

The

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DOOR

**The Official Newsletter of
Sigma Phi Epsilon – Indiana Zeta**



Spring Memories

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Featured Stories

2026 Spring Edition!

This past quarter has been one of continued growth, recognition, and meaningful engagement for the brothers of Indiana Zeta. From our strong presence at the Carlson Leadership Academy in Chicago to new creative initiatives within the chapter, brothers have taken seriously the call to develop as leaders and to invest in one another. With twelve undergraduates in attendance at Carlson, the chapter was able to connect with SigEps from across the Midwest, sharpen leadership skills in position-specific tracks, and return with fresh ideas to strengthen our operations. That same weekend, Indiana Zeta was honored with the Sunago Award for Excellence in Mentorship, a reflection not only of the dedication of our mentor board, but of the culture of growth and accountability that defines our chapter. Together, these experiences point to a chapter that continues to build on its strong foundation with intention and purpose.

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A Reflection On Carlson Leadership Academy

Ben Summers, Sophomore Health Science Major

In February, I had the opportunity to travel to Chicago to attend the Carlson Leadership Academy hosted by the Sigma Phi Epsilon executives. Carlson gathers SigEps from across the region who serve as executive board officers, emerging leaders, and volunteers. During the academy, our chapter split into position-specific tracks where we attended leadership conferences with members holding the same roles from other universities. The goal of these conference sessions was to provide training on our position, create strategies moving forward, improve leadership, connect other chapters, and overall make each other balanced men. I attended the recruitment track, where I learned effective recruitment strategies and how to motivate others to actively engage in the recruitment process. Hearing perspectives from members of other chapters provided new ideas and approaches that I am excited to bring back to our chapter. Outside of the sessions, we also had the opportunity to connect with other SigEps and strengthen our bond as an executive board. One of my favorite memories was when our chapter met members from another university at the hotel pool, and we spent time talking and building genuine connections. Overall, Carlson Leadership Academy was a valuable experience that gave me new tools, confidence, and relationships that will help our chapter continue to grow.



Pictured Left To Right:
Jadon Alex, Henry Winterstein, Roger Blaney, Peter Gudinas, Cody Rusboldt, Jack Unger, Jack Magee, Max Johnson, Ben Summers, Luke Nieman, and Owen Galicia

Sunago Award for Excellence in Mentorship

Mark Robison, Chapter Counselor

Part: 1

The men of Indiana Zeta recently attended Sigma Phi Epsilon's annual Carlson Leadership Academy in Chicago over the weekend of February 13 - 14. With twelve undergraduates in attendance, Indiana Zeta was well represented at this national event, where the students had the opportunity to meet hundreds of brothers from 28 other chapters across the Midwest and to hone their skills in their respective roles. At the event's culminating dinner Saturday night, the national fraternity presented a number of awards. I am honored that Indiana Zeta was recognized with the **Sunago Award for Excellence in Mentorship**. SigEp created this award four years ago to recognize mentor boards that excel at collaborating with undergraduate chapters to improve the fraternity experience. In that time, Indiana Zeta has won the award three times.



The Sunago Award is a testament to the countless hours that our mentors devote to the chapter and to guiding the chapter with open ears – and with the constant North Star of living out the fraternity's principles. The past few years have been momentous in the chapter's history, including being recognized as Valparaiso University's Fraternity of the Year for the 25th straight year and winning its first Gold Buchanan Cup at Grand Chapter Conclave. The mentor board has played an important supporting role in helping the chapter reach those moments.

