

THE RED DOOR

The Official Newsletter of Sigma Phi
Epsilon's Indiana Zeta Chapter

AND WE'RE BACK

Life in Masked Valparaiso

After not being on campus since March, the brothers of Indiana Zeta have finally returned to their home-away-from-home in Valparaiso. The house is a little different this year, as guests are only welcomed outside and the rooms now have limited capacity. Because of these and other changes, chapter is now held in the Neils Science Center, and all events must be held on campus. While these precautions may seem overcautious to some, the men of 705 Mound Street are following the guidelines carefully, and we eagerly await the end of the COVID season in the hope of life returning to 'normal'. Until then, the Brothers have been virtuously following university guidelines, diligently washing hands, and [brotherly] lovingly wearing masks in public spaces. This Fall semester has given us a good chance to follow our fraternal values.

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR: A SIGEP HERO

By Brother Matthew Yee

In times of crisis, we commonly celebrate heroes who rise to the occasion and act selflessly for the benefit of others. During this novel pandemic, we have considered health care workers, essential workers, and first responders to be heroes of the day. However, from a company called TechPoint based in Indiana, another hero has been detected. Its name is Covid Hero.

Covid Hero is an app designed by our SigEp brother, **Shreedhar Pandey**, and a team of four other college engineering students from schools located in Indiana. I recently interviewed **Shreedhar** about his summer experience. According to **Pandey**, this project was an internship/challenge sponsored by TechPoint. He described, “There were nine topics in total about COVID-19. Our team was in the category ‘COVID-19 Detection’.” **Pandey** functioned as the Project Manager and the Software Engineer on his team. Not only did he organize and facilitate weekly task meetings, but he also worked on many of the physical properties of the app. **Pandey** remarks, “I was responsible for taking the prototype and making an actual product out of it. I implemented the authentication system, settings, home page, and restaurants/businesses page.” So, what is Covid Hero? What does it offer and why should people use this app?

Covid Hero is the result of this challenge: “Identify a solution to regularly test/monitor Indiana’s citizens, quickly identify hotspots, and enable contact tracing and other measures to mitigate and limit further outbreaks.” **Pandey’s** team certainly met the challenge when they developed this multi-faceted app. Like many resources currently on the internet, Covid Hero reports COVID-19 cases, positivity rate, and deaths within the user’s county on the home page. But this is just the beginning of the app’s capabilities. It utilizes GPS technology to alert individuals when they enter a COVID-19 “hot zone”. **Pandey** pointed out that when traveling to new places, it is critical to be aware of local coronavirus conditions in order to be safe and well prepared. Additionally, there is a page dedicated to reviewing businesses and restaurants. Customers can add public safety reviews of the businesses they visit which will be visible to all other app users. **Pandey** articulated that the two goals of this feature are to assign businesses with an average COVID-19 safe rating and to give businesses an incentive to follow COVID-19 guidelines. Finally, the app has a built-in system that predicts COVID-19 cases in Indiana counties using specific algorithms. Covid Hero aims to be a “one-stop-shop” for COVID-19 resources.

Aside from the technology, I asked **Pandey** about his experience working on a team of students representing different universities from around the state, especially considering the complications of collaborating in a strictly virtual environment. He responded with remarkable positivity. “Even though this was a remote internship, we found it pretty easy to communicate because of Zoom, email, and regular meetings,” he said. “I think the virtual meetings became our advantage because we could meet at any time and it was really flexible.” He expressed his gratitude at this opportunity to work with such talented peers and to network with encouraging coaches and mentors.

Finally, I asked **Pandey** to describe the impact this research opportunity had on him. His answer should make the Valparaiso University SigEp community proud. “My biggest takeaway would be that it was great to be able to create a product that can make a difference in people’s lives. In these tough times that we are facing now, I saw a beam of hope.” During this pandemic when bad news seems to be around every corner, **Pandey’s** “beam of hope” is a refreshing relief. “Even the smallest thing, done wholeheartedly, matters.” I think that **Pandey** is saying that we can all find opportunities to be heroes.



*Shreedhar Pandey, above
Matthew Yee, below*



Matthew N. Yee

Executive Secretary

DID YOU KNOW?

- Brother **Shreedhar Pandey** was not the only SigEp working at TechPoint this summer. On another team, Brother **Brett Ladewig** worked on systems to aid professionalism in at-home offices.
- **Shreedhar’s** project won fan favorite out of 90 submissions, and Governor Ed Holcomb spoke at the virtual awards ceremony.



Above, Reutlingen University

Across the Sea: Brothers in Germany

Come September 12, Valparaiso, Indiana will be three Brothers short. SigEps **Zac Ahlers**, **Drayce Adams**, and **Kyle Langreck** will be studying electrical, biomedical, and mechanical engineering, respectively, abroad in Reutlingen, Germany at Reutlingen University. Despite being 4,400 miles from their typical campus, the Brothers will have little difficulty connecting with the rest of the chapter, primarily because of the heavier online emphasis due to COVID-19. The three men are excited to be studying abroad for the first time in their college careers and have little fear for what the semester may bring.

