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BETA SIG NEWS

PENN STATE

Fall 2022

DAVID LADOV '75

Brotherhood, leadership, and the ties he made at Beta Sigma Beta

Beta Sigma Beta has been foundational for **David Ladov '75** from a young age. His older brother, Donald, who graduated in 1970, brought him into contact with the fraternity long before his own college career. While Donald was at the house, David witnessed the support and connections that come with being a member of Beta Sigma. When it came time for David to enroll at Penn State and decide where to live, the decision was simple. "I went to see a few other places, but knowing that my brother had these wonderful friends, joining Beta Sigma was easy."



David Ladov '75 today

Ladov recalls that when he was at Beta Sigma Beta, it was one of only two Jewish fraternities, along with Alpha Epsilon Pi. "I think there was a great deal of affinity with Beta Sig. I wanted to be with people I felt comfortable with, and they certainly made me feel that way."

One of his best memories from the fraternity was being able to share first-rate rooms with good friends in his senior year. "I was a chancellor at the house during my junior year. After being chancellor, you get priority in picking a room. I had the first pick after that. During my senior year, there weren't a lot of seniors. Basically, **Sam Becker '75** and I had the first two or three room picks. Four of us shared two different rooms: Sam Becker, myself, **Dave Maritec '76**, and **Stu Lessin '77**. It was really nice to spend time with new and different people. To this day, Stu Lessin is still one of my best friends."

*"I wanted to be with people
I felt comfortable with, and they
certainly made me feel that way."*

"Stu was a pre-med major and I was an IFS major. I was touchy-feely and Stu was more of a hard science guy. During my last semester, I made him take a course with me—women's studies. We had a ball. It kind of showed Stu a different perspective from all of his hard science courses. That last year had some of my fondest memories."

Ladov was actively involved with Beta Sigma Beta and the campus as a whole and he is appreciative of the abilities the fraternity gave him. "There were amazing leadership opportunities in the house and outside the house. I was president of the alumni association for a number of years and Sam Becker was my treasurer. Economics is a big part of running the house. There is no one I would trust more, then or now, than Sam."

"I also was very involved outside of the house. I was the vice president of the Penn State Interfraternity Council (IFC), so I spent a lot of time dealing with other fraternities and fraternity issues. I also helped to run a food co-op through the Organization of Town-Independent Students (OTIS), I was on the board of directors for the Penn State

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DAVID LADOV '75

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Daily Collegian and I was on the concert committee as an IFC rep. I had many great experiences in the University.”



David Ladov '75 in his senior photo in La Vie yearbook.

Toward the end of his undergraduate degree, Ladov determined that law school was the next step in his career, so he and Sam Becker took a road trip to look at different schools. “Starting at Washington, we went down I-95 and saw schools in the South, ending up in Atlanta. We both wanted to see Emory University, which is where I ended up. It was very different to go to school in the South — it was less competitive, more collaborative, and the weather was a lot better!”

During law school, Ladov began working at a law firm with Marty Sobel, his brother’s fraternity brother. “They had lived together during law school in Pittsburgh. It was the perfect example of why this fraternity was so important in my life. I would never have gotten my entry as a law clerk without my Beta Sig brothers. After law school, I had opportunities to stay in Atlanta, but felt I needed to come back home. The ties that I had with my brothers and my parents (who were aging) brought me back to the area that I grew up in — Norristown. I have lived here since then.”

“Without Beta Sigma, I wouldn’t have had as much fun attending Penn State as I did. Beta Sig was my primary source of entertainment. We had tremendous parties during my tenure at the house. We had a great social environment that I would not have had in an apartment. It was just a lot of fun. When you are an eighteen- to twenty-two-year-old, fun is an important factor.”

“I got a lot out of the fraternity, and not just while I was there. I have ongoing relationships with dozens of brothers. I’ve had the ‘pleasure’ of representing a bunch of them in their divorces. My wife has often said, ‘when I married my husband, I didn’t realize I was marrying the Beta Sig fraternity as well!’”

“I got a lot out of the fraternity, and not just while I was there. I have ongoing relationships with dozens of brothers.”

