



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



Brothers, we're thrilled to announce that this year's keynote speaker will be our own Steven "Jughead" Jara (Beta Pi '86)! Steve is a long-time member of our chapter, dating back (nearly) to the charter membership, and served as our Chapter Treasurer in 1984 and Chapter President in 1985. He has been very involved in our graduate networks ever since, and remains connected with his pledge class, his immediate brothers, and beyond.

Steve missed being a charter member by only two months (as he notes, he's still "not bitter"). Shortly after arriving on Bradley's campus as a freshman, he pledged our early ranks in Fall 1982, and initiated in January 22, 1983, shortly after we received our official recognition (November of 1982). In addition to his noteworthy leadership within our chapter, he was a member of the All-University championship basketball team, and was even a member of the B-League championship football team! Steve attended FIJI Leadership Academy twice, in both 1983 and 1985, and represented Beta Pi at IHQ's Ekklesia in 1984 (New Orleans).

After receiving a Bachelor's of Science in Operations Management and Information Systems, Steve went to Frito-Lay for an initial twenty-year employment span. Working his way up the leadership chain from a front-line supervisor, he culminated as the Denver Plant Manager from 1999-2006. During his time there, he was certified in Lean Management and Continuous Improvement.

Moving forward in his work life, Steve then went to TruStile Doors in 2006, where he will soon be completing another 20 years of employment (all as a plant manager). Overseeing the manufacturing of custom, high-end engineered doors, his time at TruStile has seen the company grow an overall 4x, and he oversaw the move of his facility into a new state-of-the-art building in 2021.

Steve married his college sweetheart, Karen (Williams) Jara, shortly after matriculation, on October 3, 1987. She came from farm country in Dwight, Illinois—and Steve got to learn how to drive stick shift on the farm tractor in those early years. They have three grown children, and five young grandchildren; and a new puppy named LaBonte.

In his free time, Steve and his wife organize a semi-annual family ski trip each year, and enjoy the beautiful outdoors around Denver, Colorado. They are avid concert goers, and particularly enjoy Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado; and have a long-distance, die-hard, relationship with the Chicago Bears.

Steve is greatly looking forward to sharing his stories of fraternity life, memories, and key lessons with us at our upcoming Pig Dinner, and we appreciate his willingness to speak!

