

Chapter Profile

Chi Phi, Theta Chapter

Spring 2021

1981 and 1985 15th Street, Troy, New York 12180
RENSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

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SUMMARY

Located on the corner of Sage and 15th Street, Chi Phi is a convivial and diverse group of Brothers who take pride in their values: Truth, Honor, and Personal Integrity. As a Brotherhood, we love enriching our local community, forging lifelong connections, and building better men. Since 1878, The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi remains the gold standard for Greek life and shines as the paradigm for a fraternity with excellent commitment and leadership.



ORGANIZATION AT A GLANCE

Chapter Size	37 Members
New Members	4 Members
Average Cumulative GPA	3.32
EHS Safety Score	96.31% and 95.07% Spring 2020
Philanthropy Dollars Raised	\$1050
Community Service Hours	10.1 per Member
Live-In Capacity	38 Members
Majors	
School of Business	3 Member
School of Engineering	25 Members
School of Science	10 Members
Cohorts	
Undergraduate, Class of 2024	4 Members
Undergraduate, Class of 2023	7 Members
Undergraduate, Class of 2022	9 Members
Undergraduate, Class of 2021	14 Members
Graduate	3 Members

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Score: 3.8 / 4

PREPARED BY: Shin Sasakura

Academic excellence is a hallmark of the Theta Chapter of Chi Phi Fraternity. The Theta Chapter currently stands as the third-highest ranked Interfraternity Council affiliated chapter by grade point average within the Rensselaer Greek community. As we have increased our expectations of our Brothers, we have continued to achieve and accomplish more than ever before. A significant responsibility of Chi Phi is to foster the academic success of its members, typically through study hours, in-house tutoring, and grade monitoring by the Scholarship Chairman. While participation in programs like our study hours and in-house tutoring is voluntary, there is an overwhelming turnout among the Brotherhood. Our Chapter recognizes the importance of academic excellence, and each Brother strives to reach their fullest potential. Theta Chapter is honored to be recognized for its commitment to academic excellence and high academic achievement within the Rensselaer Greek community.

In addition to the academic resources for Brothers, Chi Phi ensures that its new members meet the 2.5 GPA minimum long before the initiation process and provides new members similar academic resources. We encourage every Brother and new member to take advantage of ALAC drop-in tutoring, review sessions, and office hours to begin developing long-term relationships with peers and faculty to prepare them for the rigorous academic journey offered at Rensselaer.

The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi loves to be a part of its members' success stories. Chi Phi's study hours have helped Brothers and new members to maintain higher test scores and feel more confident about

upcoming exams and homework. During these study hours, each Brother can help another with any academic difficulties they may encounter. Brothers are encouraged to tutor others, both Brothers and non-Brothers alike if they are well-versed in the subject. The prioritization of academic success is a key value of the Theta Chapter of Chi Phi and we take pride in our ability to help anyone we can. The Scholarship Chair of the Chapter also monitors the grades of everyone in the Chapter and ensures that the GPA of each Brother is above our requirement. If the Scholarship Chair notices that a member is struggling academically or letting their grades slip, they will set up an individual meeting with the member to help determine the problem that the member is having. Brothers whose GPA falls below our standards make an academic plan with our Scholarship Chair to set the Brother on a path for academic success. Through this plan, the Scholarship Chair will help them increase their study hour attendance, allocate time for schoolwork, form study groups, learn from peer mentors, and reacquaint them with Institute academic resources.

In the process of recruiting new members, Chi Phi emphasizes the prioritization of academics from the very start. This does not just mean maintaining a satisfactory GPA; it includes contributing to the academic success of everyone in the Chapter, whether through tutoring for specific classes or general academic guidance. All Brothers and new members continually uphold these standards; our chapter received a 3.32 GPA collectively last semester as we attempt to beat that record this semester. Thanks to the high expectations of our Brotherhood to uphold the Chapter's academic standards, we continue to improve and be respected by members of the Rensselaer community.