Even now, Ladov experiences the bonds that his fraternity family has left him. “For me, it’s been an amazing, positive experience in my life. I hope as many other people get out of it what I got out of it — the same kind of lifetime friendships. My brother, Donald, had these amazing relationships until he died in 2007 at the age of 59. To this day, I could call on any of my brother’s Beta Sig brothers. Getting together with his brothers who knew him so well is comforting.”



David, his brother Donald, also a Beta Sig brother, and their mother at David's daughter's bat mitzvah in 2000.

“At my wedding, I had brothers in the wedding party and even more in attendance. They’ve come to the kids’ bat mitzvahs and when my daughter was married, they were at the wedding. It’s not like my friendships with my fraternity brothers stopped when I graduated. Far from it — we’ve remained close friends to this day.”

“Why do I give back to Beta Sig? I want to give whatever I can to continue the fraternity experience. It takes money to run anything. An alumni association is a nonprofit that needs money to send out newsletters. You get out of something what you put into it. It’s not just giving it and not getting back — you get it back double or triple fold!”

*Have an update
you'd like to share?*

Email us at alumninews@affinityconnection.com



**WHAT DOES IT MEAN
TO BE A BETA SIG AS
AN UNDERGRAD?**



[betasigmabeta_psu](https://www.instagram.com/betasigmabeta_psu)

Visit the undergraduates on
Instagram @betasigmabeta_psu for weekly undergraduate
spotlights and updates on the fraternity at Penn State!

SAMUEL BECKER '75

The greatness of the institution made me who I am today

When **Samuel Becker '75** (Becker@blankrome.com) started college in 1971, there were no smartphones, texting, or email. “In fact,” he said, “Those in the dorms spoke to our parents once a week on Sunday. Unless you had friends in State College, you were on your own in a new world with a roommate you didn’t know.”

“I wasn’t interested in pledging in the fall, but the only fraternity house I knew of was Beta Sigma Rho. One of my high school friends, **David Casnoff** (may he rest in peace), was a legacy and one of my father’s best friends, **Art Russakoff**, had a son Harvey who graduated in 1971 before I started. From my dad’s point of view, Harvey was a good reference, it was a Jewish fraternity and if I wanted to join I could.”

Becker pledged in the winter of 1972 in a class of three, with only two still there by initiation. “I became a brother in time to find out that Beta Sigma Rho was merging with another national Pi Lambda Phi. My pledge brother disaffiliated in a year or so.”

So, in fall of 1972, they moved into a house that was fairly empty. “We had 29 students at one point,” he said. “There were financial problems and while **David Rosenberg '74** did a great job rushing pledges, we were an organization in trouble. A group of alums headed by **Gene Chaiken '62**, **Marty Leonard** and **Richard Grossman '54** talked to our bank and guaranteed the loan. They also knew they needed to bring in a leader at the alumni level who could get things under control. They turned to **David (“El Dirt Diablo”) Lipson**.”

Becker remembers that by the end of 1973, the alumni told the actives that they needed to take in Pi Lam members since Pi Lam did not have a house in State College but had one at the Altoona Campus. “Pi Lam gave us a wide mix of characters from academic types to Denny who wanted to be a State Trooper to Wild Bill,”

he remembers. “The cultural clash was enormous. Not so much with the guys who moved into the house, but with the onslaught of Pi Lams from Altoona who wanted to take over the house on weekends and wanted us to host them. Needless to say, they were bigger drinkers than the Jewish kids from PA, NJ, and NY.”

The 1974-1975 school year was the year that change began. “Dirt was alumni president,” he says, “**Alan (Baumus) Greenbaum** was alumni treasurer, and I had been elected undergraduate treasurer in the spring of 1974. Beta Sigma Beta (as it was now known because we couldn’t use the Rho and we were the Beta chapter of Beta Sigma Rho) began the process of splitting from Pi Lam and being independent. I was involved for the undergraduates.”

“Beta Sig alums and brothers in the classes of 1973 and 1974 who mentored me and helped me grow..”