“I’m excited. Despite COVID, I think it’ll be a great semester. Everything is already online, so I’m excited to have that opportunity to stay involved in the chapter.”

- Kyle Langreck, ‘22

Bigger and Better: Fall Recruitment

With the Fall semester comes Fall recruitment, and this year's season did not disappoint. After hosting a few events in August (seen on page 6), the Recruitment Cabinet was able to extend bids to two men, **Morgan Arndt** and **David Fowler**. Both accepted and became brothers at Fall Bid Turn In. Afterwards, the Brothers grabbed their class dinners from various restaurants and ate on the new patio tables as a chapter. Following ritual, the men returned to the House for a late night breakfast, basketball, glow-in-the-dark spike ball, and lighted cornhole. While two men turned in bids on August 28, another one, **Jimmy Ernst**, also plans on turning in his outstanding bid soon. We are excited for the future of these men in our chapter.

Morgan Arndt is a Nursing junior from La Porte, Indiana.

David Fowler is a Business Management sophomore from Valparaiso, Indiana.

Jimmy Ernst is a Electrical Engineering junior from Lincolnshire, Illinois.



Morgan Arndt, above left

David Fowler, above right

*Below, the men of Sigma
Phi Epsilon at Bid Turn In*



CHAPTER EVENTS:

AUGUST

Despite not beginning until the seventeenth, August was filled with events, primarily geared toward the Fall Recruitment period.

- 17** First Day of Class
- 17** Fall Recruitment Begins
- 17** Recruitment Event: Volleyball and Yard Games
- 21** Patio Movie Night
- 22** Recruitment Event: Basketball with the Bros
- 26** Recruitment Event: Grillin' in the Grass
- 27** Service Opportunity:
- 28** Fall Bid Turn In

Philanthropy Fun: Preparing for SigEp Splash

With the Fraternity's annual philanthropy event coming up on September 26, the chapter has been hard at work making plans and preparations for Indiana Zeta's largest event. Our philanthropy is Hilltop House, a childcare center in Valparaiso right down the street from the SigEp house. While the events committee coordinates various teams and activities for the big day, the rest of the chapter has been busy asking local businesses for sponsorships. While SigEp Splash will not be able to be held in a pool this year, there will be plenty of opportunities to keep up the excitement. All money raised at SigEp Splash will be put towards purchasing gifts and supplies for Hilltop House at SigEp Christmas. Follow along with our social media pages to order a shirt, support our philanthropy, and learn more about Hilltop's great work.



Cabinet Spotlight: The Recruitment Cabinet

Though we've only been on campus for a little over two weeks, Jack Meyer, the Vice President of Recruitment, and his cabinet were able to hold three recruitment events and countless coffee chats before Fall Bid Turn In. While we've successfully passed Fall Bid Turn In, the grind never stops as the Recruitment Cabinet shifts focus to hosting the Balanced Man Scholarship program aimed at giving freshman the opportunity to better acclimate into campus life and become introduced to fraternal values. Between BMS interviews and events, Jack, Frank Mancari and Matt Morateck, the BMS Chairs, and the Recruitment Captains will have little trouble finding things to do for the remainder of the semester. The chapter is thankful for these men's dedication and effort in growing our chapter.



On right. Top to bottom: Jack Meyer, Frank Mancari, Matthew Morateck

VIRTUAL HOMECOMING

Though we are unable to hold a traditional homecoming this year, IN Zeta Alumni Corporation is still hosting a virtual homecoming on Saturday, September 26. The meeting will be from 12 to 1pm CT, with a chance to hear an update on the chapter and conduct the annual business of the Alumni Volunteer Corporation. Meeting login instructions will be sent to all registrants. For more information, please contact:

avc-communications@valposigeps.org

We look forward to seeing you there!

Final Thoughts: Words from the Editor

Most of the stories in the issue have mentioned COVID-19 in one way or another. Like many of our friends outside of Valparaiso, it has affected us immensely. Yet, despite the anxieties and precautions that come with a global pandemic, we are not defeated. Rather than giving up to the challenges this season poses, we are creating safe and alternative activities and events for our friends both in and outside SigEp this semester. This is an experience few of us will forget, and we strive to make the most of it.

Fraternally,

Evan Stock

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You can unsubscribe to some or all communications by the Sigma Phi Epsilon Indiana Zeta chapter. However, SigEp needs to communicate with you periodically about our chapter or events that may happen in your area, so we encourage you to allow general Fraternity communication through e-mail. SigEp makes every effort to minimize the number of e-mails you receive. To update your contact and/or communication, preferences email us at sigep.externalrelations@valpo.edu.

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