi Chapter
Traveling to Serve

Although the Alpha Omega chapter is located in Western Massachusetts, we are excited to be working closely with a non-profit located in Eastern Massachusetts called Project PACK. Project PACK is a non-profit organization that assembles and distributes Post-Assault Comfort Kits to victims of sexual assault throughout Massachusetts.

On March 31st Project PACK will be having their largest event yet and attempting to pack 1,000 care packages, and Lambda Sigma is going to help! On the day of the event Lambda Sigma members will be travelling across the state to a city about two hours away to help out. It is one of the most exciting things we have done and definitely the furthest away event Lambda has taken part in all year, but we are excited to make Lambda Sigma’s presence known on a much larger scale. We are the only Lambda Sigma chapter in the state of Massachusetts and look forward to serving the community as a whole.

Thalita Neves, President
Alpha Omega Chapter

Lambda Sigma National Honor Society
Diversity Statement

Inherent in the purposes and ideals of Lambda Sigma Society is the understanding of the importance of diversity within the organization in achieving its goals. To this end, the National Executive Board of Lambda Sigma Society encourages its member chapters to actively pursue candidates for membership who would broaden and strengthen the local chapters by providing diverse backgrounds. This diversity within the organization should serve to enhance the potential for leadership and service by acknowledging the wide range of students within the college or university and their potential to contribute to the goals of the society.

The First Year

The new Beta Pi chapter of Lambda Sigma is wrapping up its second semester at Jacksonville State University. Those in the Beta Pi chapter have a common goal of reaching out to the students on campus to get them involved in a group that cares about each other and the community. Making Lambda Sigma known on JSU’s campus has not been challenging. The university hosts multiple open events every year so that everyone may get involved on campus and find at least one group in which to thrive. As charter members of Beta Pi, the main focuses from this chapter have been recruitment and involvement.

Beta Pi has been involved on campus through participation in “JSU in Lights.” Organizations congregate at a central point to have such a large impact in the lives of sexual assault victims across MA.

The kits we will be putting together consist of chapstick, deodorant, mouth wash, hair elastics, and other small items that can bring a little bit of happiness to women who have experienced the unimaginable. When speaking with Katie Vamosi, the Public Service Chair for Alpha Omega who has worked with Project PACK before, she said, “The kits are a little bit of hope and compassion for women who are waiting in the hospital, it gives them a sense of dignity after their experiences.” As a chapter, we will not only travel to volunteer our time to this great cause, but we will also use some of our funds to purchase items to be put into these care packages.

Alpha Omega has volunteered at multiple locations, like nursing homes and elementary schools near our area, but we are ready to make Lambda Sigma’s presence known on a much larger scale. We are the only Lambda Sigma chapter in the state of Massachusetts and look forward to serving the community as a whole.

Erin Sims, Charter Member
Beta Pi Chapter

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As you are recruiting next year’s class and executive board, make sure you tell them about the National Presidents’ Leadership Conference that takes place in the fall. This coming year we will be in Atlanta, Georgia, where Georgia Tech and Berry College will assist with hosting duties. The dates for the conference are already set for September 20—22, 2019.

We will be staying at the Embassy Suites near the Atlanta airport. In a departure from past conferences, we will NOT be on a college campus. This year we are trying a new format to ease the burden on travel and transportation for our members.

As always, the national board will arrange for travel to the conference if your chapter needs to fly in, and all costs are included while at the conference (food, lodging, transportation). This is a requirement of all chapters and an incredibly important weekend for new presidents. We learn about the mission of Lambda Sigma, the rituals, recruiting, reporting, and so much more. It’s also a great time to correspond with board members and fellowship with other presidents. Those who have attended can attest to the impact the conference makes!

Please make sure your new president marks these dates on their calendar or finds a replacement if they are unable to attend. Information will be sent out in June to all chapters regarding travel and details, so make sure you tell the new president to keep an eye out. We look forward to convening in Atlanta for what is sure to be another great conference!

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**Excellence in Teaching Mugs**

Blue ceramic coffee mugs with the Greek letters Lambda Sigma and “Excellence in Teaching” are available for $7.50 each. Contact Neal Edman to place your order. His contact information is listed on the website and on the last page of *The Diamond*.

