The average college freshman is undecided in a major. Of those who do declare one, most will switch. Many will do so two, or three, or four times.

But Gary Pan, Eta ‘86 (Lehigh) was not your average college freshman. When asked during high school what he thought he wanted to do, Gary rattled off his well-planned litany of professional goals. “First I’m going to ... and then I’ll ... and by 1992 I should be able to ...”

That ten-year professional plan was quite specific, and, extraordinarily, Gary Pan accomplished it just as he set out to do.

The Weston, Massachusetts native earned his BS in electrical engineering with a minor in legal studies from Lehigh University in 1986. Gary attended Virginia Tech to finish an MBA and later began the pursuit of a doctorate of management (organizational leadership) from University of Phoenix. In 1990, he founded his own company. “Being fortunate enough to know that I wanted to start an information technology and systems engineering firm supporting the federal government,” he says, “I strategically moved to Washington, DC, cut my teeth at a small firm in my target industry to gain valuable experience, and eventually launched out on my own with Panacea Consulting.”

One thing that hadn’t been in the plan, however, was joining a fraternity. “No, I hadn’t planned on that,” he admits. “But one night I went to a movie and met a group of guys sitting next to me and they were great.”

They were Eta chapter Psi U brothers. Soon enough, Gary was one, too.

It was through Psi Upsilon that Gary says he had the opportunity to grow the most in college. “I was extremely shy in high school. It was pretty bad – I could never get up in front of a group or express myself confidently. Psi U gave me my biggest opportunities to grow at Lehigh. It was a safe, supportive environment where I could develop my communication and leadership skills. That was on top of finding lifelong friends.”

Unlike those fraternity graduates who never look back after leaving campus, Gary understood the value of the family he had found. “No way did I think it was the end. We were brothers for life. I have worked professionally with some of my brothers, I have shared a house with some, some have been in my wedding party ... If I am traveling I try to make an effort to at least call a local brother just to catch up.”

Gary’s natural leadership abilities and his heart for service earned him undergraduate roles as treasurer, rush chairman, vice president, and archon. As an alumnus, he’s continued to give back as a dedicated Alumni Advisory Board member and past member of the Executive Council. He currently serves on the Psi Upsilon Foundation’s scholarship committee.

Gary’s scholarship committee work is particularly meaningful for him. First, he says it gives him the chance to follow the lead of Henry Poor, Gamma ‘39 (Amherst) who heralded the importance of promoting academic excellence among Psi U undergraduates. “Having worked with Henry for many years, I consider him a role model and someone to emulate.”

“The second reason has to do with Curtis J. Rettke. Curt was a fellow Eta – a couple years older than I – who

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At its meeting on March 1, 2014 the Executive Council reviewed a petition from the Theta Pi provisional chapter at Georgia State University to become the 48th chapter of Psi Upsilon Fraternity. The Executive Council agreed to send the petition to the chapters with a recommendation that it be approved.

The petition addresses 15 criteria set forth in Psi Upsilon’s chapter acceptance standards that cover such areas as membership, academics, governance and knowledge of Psi U’s history and traditions.

The petition will be sent to each chapter’s undergraduate membership and alumni governing body.

Approval of three-fourths of the active chapters is required for approval.

Once mailed, the chapters have 20 days to send the results of their votes to Tom Fox, executive director of the Fraternity.

Colonies at San Diego State University and Clemson University are currently working to meet the chapter acceptance standards.

With its Leadership Initiative, The Psi Upsilon Foundation set out to expand and improve Psi U’s educational programs and leadership development opportunities for current undergraduates and for generations of undergraduates to come. A goal of raising at least $1 million is in sight. The final amount will be announced during this year’s Convention at Lehigh University.

The success of the Leadership Initiative has already permitted the Foundation to double the funds available to support the Fraternity’s leadership education programs in 2014-15. In addition to supporting the Archons Academy, Leadership Institute, Commitment to Excellence and chapter visits, for the first time the Fraternity will be able to grant scholarships to the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI). UIFI is presented by the North-American Interfraternity Conference and is considered to be among the premier leadership experiences for undergraduate fraternity men and women.

