



THETA CHI

FRATERNITY

Dr. James A. Black (Gamma Rho/Florida State 2008)

Nominated by: Alpha Nu/Georgia Tech

Education:

Ph.D. – Mechanical Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology

B.S. – Mechanical Engineering, Florida State University

Summary of Professional Background:

Dr. James Black is a faculty member at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, GA, and currently serves as Executive Director of Graduate Student Success in the Office of Graduate Education. In this role, he provides strategic leadership for initiatives that enhance the graduate student experience and leads a team of faculty and staff supporting the Institute's nearly 37,000 master's and doctoral students. These services include Institute-level orientation and onboarding, graduate student hiring, management of \$13.3 million in fellowship funding, thesis and dissertation processing, and oversight of a new enterprise-level advising platform. He is the creator of GT6000, an "Introduction to Graduate School" course enrolling approximately 500 new graduate students each year. Before joining the Office of Graduate Education, Dr. Black completed his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech, where his research focused on a novel droplet levitation technique utilizing a fluid property called thermocapillarity.



Summary of Service to Theta Chi as a Collegiate Member:

Gamma Rho Chapter, one of Florida State University's original seven fraternities, took a brief hiatus from the FSU campus in the early 2000s. I joined the Gamma Rho Colony as a sophomore, after spending a year believing Greek life was not for me. Theta Chi was on a mission to raise the bar for fraternities at FSU, and I bought into that mission fully. I was elected Vice President that semester and served during our Reinstallation in 2006. Despite that milestone, the chapter struggled with recruitment and with defining its purpose after Reinstallation, and we found ourselves stagnating. I then served as Chapter President in 2007. Under my leadership, we recruited our first 45-man pledge class and doubled the size of the chapter. Gamma Rho has not looked back since. Following my service as Chapter President, Gamma Rho won an Alter Award, and I was honored as FSU's IFC President of the Year and Theta Chi's Second Runner-Up for the Reginald E.F. Colley Award.

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Summary of Service to Theta Chi as an Alumnus:

“Theta Chi for Life” is more than a slogan—it is a commitment to the Fraternity that I have honored continuously since graduating from FSU. Over the past 18 years, I have completed a Ph.D., begun my professional career, married my incredible wife, Jessica, and grown our family, all while remaining actively engaged in service to Theta Chi. My notable service includes:

Conventions: 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022, 2024

Regional Counselor/Counselor: 2009–2018 (Alpha Nu/Georgia Tech, Gamma Rho/Florida State)

Chapter Leadership Conference Faculty: 2009

International Standards Committee: 2012–2020 (four terms)

School of Fraternity Practices Faculty: 2012, 2014, 2016

Recruitment Boot Camp Faculty: 2013, 2018

Engage Theta Chi Presenter (2021): “Leveling Up Your Chapter: Goal Setting”

Grand Chapter: 2022–2024 International Chaplain, 2024–2026 International Secretary

Awards: 2007/2008 Reginald E.F. Colley Award – 2nd Runner Up; George T. Kilavos Alumni Award (from the Grand Chapter); Citation of Honor (from Iota Xi/Georgia College); David E. DeVol Award

Honorary Memberships: Eta Alpha/Clemson, Eta Psi/UAB, Theta Epsilon/Kennesaw State, Iota Xi/Georgia College, Iota Rho/Southern Poly

Summary of Volunteer Service Beyond Theta Chi:

I am active in professional organizations and recently completed a three-year term on the Executive Committee of the Georgia Council of Graduate Schools, serving as President during the 2024/2025 academic year.

Summary of Vision for Theta Chi’s Future:

Theta Chi adds indispensable value to the lives and experiences of collegiate men—and if you are reading this, you already know that. Maintaining, enhancing, and perpetuating this positive influence is central to our mission, and the Grand Chapter must strategically guide the Fraternity’s resources to maximize our impact. Among the current board members and candidates, my extensive experience working in higher education and on a college campus is unique and has proven highly valuable during my four years of service on the Grand Chapter. Higher education has transformed significantly during that time and will continue to evolve rapidly. I believe the most significant emerging threats to our Fraternity stem from these changes, including demographic and enrollment shifts, increased administrative scrutiny of chapters, and rising operational costs. In partnership with the Norwich Housing Corporation and the Foundation Chapter, the Grand Chapter has pursued strategies to address these challenges across several areas, including housing, charitable giving, and collegiate development and support. I look forward to continuing this work and discussing these efforts with brothers at Convention.

Additional Relevant Background/Experience that Qualifies for Service on the Grand Chapter:

While in graduate school at Georgia Tech, I served as Graduate Student Body President which required serving on Institute committees and developing relationships with high-level administrators.