

Interview of Vice President Ken Chapel, CFP

For those of you not present at Convention this past July in Pittsburgh, PA, you missed an opportunity to meet many of the newly elected Council members of the National Fraternity. Since not everyone could attend, I will be interviewing all members of Council over the next few issues for your benefit. For this issue I decided to start out with a few familiar faces or new ones depending on your exposure to National Fraternity events and gatherings of the past few years.

In this second interview we will be going over some background, goals and expectations of Brother Vice President Ken Chapel CFP, a graduate Brother from the Pi Phi Chapter at Robert Morris University. Brother Chapel graduated from Robert Morris in 1991 and also completed his Masters there in Business. He works today as a Certified Financial Planner, specifically a wealth strategist for BNY Mellon.

Ken grew up in Pittsburgh, PA, and for those of you familiar with the area he is from Allison Park. When asked about what helped to mold him into the person he has become today, Brother Chapel replied, "My mother insisted that my siblings and I have strong values, and that these values be important in our upbringing. We were raised and went to Catholic school even though it was upwards of an hour away from where we lived."

As a young man, Brother Chapel was motivated most by his parents, primarily his father. He went on to explain, "I didn't actually realize this until I was half way through my undergraduate years and had the benefit of hindsight. My parents let me learn from my own mistakes and never asked me to do more than my best." He also pointed out how his parents taught him through actions as well. "Coming from a humble background, my parents worked very hard to support my brothers and me. That taught me sacrifice and doing well for others," Brother Chapel continued to explain. He was also inspired by President Franklin Roosevelt and how the former President faced many of the Nation's greatest challenges and overcame just about all of them with persistent optimism and activism that rekindled this Nation's spirit at the time. When asked about who motivates him now, Brother Chapel replied, "Today, I am motivated by Dr. Randy Pausch. If you haven't read his book, *The Last Lecture*, then I recommend you should. It will really put your life into perspective, and it will remind you how short and finite life really is."

When Brother Chapel was a high school student he became interested in investments, which would eventually become his profession. He would use his study time to read about investments in the *Wall Street Journal* or *USA Today*. "I was always intrigued with following companies, what drove them, their performance. I was big into market simulation games from high school onward and continued to focus on finances and financial statement analysis, what makes companies tick." Brother Chapel's eventual major and job started as his hobby, which he finds very rewarding.

Brother Chapel initially wanted to join Alpha Chi Rho due to the diversity of the Chapter Brothers (athletes, honors students, et cetera.). After becoming a Brother he feels it helped him become a better person through the guidance of the Landmarks and experiences he would have chaireing IFC committees and Chapter positions. He stated, "This helped me become less of an introvert and grow as a person. It was my opportunity to get out of my shell, re-evaluate myself and get more involved on campus and eventually in my Chapter once I became a Brother." He also noted the fact that the Brothers of Pi Phi were a close knit group and a lot of fun aided in his decision.

Brother Chapel not only served on the National Council, but he also was highly involved with the revival of the Pi Phi Graduate Chapter at Robert Morris University. After taking on that task, he also worked with the men of the current Pi Phi Chapter, as their advisor, to get Colony status and

eventually re-charter. He still advises the Chapter today on academics. I asked Brother Chapel what is his motivation for volunteering within the Fraternity and Foundation to which he replied, "I am just to the point in my Life that I've decided to give back in ways that can make a difference. Basically, it gives me a lot of personal satisfaction to volunteer my time. If I have the choice of what to do with my time, then I want to help the Fraternity which has helped me and given a lot to me in the past. I want to provide and teach leadership and life skills to the Fraternity."

When asked what traits or skills of your profession translate and are useful to performing the duties of Vice President of Alpha Chi Rho, Vice President Chapel replied, "The number one thing is being able to articulate your thoughts. Conveying thoughts is the most important thing. I often find myself dealing with clients and articulating investment strategies. It conveys to my position where I need to come up with ideas and convey them to the Fraternity to make sound decisions." He continued, "Many of the clients I work with have charitable interests, so I see and get to talk to people and understand their personal needs and desires to give back. It sparked an interest in me to take their message of giving back, and that is how it started with me. I can donate monetarily to the Fraternity and get my name in a paper, or I could give my time, the most valuable commodity we all possess. I'm fortunate to do both".

In regards to expectations of himself, the Council and the Fraternity during his term as Vice President, Brother Chapel said, "I expect the same thing out of myself that I expect out of others, to be the best you can be. That is my personal expectation whether it be advisory, getting involved with grades for students I advise and juggling my family life." Brother Chapel also stressed the desire to put his best foot forward, and that he never wants to stop learning. "For Council, in light of President Ramos' desires to get the Fraternity back to good financial health and have good communication, my personal expectations are to deliver on that as a whole." His personal goal for his position is to send a consistent, renewed message to our alumni and resident Brothers, which is what the Alpha Chi Rho brand is and that we are a first class organization through our word and deed.

One way to help establish what Alpha Chi Rho is would be social interaction between Council and the Brotherhood. Brother Chapel agreed that this is very important. "We need to make the environment conducive for communication. The National Fraternity should actively interact with the resident Chapter by attending Chapter meetings and aiding with leadership development. It ties in with the "Once a Crow, Always a Crow" in the sense that there is Fraternity life after college. It is important that we, National, show this through action."

We finished the interview with one last question. If you could add one trait to all Chapters, what would it be and why? Brother Chapel replied, "From an operational standpoint for the Chapter, there has to be a greater respect for each other. It really is a Brotherhood, and we have to treat it as respectable Brothers by listening rather than hearing, by understanding rather than being understood and by living our Landmarks each and every day." I would like to thank Brother Chapel for taking the time to be interviewed and wish him well with his new role in the National Fraternity.



Above image of Brother Ken Chapel at the 2011 National Convention.

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Omega Phi, '05