All in all, the Chi Phi Fraternity at Rensselaer prides itself on having an excellent academic framework. Not only do Brothers and new members have plenty of resources, such as study hours and tutoring, but also the Total Membership Education program helps to further educate the entire

Chapter and enrich the Chi Phi experience. Because of the opportunities we provide for our Brothers, our Chapter has been able to continually excel and reach new heights with each coming semester.

MORAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Score: 3.6 / 4

PREPARED BY: Zachary Burpee

The Theta Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity is dedicated to upholding a responsibility to the community through the moral and cultural development of its members.

One way in which the Theta Chapter places a large focus on the development of our Brotherhood is by emphasizing personal responsibility and creating leadership opportunities within the Chapter. The Theta Chapter believes that leadership is most effectively developed through experience and positive recognition. As a result, the Chapter holds elections twice a year and currently has nine executive board positions, four additional elected positions, seven appointed positions, and four judicial board positions.

All of these positions allow members of the Brotherhood to mature their leadership styles, learn how to delegate work, motivate teammates, organize events, and coordinate with external organizations. Each elected officer is in charge of a committee dedicated to helping them manage their workload. Committees are created based on the interests of the active Brotherhood to ensure that committee members will be dedicated to its mission and feel rewarded by the work they put into the Chapter. Brothers are encouraged to hold as many positions as possible throughout their time at Rensselaer, which brings a diversity of opinions to the Chapter and Executive Board. Heterogeneity in thought is important for considering new ideas and approaches to making our chapter operations a success.

Theta Chapter also hosts a Total Member Education program dedicated to enriching the Chi Phi experience and preparing the Brothers for professional success. The events hosted by the Total Membership Education Chair emphasize the importance of continued learning by teaching new skills to the Brotherhood or developing learned skills to a higher degree. Our programming ranges from resume workshops and interview tips to virtual cooking sessions and mental wellness workshops. Due to the challenges of hosting in-person workshops and protecting the welfare of our Brotherhood, the Theta Chapter hosted its Total Member Education programming virtually this semester.

The virtual environment has facilitated engagement from our Alumni base who have attended and hosted Total Member Education events. In recent years, some of our Alumni have sponsored events on behalf of their employers—most notably MathWorks and IBM. These professional Alumni events have helped our graduating seniors find employment and begin their careers. We have begun hosting professional development nights where Brothers gather virtually to apply to internships together and give each other feedback on career application materials such as résumés and cover letters. The Theta Chapter takes pride in our Total Member Education program, as it is the cornerstone piece of the infrastructure installed to develop Chi Phi gentlemen for life and honing them to the best they can be. The diverse variety of in-depth topics that our programming features ultimately educates the whole person and introduces our Brothers to novel activities they otherwise would have never had exposure to.

The Theta Chapter makes a dedicated effort to educate every new member about our National Fraternity and Theta Chapter's history, Chapter leadership, risk management, and philanthropy. The New Member Educator will host weekly meetings where new members learn about these topics and they invite Chapter leadership to speak about their responsibilities. This helps new members better understand how officers work together to form a

more cohesive unit that runs Chapter operations. New members are tasked with electing members of their own class to serve as the President, Project Manager, Historian, and Social Chair to begin developing critical leadership skills necessary in preparation for them to eventually take on Chapter leadership positions as active Brothers. Active brothers fully support and encourage new members to fill these leadership positions and acknowledge their value in producing effective leaders in the future. The New Member Education program develops young men into ethical leaders who will continue building upon the foundation built at Chi Phi throughout their time at Rensselaer and beyond.

The rituals and traditions of the Theta Chapter reflect its core values and connect the Brotherhood to generations of Chi Phi brothers that came before them. They are the most fundamental elements of our fraternity. Performing our rituals is critical to maintaining our Chapter's character and passing down our traditions. It guarantees that Brothers will understand the significance of our history and ensures that they will be maintained in the future. However, due to the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to conduct them virtually instead of performing them in person in accordance with the appropriate COVID-19 guidelines.

