



THE TAU NEWS

Official Graduate Brother Newsletter - Tau Nu Chapter of Phi Gamma Delta

Volume AE, Issue 1

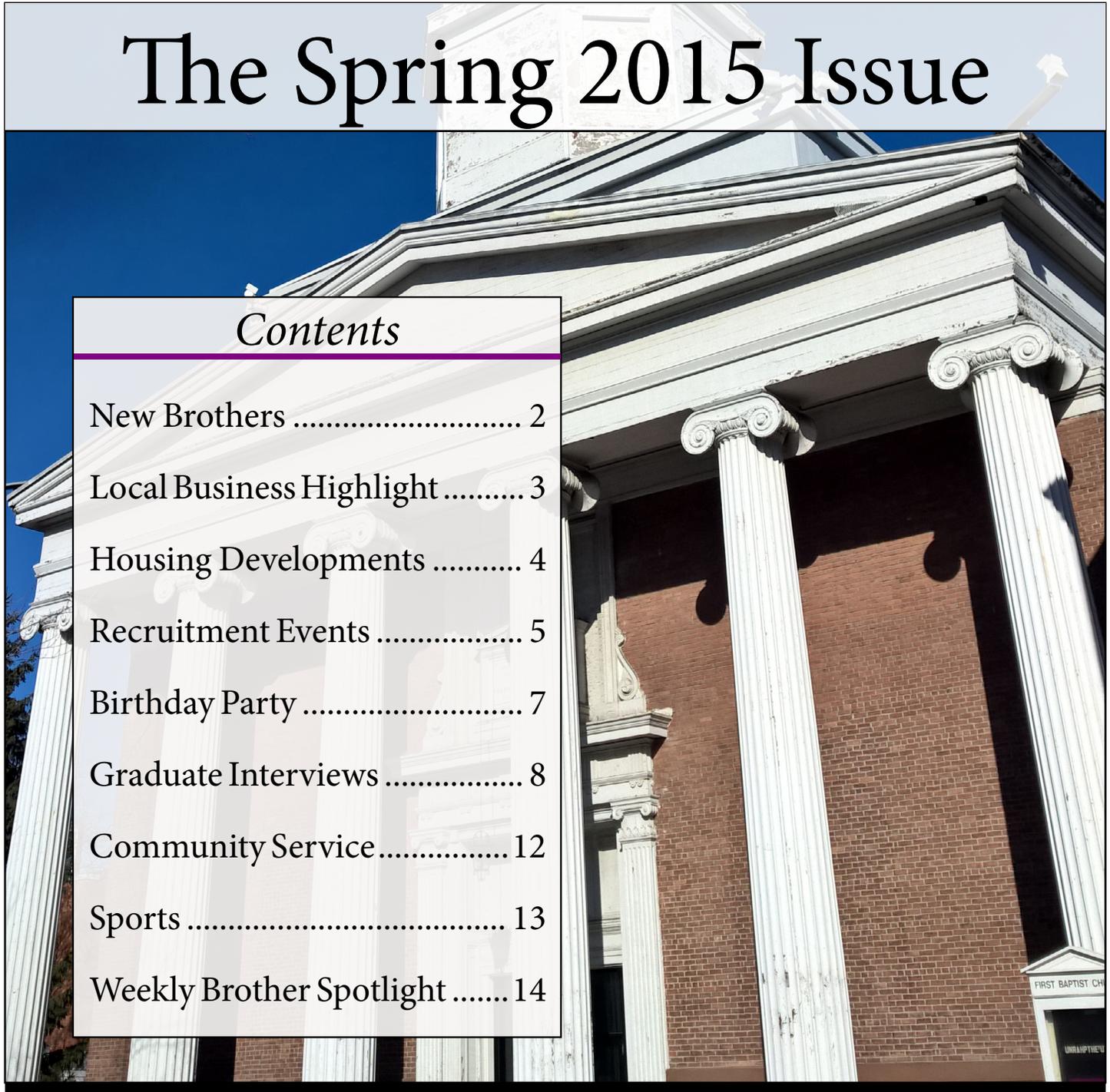
Monday, March 30th, 2015

82 3rd Street, Troy, NY

The Spring 2015 Issue

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New Brothers

Since beginning pledging last September, the Tau Nu chapter's Fall 2014 pledge class has persisted through the pledge program and been inducted as new brothers.