**Graduation Honor Cords**

Many chapters provide honor cords to their graduating seniors to be worn at graduation. If you are interested in ordering these blue and gold cords, you may contact:

**Schoen Trimming and Cord Co., Inc.**

https://www.cordsandtassels.com/product/double-honor-cord/

or

(212) 255-3949

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**Service Activities Around the Country**

Here are some ways Lambda Sigma Chapters are serving their campuses and communities:

- The Alpha Zeta Chapter at Texas A&M helped convert shipping containers into mobile medical clinics, a tradition on their campus. The mobile clinics will be stocked with medical supplies and, with the help of Medical Bridges, will be shipped to developing countries. These clinics can now be found in countries such as Guatemala, Haiti, Bolivia, Tanzania and many more. Each clinic has been dedicated either to one of the fallen Aggies killed in the Bonfire collapse of 1999 or an Aggie World War II veteran.

- At Slippery Rock University the Alpha Theta Chapter has been helping to clean and renovate an abandoned home in town. Named “Robin’s Home” it will serve a housing program for female veterans and their children who are in need.

- The Pi Chapter has been busy with a variety of activities at Auburn University. They have gone shopping for *Toys for Tots*, volunteered at the local Boys’ and Girls’ Club, taken books to the pediatric wing of the local hospital, and written cards to servicemen and women for Veterans Day.

- Members of the Beta Gamma Chapter at the University of Pikeville held a food drive for the Tug Valley Women’s Recovery Shelter. The shelter feeds and clothes women and children, historically those coming from domestic violence situations. The shelter relies almost completely on volunteers like those from Lambda Sigma, so they were thrilled to help out!

- Alpha Kappa Chapter members at Georgia Tech had the opportunity to help at-risk children from Parklane Elementary School on a Saturday at the Atlanta Zoo. Members were paired one-on-one with a student, and by the end of the day many of the children did not want to leave their mentor’s side! This experience opened the door for the chapter to continue working with Parklane, and many Lambda Sigma members return weekly to keep working with the students there.
### Upcoming Deadlines

**May 1, 2019**

Scholarship Application………………………….Terri Mando

**June 1, 2019**

President’s Report………………………….Neal Edman
Advisor’s Report
Treasurer’s Report
Summary Report & Initiate List
Check for Dues ($40/member), along with Conference Assessment ($350 per chapter), National Scholarship contribution ($50 minimum), and Pin Orders ($7.50 each)

### Lambda Sigma Chapter Roster

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<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
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<td>Beta Pi</td>
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### National Board Directory

**Liaison chapters are listed under the corresponding board member’s name**

**NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

John Hauser
Thiel College
(724) 456-4066
jhauser@thiel.edu
Alpha Omega, Beta Zeta, Beta Eta, Beta Kappa, Beta Xi

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Amy Fountain
Mississippi State University
(662) 325-8938
afountain@comm.msstate.edu
Iota, Chi, Omega, Alpha Delta, Epsilon

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Neal Edman
Westminster College
(724) 813-6462
neal51@verizon.net

**PAST PRESIDENT**

Denise Rode
Northern Illinois University
(815) 751-8256 (cell)
drode1@niu.edu
Tau, Alpha Zeta

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Courtney Walters
North Carolina State University
(910) 736-2915
cbwalte2@ncsu.edu
Mu, Alpha Theta, Alpha Kappa, Alpha Pi, Alpha Sigma

**TREASURER**

Dinna Edgell
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
(910) 521-6625
dinna.edgell@uncp.edu

**COMMUNICATIONS/CONFERENCE COORDINATOR**

Tyler Henson
Middle Tennessee State University
(615) 584-4970
tyler.henson@mtsu.edu
Lambda, Rho, Alpha Phi, Beta Gamma, Beta Mu

**ADVISOR (BYLAWS)**

Cheryl Schratz Finlay
University of Pittsburgh
(412) 401-1774
cfinlay@pitt.edu
Eta, Alpha Gamma, Alpha Eta, Alpha Tau, Beta Epsilon

**ADVISOR (RITUALS)**

Megan Adukaitis
Alvernia University
(610) 796-8225
megan.adukaitis@alvernia.edu
Epsilon, Alpha Lambda, Alpha Mu, Beta Lambda, Beta Pi

**ADVISOR (SCHOLARSHIPS)**

Terri Mando
Pitt State Behrend
(814) 898-6164
tbm10@psu.edu

**ADVISOR-AT-LARGE**

Charles Johnson
University of Pikeville
(606) 367-1220
charlesjohnson@upike.edu

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Josie Hadaway
Berry College
(706) 329-5178
josie.hadaway@berry.edu

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Cailin Sims
Mississippi State University
(228) 218-4147
cs2860@msstate.edu

Visit our website at [www.lambdaSIGMA.org](http://www.lambdaSIGMA.org)