Finally, the Theta Chapter is dedicated to maintaining its image as a hard-working and scholarly Fraternity on campus. Any member who dedicates time towards improving the Chapter house, improves their GPA, or does more than the required community service is recognized for their commitment to our core values by the Brotherhood at our weekly Chapter meeting. Overall, through the requirements and teachings of the Fraternity, the Theta Chapter is successful in promoting the cultural and moral development of its members in the community and on campus at Rensselaer.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Score: 3.6 / 4

PREPARED BY: Anton Kapitman

The Chi Phi Fraternity always seeks to engage with the local community at a personal level and support them through any means necessary. We pride ourselves on our strong commitment to giving back to Troy, the community that we are privileged to be a part of. With COVID-19 affecting the community in a new and unique way, our Fraternity decided to adapt our operations as such and help out by being more involved in community service. The Theta Chapter limits its in-person philanthropy service groups to five or six Brothers at a time to promote social distancing and mitigate the ever-looming threat that COVID-19 poses.

We have continued our strong relationship with the Regional Food Bank, an organization that seeks to reduce food waste and provide it to those who are less fortunate in the Capital Region community. The Chi Phi Fraternity sends volunteers multiple times a week to help sort food that then gets delivered to soup kitchens and food pantries. In an era where food waste is prevalent in nearly any food establishment, such as restaurants and supermarkets, we believe that this is a great sector in which we could help prevent food waste and feed the less fortunate.

Not only does the Chi Phi Fraternity help indirectly to combat food waste, but we also seek personal engagement with the community at the Victorious Life Christian Church and the Provisions Food Pantry, both located in Troy. The Victorious Life Christian Church acts as a soup kitchen that feeds the local Troy community at no cost; our Brothers help out once a week, mainly by tidying up the dinner tables and kitchen, allowing the

Church's operations to go more smoothly and relieving the responsibilities of those who work hard to organize these events. The Provisions Food Pantry provides food in the form of groceries and other essentials to families who need additional support. Chi Phi Brothers volunteer once a week by gathering food for families from the pantry and package it to hand off to customers. Before COVID, families were able to collect food on their own; however, to comply with COVID guidelines, the organization looked for volunteers to perform these activities to limit person-to-person contact, and we were excited to help.

While the Brothers of Chi Phi are dedicated to helping out through community service, we understand that donations can also go a long way. Every spring semester, the Brotherhood raises money on the scale of around \$20,000 for the St. Baldrick's childhood cancer research foundation, in addition to shaving our heads to show our support. We realize that cancer is still an issue that affects children throughout the world, but with COVID plaguing our community and taking the world by storm in such a short time we decided to redirect our efforts and help out with this issue instead. We were able to find an organization, The Unity House of Troy, that provides emergency relief for families and individuals hit by the pandemic in our local community. Some of these donations go towards people directly affected, such as those who were hospitalized, while other donations go towards people affected indirectly, such as those who lost their jobs due to layoffs. We raised and donated \$1,050 for COVID-19 relief to help local families and members of the Troy community get back on their feet as the pandemic starts to taper off.

In the following semesters, we plan to continue our community service efforts with the Regional Food Bank, the Victorious Life Christian Church, and Provisions Food Pantry. The Chi Phi Fraternity also wishes to return to fundraising for the St. Baldrick's foundation in the Spring of 2022 and host all of the fun events we do annually. In spite of the challenges in organizing

philanthropy events given the current public health circumstances, the Theta Chapter has been successful in servicing our local community and is planning to expand its reach in the upcoming Fall 2021 semester.

HUMAN CONNECTION

Score: 3.7 / 4

PREPARED BY: Richard Gonzalez

The Theta Chapter entrusts our Social and Brotherhood Chairmen to propose, budget, and organize events that strengthen the bond that runs deep among our active members. These events are designed to give Brothers the opportunity to further enhance their development as Chi Phi gentlemen, sophisticate their connection to the Capital Region and Rensselaer at large, and enrich their college experience. We participate in a wide variety of events with the added goal of diversifying our Brotherhood's interests and uncovering new passions they may choose to continue with during their tenure at Rensselaer and beyond.