The newly initiated brothers are: Yusheng "Albert" Chen '18, Patrick Brendan Clinton '18, Nathan Daniel Greene '17, Patrick Oliver Hesselbach '17, Blake William Lingenau '17, Dylan Joseph Lingenau '17, Steven Robert Neyen '17, William Gresley Rigby-Hall '17, Kenneth William Schmitt '18, and Jonathan Armando Yax-Argueta '17.

Since initiation, the new brothers have taken active roles within the fraternity, with many of them becoming key to chapter activities, such as the recent wildly successful Spring 2015 rush period, and the subsequent spring pledging process. Brother D. Lingenau has taken on the role of Pledge Examiner for the Spring pledge class, while Brother Hesselbach is the chapter's new brotherhood chair, assisted by official intramural sports chair Brother Clinton, and finally Brother Greene has taken on the role of Steward for the chapter. The new pledge class is a welcome addition to Tau Nu, and we look forward to seeing them uphold the Phi Gam values.



Local Business Highlights

Now that we have a house in the middle of downtown Troy, undergraduate brothers have been eating out more—and not just at Bella’s and Brown Bag. There are many great recently opened local restaurants near the house.

First, a local breakfast place that has become an almost weekly brotherhood trip is Nibble Inc. Nibble, as we’ve come to call it, is a new doughnut shop on the corner of 5th Street and Broadway. These doughnuts aren’t the Dunkin’ Donuts variety; however, they specialize in making more interesting “artisanal” doughnuts that vary from salted caramel to thai green tea flavored. Another staple are the pocket sandwiches, doughnut dough filled with mixed ingredients based on the season; for example, applewood-smoked bacon and mac and cheese, or chorizo with mushroom and oaxaca cheese. In any case, it’s a great breakfast destination with the only downsides being the early closing time of 1 pm, and it being closed on Sundays.

Next, near the new house on 3rd Street is Muddaddy Flats, a specialty quesadillary. This spot has also become a common eatery for



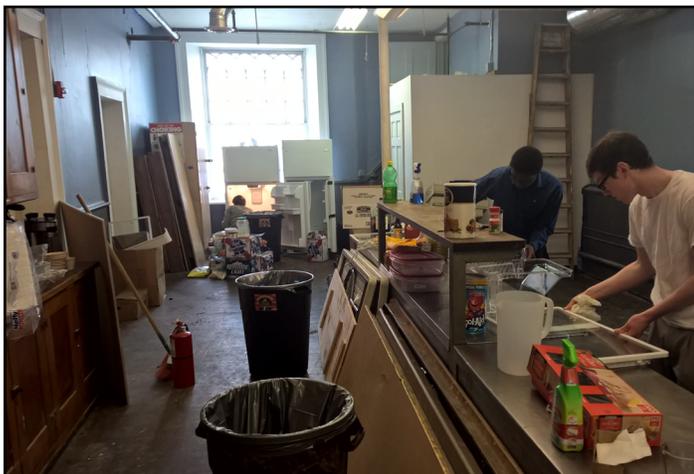
undergrads—with lots of meat, cheese, and even tortilla flavoring options, this isn’t just a Taco Bell run. Also, if you’d like an interesting story regarding the food, ask Brother Josh Goldberg about his experience.

Finally, recent graduates might remember the Slidin’ Dirty food truck that sold sliders on campus on Thursdays at the Union. Well, they’ve recently opened up a full-service restaurant on 1st Street. This new restaurant offers all the sliders they’ve served on the truck, while also offering tacos and a wide variety of great appetizers, most of them deep fried. The mac and cheese balls, pulled pork poppers, or avocado fries are common serving options of choice when we go, and you will not regret ordering any of them.

Housing Developments

The Present

Among the treasures present at the new chapter house of the Tau Nu chapter of Phi Gamma Delta, one stands out in particular. While the sanctuary displays the grandeur of the twenty-three thousand square foot palace, and the brand new kitchen showcases improvements that have been bestowed upon the house, nothing can compare to the recreational room. The rec room is in many ways the way our guests view our brotherhood. If we set the standard now for the significance and importance of the room to undergraduates and graduates alike, we set ourselves apart from the trite crowd of fraternities that have a lack of enthusiasm for their external appearance.



The Future

In order to make the room as best as it can possibly be, brothers have been discussing their vision for its future. While it is still in the works, we have made great strides toward its completion to showcase the glory of the room. Our most recent pledge class added Phi Gamma Delta novelties, such as their pledge class gift (a slap cup table) and a set of other tables for party and everyday use. We have also added high quality lights and speakers to aid in the atmosphere of the room, and are putting up tokens from our old RAHPs apartments so future generations understand and respect where the chapter has come from.