Several years later, after Becker became a lawyer, he helped document the buying of the fraternity house and securing the permission to be an independent chapter. “We formed the Beta State Foundation and we raised money to fix the house,” he said. “I served on the Alumni Board for about 15 years starting in 1979 and served as alumni vice president and then alumni president for the two school years of 1987-1989.”

“What was special to me about Beta Sig was the number of alums and brothers in the classes of 1973 and 1974 who mentored me and helped me grow from the 17-year-old kid I was when I started pledging to the man I became. That was the greatness of the institution and I hope it continues.”

STUART LEVIN '71

Joining Beta Sigma Beta made Penn State more personal for me

Stuart Levin '71 (stuartlevin9@gmail.com) says that joining Beta Sigma Beta (or Beta Sigma Rho, as it was known when he pledged) made Penn State more personal for him. “The size of Penn State campus and number of undergrads made me want to join a fraternity to better meet other students.

He says that it stood out from other fraternities on campus. “Most genuine members who did not require conformity.”

He says that one of his favorite memories are of “The great debate as to what to do with some extra money we had one term. One faction wanted a “Schvitz” and I can’t remember what the other factions wanted.”

Levin says that Beta Sig impacted his life long after graduation “Beta Sig bestowed many lifetime friends that are still my closest friends.”

He says that he donates to the chapter for one important reason. “I give back in the hope that young men can experience some of the same wonderful experiences I got.”

Without Beta Sigma Beta, I wouldn’t have made the lifelong friends I made.



Beta Sigma Beta Through the Ages

Check out this throwback of the Beta Chapter from Penn State's Le Vie Yearbook! The image is from the 1989 edition of Le Vie, brothers, what do you remember about the Regatta, or Ebony and Ivory?

Do you have any throwback stories or photos to share? Send them in to be featured in our next communication at this webpage <https://tinyurl.com/2p99e4b5>

Marks of Excellence

Ya Gotta Regatta

—by Karen Rasmussen

"Ya Gotta Regatta" was the phrase that took over campus last Spring. What did this mysterious nautical-sounding command mean? It turned out to describe a transformation. For one day, Bald Eagle State Park was changed into a beach, complete with tanning bodies and live bands. Beta Sigma Beta, as organizers of the event, was synonymous with Regatta. However, the brotherhood participated in many other events throughout the year in order to strengthen and enjoy the bonds of brotherhood.

Regatta was, by far, the most visible activity of the fraternity. "We look forward to it all year as a way to have fun and raise as much money as we can for the cancer society," explained Todd Nurick.

As well as Regatta, the brothers sponsored Ebony and Ivory week. "It's a way for our fraternity to get to know a black fraternity and

to work on breaking down some of the barriers between the two groups," explained Nurick.

In addition to Regatta and Ebony and Ivory week, Beta Sig brothers tried to serve the community in other ways. Some worked with elementary school-aged children and day care centers by taking children on mini-field trips around campus. Nurick stressed, "Our house is socially aware. We're all best friends. The tightness of the brotherhood attracted me over anything else. It's something you can see."

Looking back, Evan Kann of Beta Sigma Beta Fraternity flashes a smile as he departs the room.

Going to the hoop, Keith Singer drives to the basket against his Beta Sigma Beta brother, Steve Cohen, as they play a short in-house game of one-on-one.

Layout by Gregory Robino

—by Laurie Siegel

—by Carl Wolf Studios

FRONT ROW: David Kebhner, Marc Zamsky, President J. Alex Witter, Treasurer Jeff Silberman, Jeffrey Stein, Adam Cohen. SECOND ROW: Jonathan Bach, Doug Davidson, Jonathan C. Wilk, Andy Leibowitz, Keith Singer, Bruce Shapiro, Steven Milstein. BACK ROW: Ray Lopez, Kevin Steinberg, Dave Kleinman, Steven Cohen, Michael Ginsburg, Steve Rock.

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Beta Sigma Beta



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If you did go check out the throwback photo?
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Email updates@affinityconnection.com and let us know who is in the photo, the year, and what was going on!