Sunago Award for Excellence in Mentorship

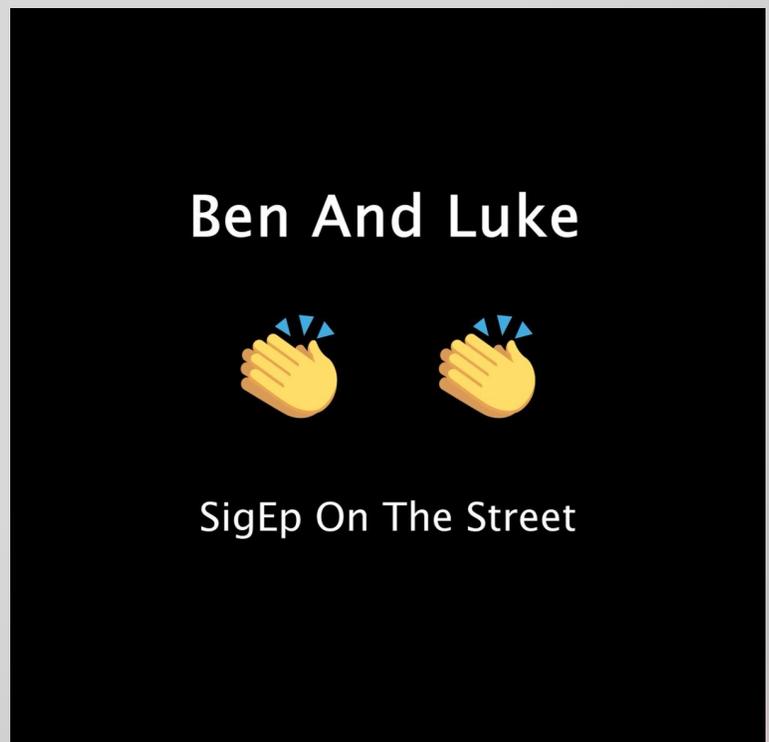
Mark Robison, Chapter Counselor Part: 2



It was especially gratifying to have several members of the Indiana Zeta mentor board in attendance at Carlson to celebrate the Sunago Award: Dr. Carolyn Whittier (Balanced Man Steward and mentor to the President); Ryan Bye (mentor to Programming); and Steve Janowiak (past mentor to the President). Also in attendance were Kevin Klug ('00, Treasurer of the chapter's Alumni & Volunteer Corporation) and recent alumni Noah Godsell ('24) and Jack Colwell ('25), both of whom taught as faculty for the Carlson Leadership Academy – and who are sure to join the mentor ranks in the coming years. Congratulations to all remaining members of the mentor board, including Marshall Miller ('14, mentor to SLC), Josh Mullens ('19, mentor to Finance), David Fowler ('23, mentor to Recruitment), Allen Marvel ('23, mentor to Communications), and Jim Jaeger (mentor to House Manager). Finally, many heartfelt thanks to the chapter for nominating us for this award and for being such a rewarding group to work with. As I've said many times, the mentors are all "adults with jobs" and could be doing *lots* of other things with our limited spare time. But we choose to spend time with the chapter because we believe in the excellent, formative experience you are creating for your members. It's a great day to be a SigEp!

SigEp On The Street Excitement Jack Magee, Junior Digital Media Arts Major

As the Current Vice President of Communications, I am very excited to be editing and filming SigEp on the Street. This is something that I have been a huge fan of since I joined the fraternity in Spring 2024. Already at the time of me writing this two episodes have been posted. One during our Superbowl watch party with Kappa Delta introducing the new Hosts Ben Summers and Luke Neiman and asking Brothers and our Guest about which Celebrity could they beat in a fight. The second one was filmed at the Valpo VS Indiana State Basketball game where we interviewed many people in the FSL community, a fellow SigEp brother from IN Delta Brandon Oelrich, and the new Valparaiso University President Reverend Brian Konkol. I am very excited to be creating content that shows what our brotherhood truly is. To be seen by our potential new members, chapter alumni, and the overall university community. The whole process, from planning, to filming, and then editing is some of the most fun I have had as a SigEp. Please stay in tune for more episodes coming soon!



Augustine Fellows

Korbin Opfer, Senior Geography & English Major

This past year, fellow senior Roman Van Meter and I have had the privilege of serving as leaders of the Augustine Fellows organization here on campus. The role carries with it both a stipend and, more importantly, the responsibility of cultivating thoughtful discussions rooted in the Christian intellectual tradition, creating in our small way a space where Athens and Jerusalem might meet. Over the course of the year, our discussions have ranged widely, from the proper Christian attitude toward charity and the ethical demands it places on us, to the complicated and often contentious topic of Christian Nationalism, and even into the rich literary and theological insights of the great Metaphysical poets, especially John Donne. Both Roman and I came into this role having participated in Augustine Fellows in previous years, and I can say without hesitation that the organization has consistently provided a robust and healthy space for grappling with the kinds of problems that have occupied Christian thinkers across the centuries, and how to live faithfully here and now.



One of the most encouraging aspects of this year has been the strong presence of brothers from SigEp at our meetings. Time and again, they have made up a significant portion of those in attendance, and their contributions have not gone unnoticed. I am continually impressed by my brothers' commitment to the Christian life, as well as their earnest and serious engagement with difficult intellectual questions. There is something deeply heartening about seeing that kind of curiosity paired with conviction.

Senior Reflection on Meteorology Journey

Adam White, Senior Meteorology Major

Being a meteorologist is something I've aimed for since childhood. After a close call with a tornado and flash flooding at a young age, I became instantly curious about the power and beauty of the weather constantly around us. Meteorology is a field where no two situations are the same, and that makes it both challenging and rewarding. Valpo has helped me reach my childhood goal with awesome professors, storm chasing programs, and memories that I'll never forget.



People who know me know that I have always loved the weather. It is a strange thing to be passionate about, but in the field of meteorology, it is how most in this generation decided it would be their professional path. I'm not sure if it was "Twister", or the Discovery Channel show "Storm Chasers", a close encounter with *fun weather*, or something else entirely for my peers, but there is an intrinsic connection between this year's Valpo cohort that seems like it began well before college. Some of the men in this cohort I have since called brothers for the last three years. SigEp has been a foundational and grounding place for my education in meteorology at Valpo. From my initiation until now, the meteorology majors in the chapter have helped each other succeed. Through 100-level introductions to 400-level artificial intelligence/machine learning weather modeling, we have been there for each other, and SigEp has been there for us. This unique accommodation has bridged the gap between academics and the social aspect of brotherhood— together, we have enjoyed the brotherhood that encompasses us all, continuously helping each other succeed in our final undergraduate classes and in professional aspirations.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello again, newsletter readers. As I put together this edition, I found myself thinking often about the small moments that shape our time in this chapter. Reading through the reflections in this newsletter, I was reminded how many blessings we experience without always realizing it. Sometimes it takes a trip to Chicago with brothers or a late-night video call from thousands of miles away to see just how lucky we are. Other times it is found in the simple act of sitting beside someone who understands you. These moments remind us that the connections we build here are not ordinary.

As always, if you have any suggestions on topics or items you desire to see within these newsletters, please contact me at korbin.opfer@valpo.edu or sigep.externalrelations@valpo.edu

Thank you for reading and I hope you have a great Christmas.

**Korbin Opfer -
Newsletter Chair**

SigEp

IN ZETA SLC

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 email. SigEp makes every effort to minimize the number of emails you receive. To update your contact and/or communication, preferences email us at sigep.externalrelations@valpo.edu.

MEET OUR CHAPTER

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