Behind the rec room is our remodeled master kitchen. It features two fridges, four industrial sinks, eight gas burners, and a whole ton of counter space. We started using it as the primary kitchen earlier this semester.

The future of the house is of great importance to us and we want to see it shine. With a combined effort from both the undergraduate and graduate members of this chapter, we are confident we will be able to do just that.

Recruitment Events

Recruitment this semester, despite difficulties imposed by RPI such as severe restrictions on dorm storming, ended up being very successful. We focused on holding events that let us get good 1-on-1 time with rushees.

It kicked off with a day of sledding at Prospect Park, followed by an evening at the house spent watching *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, itself followed the next day by a wings and dip-filled Super Bowl barbecue. The next day would have been spent bowling, but the alley was closed due to snow. Despite this setback, we continued the sport-based trend with our standard Dodgeball event two days later.

The next night was Poker Night, where rushees could seek to win prizes by knocking brothers out of games. This was followed up with a night of playing video games. Some of us played *Super Smash Bros.* for *Wii U*, taking advantage of the 8-player mode. The highlight of the night, though, was a 16-man, full-bracket *Nidhogg* tournament. In the end, our own Brother Tyler Gumina came out on top.

The penultimate event was Snow Tubing, held at West Mountain Ski Lodge. Brothers and rushees alike spent the day sliding down the hill and bonding over warm soup. During the day, we managed to pull in some strangers to form a 21-person chain of inner tubes. It may have been against the rules, but it was a sight to behold.

SA 31 | SLEDDING 5PM, MOVIE 7PM*
SU 1 | SUPERBOWL BBQ 6:30PM
MO 2 | BOWLING 6PM
WE 4 | DODGEBALL 4PM
TH 5 | POKER 7PM
FR 6 | VIDEO GAMES 7PM
SA 7 | SNOW TUBING 12PM
SU 8 | WINGS & MOVIE 1PM

OPEN HOUSE DINNERS MO-TH 6:30

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Recruitment Events (continued)

The final event for this Spring was a Wings & Movie night. Brothers and rushees ate wings from a number of local eateries and watched *The Interview*. Overall, we're very pleased with recruitment this semester, and are looking forward to showing new brothers in the next Tau News.



You can see all our event photos on our Facebook page!
facebook.com/TauNuFIJI

Birthday Party

The Tau Nu chapter of Phi Gamma Delta hosted a party on March 6th. Over seven hundred students came to share in the enjoyment of our hospitality and new house. Social Chairman Mark Stein worked for weeks on the birthday-themed party with a number of Castle (Pi Kappa Phi) brothers, and the brotherhood is incredibly proud of the results.

Chapter President Bradley Schwartz mentioned that “the party was a great success; it surpassed expectations. Co-hosting with Castle was a delight, and we look forward to hosting with them in the future.” According to Risk Chairman Ananth Sridhar, “This party was well, fun, and got our name out in the RPI Greek community. Given the novelty of the location and theme, it was incredibly well regulated and portrayed us as responsible gentlemen to our guests.”

At the end of the day, we threw a party that topped our last, and we will continue to strive for more that will keep our names on the map. Brother Harrison Tarr put it best when he said,

“This party hit.”



Graduate Interviews

We've always valued getting insight from our older brothers. It was the Publications Committee's honor to interview two grads on everything from the state of the chapter to their lives during and after their college days.



Keith Downes

Vice President, House Corporation

What did you do at RPI?

My degree was Mechanical, Bachelors. I used to row in the top boat for the crew team, I was the bowman. That's usually given to the smaller guy. It was fun.

How did you get into Fiji?

I would say I was at first fairly open to the idea of joining a fraternity. When I got here, like most people I didn't know a lot about the fraternity system. I didn't sign anywhere freshman year. During freshman year I became very close to three other guys in my dorm, two of whom joined Fiji. One of them in particular, Neil Eklen, was a good friend who was telling me his good experiences here. I was unsure at first because while I liked the guys and had some close friends I also had a bit of a "didn't like to be told what to do" streak in me. But if I say I'm gonna do something, I don't do it halfway.

What do you typically do in House Corp?

Being the Vice President is kind of like being a free safety. You know, you can kind of go wherever you're most needed and not have specific duties so much. There was a time where I was just a Director and I thought, "You know, I'm just going to go and crusade and get on. We're tired of waiting for RPI to work a deal with us where we can build on their land, so let's just get a realtor and find a property." Then, when the property was found, I thought, "Okay, I'm going to file this through and I'm gonna be the person that's gonna oversee the renovation." And, I got a lot of help. It certainly wasn't just me, but I did lead the effort.