Due to the unprecedented public health crisis, the Theta Chapter has elected to host many of our events online on our Discord server, with the addition of small in-person events in accordance with The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi COVID Action Plan, Institute Health and Safety Protocol, and local COVID-19 guidelines. Thus, we have observed a significant increase in virtual Brotherhood event participation.

The virtual platform allows active Brothers whose presence would normally be hindered by factors like an arduous academic workload coupled with the logistical challenges associated with travel, be it short or long distance, to now attend events with ease. This has proven to be especially effective in boosting the attendance of our semesterly Alumni Weekend since many of our alumni have continued on towards building successful, yet time-demanding careers that have helped shift industry paradigms within their respective fields.

The Theta Chapter encourages thought diversity and embraces input from its membership. Active Brothers are welcome to pitch ideas and give input with regards to what they think might make for quality and fun Brotherhood events. However, the Social and Brotherhood Chairs ultimately decide whether these events will help foster lasting relationships among brothers, all while ensuring that these events can be put on while adhering to Institute, state, and federal COVID-19 guidelines.

Weather permitting, we have had the privilege of exploring some of New York State's natural wonders and observing its beauty while hiking Sleeping Beauty Mountain and Minnewaska State Park. Our chapter has truly taken the motto "Enjoy Troy" to heart—our leadership organized bowling nights this semester at Uncle Sam Lanes where groups of five or six of our Brothers went to kick back, relax, and knock some pins down together. We have also traveled to Jiminy Peak, where Brothers "shred" the mountains on snowboards and skis. Throughout the semester, the Theta Chapter has also hosted socially distanced sports competitions, organized by our Sports Chair, for Brothers to continue cultivating a culture of athleticism and healthy competition. In the interest of COVID-19 policy compliance, we determined cornhole and ping pong tournaments could be run with strict distancing measures enforced. Each of these tournaments consisted of eight people. The cornhole tournament was played in a round-robin style, comprised of four two-person teams. Ping pong was played in a tournament bracket with single-person teams. Our leadership found that these events have significantly improved the Brotherhood's overall mental health and helped many cope with the stresses associated with living in a post-COVID society.

The Theta Chapter holds firm that maintaining sanitary, clean, and well-kept living quarters further promotes the familial bond felt by our members through the shared responsibility of keeping our Chapter house shipshape. Groupings of Brothers are assigned to care for the bathrooms

and hallways of the floor that they live on in our chapter house. This system has indirectly led to the development of floors with their own “personalities” and cultures, establishing smaller communities within the house where Brothers hold each other accountable for making sure their living spaces are kept in superb condition.

All members of our Brotherhood are obligated to complete an assigned cleaning shift that rotates on a weekly basis, regardless of whether they are living in or out of our Chapter house. The institution of these cleaning shifts strengthens the feeling of shared responsibility that our Brothers perceive for our home away from home. All out-of-house Brothers visiting the Chapter house to complete their assigned cleaning shift *must* be masked in strict accordance with the Theta Chapter of Chi Phi COVID Guest Policy. Additionally, we have communal whiteboards and chalkboards that all of our active Brothers can use to express their thoughts, share memes, encourage each other, and reflect on memorable moments that occurred during our events. This medium allows Brothers to have fun together, make each other laugh, and keep a lighthearted atmosphere in our community in between classes or the lulls of everyday life.

