

NICK PAULSON – FINAL REPORT 2017

I would like to begin this final report by thanking the committee for supporting my journey this summer with Bike and Build. In the following report, I will detail my experiences this summer, the impact I had on the affordable housing cause, and the experiences I will bring back to the Alpha Sigma.

Bike and Build

This summer, I participated in a bike trip for affordable housing with a non-profit called Bike and Build. I was proud to continue the Alpha Sigma tradition of biking with Bike and Build, following in the footsteps on brothers like Camden Francis, Sam Bondurant, Ryan Smith, and Reese Wells, just to name a few. While many Bike and Build trips span the entire country, mine was shorter, totaling a little over 900 total miles from Bar Harbor, Maine, to New York City.

On the road, we would average around 60-70 miles a day, with 45 miles being the lower extreme and 100 miles being the most we rode in a day. Though my team totaled 25 incredible people, we would ride in groups of 3-4 each day, stopping at regular intervals along the routes. Along the route, we stopped in 4 cities and built with local affordable housing organizations. We would work on projects that ranged from pouring concrete to clearing debris and growth from trails in an affordable housing neighborhood.

Impact

While we spend most of the time on this trip travelling across the country, the larger purpose of Bike and Build trips is to benefit the affordable housing cause. We do this in 2 ways: 1) Hours spent working on build sites and projects during the trip and 2) fundraising and advocacy for the affordable housing cause before and during the trip.

Along the trip, we dedicated over 30 hours of work on affordable housing sites and projects. We worked on projects in Portland, Maine; Salem, Massachusetts; Aquabogue, New York; and New Haven, Connecticut. I completed tasks such as laying a concrete foundation for a deck, putting vinyl siding on a house, and clearing trails for a park in an affordable housing neighborhood.

Along with the work on projects, we were able to benefit the affordable housing cause through a competitive grant process. As a group, we granted over \$20,000 in grants to affordable housing groups across the country. These groups all submitted applications describing projects that would 1) engage youth in affordable housing work and 2) create sustainable development in their communities. We reviewed all applications, and selected four groups to receive the grants.

Translation to Alpha Sigma

This summer was incredibly impactful in ways that I am incredibly excited to bring back home to Alpha Sigma. First, I have a renewed appreciation and commitment to philanthropic work, especially that which benefits the local community. I am excited to return to Alpha Sigma

and share that enthusiasm for service with Alpha Sigma, both within our philanthropic operations and daily life in the Lodge.

Aside from that, I grew greatly as a person in my time on this trip. Through challenging myself on the bike I learned leadership skills and the benefit of pushing my limits. In my interactions with my teammates and the affiliates we worked with I gained skills in listening, teamwork, and humility. I am excited to see the way these new skills enrich my relationships with the brothers of Alpha Sigma, and my service to the Lodge as a whole.

Thank you for the support in accomplishing my goal of completing a trip with Bike and Build. I am incredibly grateful for the skills I gained and the memories I made, all of which would not be possible without the support of the scholarship.

Nick Paulson Σ' 18



Teammates and I in Acadia National Forest, Bar Harbor, Maine



Crossing the bridge into Boston!



Crossing my first state line into New Hampshire!



Working on a project in Portland, Maine



Ending my trip on the Brooklyn Bridge!