Graduate Interviews (continued)

Is there anything else you wanted to mention in particular?

Well, like I said before our interview, I just want to say that I'm just really, really proud of the chapter, and I'm really proud that the guys have done such a good job with this transformation from RAHPs and the whole renovation and moving in over here. There's still some things I hope you guys do better as time goes on, but I'm just really enjoying reconnecting with the chapter and getting to know all the guys—I'm very impressed with everyone.



Matt Farrell

Field Secretary, Phi Gamma Delta

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Manchester, CT. I attended UConn—relatively close—and now currently live in Lexington, KY as part of working for Phi Gamma Delta. We actually live at headquarters as field secretaries, so there's an apartment there. It's cost effective to keep us guys together,

which means we're paying relatively cheap rent and don't have to worry a lot about spending a lot of money on a place that we're not going to spend a lot of time at, so it works well in that regard.

What got you into FIJI in the first place?

So, I was a founding father of my chapter—Sigma Kappa at UConn. I was like most of this new wave of people who were joining these initial classes of fraternities. I was intrigued because it had a lot of the things I was looking for in Greek Life that I didn't see at my campus. UConn had the stereotypical Greek experience—a lot of traditional pledging where you were in a fraternity that was taking up all your time, or you couldn't be in a fraternity because you weren't willing to make those kinds of sacrifices. It sucked up a lot of time, and it had sort of an elitist vibe the way that people in fraternities came off- rubbed me the wrong way. I had friends in them, but I ...

Graduate Interviews (continued)

... didn't see a need to join it, personally. So I think the FIJI opportunity seemed to sound really a lot more balanced in terms of academic, social, and a really proud history that they advertized really well. I really liked the idea of starting something new at that campus.

How many chapters are you assigned to?

I'm assigned to, traditionally, one main region (that's the Great Plains, really the midwest), so I have 21 chapters in the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri. So flyover states, lots of cornfields, great schools, that's my normal region. Right now I'm covering five schools in the northeast, so RPI, WPI, UMass, URI, and Cornell, so a total of 26.

What type of differences do you see between us and other schools such as those in the northeast or the flyover states?

That's a great question. I think the main difference would be just location based, size; some of the schools I have in the Great Plains have over a hundred people in the chapter. They have the means to accommodate that, they're used to that. They have a very large amount of students, established graduate brothers, things like that. Just in pure size, it's easier to work with a chapter that's smaller

than that, but it's also understandable why they want to be so big because they have the ability to take in more people. I think size would probably be the main thing; there are plenty of chapters around this size as well. In a weird way it's more difficult to pinpoint differences when you go to more schools, because eventually you go to enough that the product all kind of blurs together, so I think it's a good thing that Fiji has at least enough commonalities. I think the main similarity would be... I don't know if that was your next question?

It actually was, yes.

I think the main similarity would be very diverse groups of people, and a lot of chapters take pride in that. Almost every group has brought with it some strengths, like we talked about yesterday, you guys firstly in terms of where people are from, people's backgrounds and what they're studying. That's good because what a fraternity should be; if you ...

Graduate Interviews (continued)

... get too many people cut from the same cloth, they're not really bound by new values, not thinking outside their own interests.

Is there anything you would like to see happen differently?

I don't know enough about it. I think you guys are using the sanctuary as a platform to hold events. I still haven't seen the upstairs yet so I'll have to check it out, but I think just taking advantage of the uniqueness of it, putting on events, making sure you guys know even though it's new for us we want this to be our home for a long time. I'm really stressing the importance of risk management, holding on to that property.

Do you have any advice for the chapter?

I think it's really important we set a lot of goals... specifically focusing on internal communication, people did a great job of really being open about what we want, not just the cabinet, but the whole chapter. I think it will be really important to follow up on those goals. Otherwise it's just kind of empty talk. It will be really important for the chapter to re-voice those concerns and acknowledge what we are doing well and what we need to improve. So I think that'd be my best advice. You're a step above everyone else, having these clear goals that everyone is on the same page, not just a few people setting them, but we all set them together, but its only as good as our follow up.

You can see the full interviews at taunufiji.com/interviews.

*Contact us if you think you have something to say!
publications@taunufiji.com*

Community Service

Bone Marrow Drive

During the second week of the Spring 2014 semester, the Fall pledge class held a Bone Marrow Donor Drive. This type of drive is unconventional in comparison to monthly blood drives as it revolves around educating the public. The supplies for the drive were provided by Delete Blood Cancer, a non-profit organization created for registering donors, matching them to patients, and funding blood cancer research.