Chi Phi, America’s oldest social fraternity, maintains a rich tradition of developing men and expanding their worldview by giving our members novel experiences that they may have never had otherwise and will keep for the rest of their lives. We seek to culture our Brothers through engaging and diverse programming that can be done with public health and the welfare of our members as our number one consideration. The Theta Chapter is unique in that we offer a more holistic approach to new experiences through our events as opposed to other on-campus special interest clubs that solely host affairs related to one specific topic. Our dynamic style of keeping active members, Brothers taking their Arch away semester, and our alumni connected through the Discord platform coupled with small, intimate in-person events have been wildly successful in maintaining the close bond

our members feel between each other and helping active Brothers find professional opportunities to ignite successful careers. The Chi Phi experience ultimately sophisticates the individual, forges well-rounded men, and prepares them to be cognizant, productive members of society.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Score: 1.8 / 2

PREPARED BY: Zachary Ward

The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi Fraternity is a proud recipient of many distinguishing accolades from our national organization. We are consistently awarded for our due diligence in fostering a culture of public health and risk management awareness, philanthropic service to the Troy community and greater Capital Region, and strong camaraderie among members of our Brotherhood. Each Brother of the Theta Chapter strives to maintain the safe and healthy environment shaped by our values and enrich the Rensselaer communities through involvement in campus activities and organizations.

The Theta Chapter has continued our implementation of policy to mitigate the unprecedented health risk to the Brotherhood with the ongoing public health crisis remaining at large during the Spring 2021 semester. The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi COVID Action Plan drafted by an ad hoc committee appointed by the Theta Chapter Executive Board before the start of the Fall 2020 semester details strict policies and procedures that all Brothers must abide by to prevent infection of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and spread of COVID-19 disease among the Brotherhood. The Theta Chapter of Chi Phi COVID Action Plan is an evergreen document that is amended in accordance with the Rensselaer Health and Safety Protocol, as well as guidelines set forth by The Alumni Fraternity and Sorority Council, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the New York State Department of Health, and the Rensselaer County Department Of Health. Every Brother of the Theta Chapter is responsible for the health of our Chapter, Rensselaer community, and our fellow compatriots; our members are held accountable

by the Brotherhood for doing so. Since the beginning of this pandemic, zero Brothers have contracted COVID-19 while living in the Capital Region and no guests at our property have contracted the virus following their visit. In part due to the encouragement of our Executive Board, all active Brothers are now fully vaccinated or waiting to receive their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Additionally, the Theta Chapter kept its commitment to ensuring a safe living space for members and guests by instituting our own safety inspections in place of the semesterly inspections performed by the Institute. Our alumni advisor, Brother Avery Montembeault, conducted health and safety inspections throughout the semester to make sure that we were in compliance with Institute safety policy and continued maintaining our high standard of living. The Theta Chapter strives to uphold the welfare of our Brotherhood and continues working to do so by implementing these safety measures.

Last year, the Theta Chapter won six awards—one of them being the *Thomas Gehring Award for Chapter Excellence*. Our chapter was truly humbled to receive this award this semester as we have tried our hardest to uphold our high standard of excellence. With the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States making it exponentially difficult to safely continue servicing our local community, the Theta Chapter had to quickly adjust its approach to operate with caution given the changing global circumstances.

Another award that we proudly received this academic year was for our outstanding community service. The Theta Chapter has always sought to do whatever is in its means to help improve the surrounding community; the reception of this award merely underscores the veracity of this mission. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic's hold on society, our chapter continues to help improve our surrounding community through our volunteerism at the

Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York and our local Victorious Life Church. The Theta Chapter is currently applying for

The Theta Chapter enthusiastically participated in events hosted virtually by the Chi Phi National Office to better prepare our Chapter's leaders and learn from the experiences of our Brothers. One of the most popular and well-received events that the Brotherhood attended was the Building Better Men Webinar Series. During this webinar series, guest speakers discussed topics like the importance of mental health, diversity and equity, and sexual assault with our partner organization, The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. Our Executive Board consisting of nine Brothers also participated in Chi Phi's virtual 2021 Regional Leadership Alliance, where they further developed their leadership skills through webinars and learning modules in lieu of any in-person programming. The Theta Chapter keeps close ties with its National organization and stays informed on local, regional, and national events through its involvement with the Chi Phi National Fraternity. Our Brothers take great pleasure in connecting with Brothers from across the country and forging strong bonds with other Chapters.