Overall, the drive was a success. The group managed to enter 20 individuals into the donor registry. Many people came by the table to take flyers and learn more. The goal was to educate the public about the importance of donors and the facts about how anyone can donate, and that is exactly what they managed to do.

High School Hacking

The weekly programming tutoring resumed with style this semester. To recap, we've been teaching high schoolers basic programming: last semester was in the Python language, and this semester is in JavaScript. The lessons range from basic programming to manipulating web pages to artificial intelligence, and are now online at <http://highschoolhacking.club>, a project sponsored by RCOS (the Rensselaer Center for Open Source) and Microsoft's Intern Ambassador, Brother Josh Goldberg. It's still used at Shaker Senior High School, and now additionally Shenendehowa High School.

Brother Will Rigby-Hall has been tapped as the replacement leader of the clubs, and leading the sessions has passed to him. We'll keep you updated as the program expands!

Do good!

Have a good deed for us? Let us know!

community_service@taunufiji.com



Sports

Volleyball

Our continued success in volleyball has continued into our run this season. Our first game ended in a crushing victory, as pledges and brothers alike showed up to represent FIJI against Alpha Sigma Phi. This victory was followed by a successful victory over Alpha Phi in similar fashion. Though the season started off fantastically, there was an unfortunate speed bump as two games were scheduled on the same day—one for indoor soccer and the other for volleyball. Though we were able to field teams in both, we were unable to pull out the win. Despite this, our volleyball season sits at a very respectable 2–1.

Wallyball

With success in the past as a measure of future endeavors, we have moved up to Division I for wallyball. This has meant much stiffer competition and much more interesting games. Our first game went down to the wire, and the game was close all the way up to the last point. This theme held true for the rest of the season, with a barrage of extremely close losses that has resulted in a winless season.



Indoor Soccer

Our indoor soccer season has not experienced the same success that it has in past. With a rigorous schedule, as well as meetings running into game time, there has not been much of a silver lining in our season. Our first game was a respectable effort against a strong team with a very close loss to start the season. As for our second game, the polar opposite occurred. Despite a meeting that lasted until 10 pm, there was an effort to get both enough players to the game as well as making sure others would be able to make it after the meeting had finished. This conflict lead us to a dramatic loss and, combined with a recent loss against Phi Kappa Tau, a 0–3 record for the season.

Weekly Brother Spotlight

Each week, the brotherhood—with moderation from the Publications Committee—highlights one or more brother(s) for going above and beyond their normal duties. Below are this semester's Spotlight winners thus far; our next issue will include winners during the second half of the semester.



Week of February 8th: **Mark Stein '17**

Despite RPI's temporary ban on dorm storming, Brother Stein helped carry the chapter through Spring Rush by storming Commons Dining Hall every day and helping out with the majority of events.



Week of February 15th: **Blake Lingenau '17**

Each driving member of the chapter typically drives four hour shifts as sober driver. Brother Blake Lingenau voluntarily drove for an additional hour and a half in his to make sure brothers and guests made it home safely.



Week of February 22nd: **Liam Wingert '15**

In a similar vein to Brother Blake Lingenau, Brother Wingert also went above and beyond throughout the week to provide transportation to brothers beyond his normal hours.



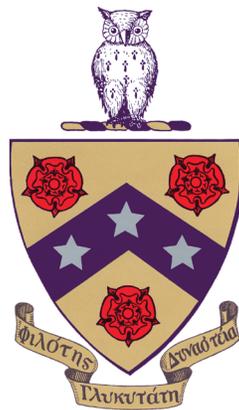
Week of March 1st: **Nathan Greene '17**

As a member of The Poly, Brother Greene spearheaded The Poly's effort to investigate and report on the intimate details of RPI's current financial standing, as well as the road the school took to it. Brother Greene also provided a significant amount of invaluable help in preparing the house for our party we hosted with Pi Kappa Phi (Castle) that resulted in a fantastic party.

Recognition

Many thanks to the generous graduate brothers who have contributed to the Tau Nu chapter of Phi Gamma Delta. Without your hard work and generosity, especially considering the work of the House Corporation, neither this article nor its contents would have been possible.

Additional thanks to Javier Camino, Pat Clinton, Sam Davis, Keith Downes, Matt Farrell, Nathan Greene, Josh Goldberg, Brandon McLearn, Connor Rhoads, Geoffrey Rosenthal, Nicholas Seguljic, Kirk Smith, Ananth Sridhar, Harrison Tarr, and Jonathan Yax for providing content inception, writing, and editing services.



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