Under the leadership of Sam Tinaglia, Omega ‘88 (University of Chicago), chairman of the Foundation board of directors, the Foundation’s invested assets have grown threefold. The Foundation board and staff made more than 200 personal visits seeking support for the Leadership Initiative. According to Chairman Tinaglia, “the willingness of brothers to meet the challenge has been impressive. People get the need and the necessity to maintain a strong Psi Upsilon. For their generosity they have our sincere thanks.”

“Alumni have been overwhelming in their support and understanding of the need to strengthen our chapters through educational programming,” said Mark Williams, Phi ‘76 (University of Michigan), president of The Psi Upsilon Foundation. “Through the Leadership Initiative we ensure that our members will have the leadership development opportunities and character building experiences that we did as undergraduates.”

Patrick Gilrane, Psi ‘83 (Hamilton College) who will succeed Sam Tinaglia as chairman of the Foundation board at this summer’s annual meeting of directors, said, “We will continue to increase our endowment fund so that we can provide progressive educational opportunities that address today’s societal concerns about campus life.” He also expressed the desire for Psi U to become increasingly relevant to our 26,000+ alumni.

Go to www.psiu.org for information on how to include The Psi Upsilon Foundation in your will or estate plans.
James Zago is an integrated engineering major at UBC. The two-time scholarship recipient was elected by the Psi U Convention delegates to represent undergraduates on the Executive Council. As philanthropy chairman he initiated the first “Psi U Think You Can Dance” event at UBC and has helped his chapter raise over $5,000 for community charities.

In his four years as a Zeta Zeta brother, James has held positions as treasurer, philanthropy chair, and house manager, with the latter becoming much more like a part-time job. “I spend anywhere from 40-80 hours a month on it,” he explains. “There are 30 guys in the house. Five are boarders who aren’t Psi U’s. It’s a lot to keep up with all the financial stuff you have to do. We have to advertise to make sure the rooms are always full, keep records, and make sure we can pay our mortgage – over the summer months, too. There’s house maintenance, and making sure everybody does his share.”

Beyond the time commitment, it can be stressful, too. “It’s definitely the hardest thing I’ve done, which is basically to have tenants who are also my brothers. There were a couple times I was ready to just say, ‘Hey, someone else take over.’ You’re always the bad guy.”

But it’s that kind of experience that has been most valuable in the past two years. And James says without Psi Upsilon, he wouldn’t have had that opportunity. “I’ve learned so many life skills I wouldn’t have had so early in life,” he says.

The advantages of being a Psi U haven’t ended there. When James was searching for ways to help finance his education, the brotherhood again came through. James has been awarded two merit scholarships in recognition of his academic excellence along with service, leadership and athletic participation representing the Zeta Zeta chapter.

It’s a gift he plans to pay forward as a way of showing his thanks. “The biggest thing is giving back. I look forward to that when I actually have my own career.” James hopes to go on to medical school following graduation next spring and eventually become an orthopedic surgeon.

“I’m the first in my family to go to a full accredited university. My mom is an LPN and my dad works at Powell River Paper Mill as a lead loader. He’s also a mechanic and does maintenance, carpentry, and welding out of the garage at home. My dad works 12 hours a day, seven days a week. His drive taught me not to be lazy.”

It was those same kinds of values his own family held that James appreciated most when he joined Psi Upsilon. “The brothers here really do live out these values, and that’s why I joined. We’re in the right place ... we always make time for each other ... it’s about not getting lost in a huge community. There’s a very close brotherhood here.”

It’s only 150 miles, but with two ferry rides it takes a good seven hours to get from the northern most corner of the continental U.S. to where James Zago grew up in Canada. The city of Powell River sits along the upper Sunshine Coast of British Columbia and, according to its website, “offers a mix of urban and rural living in a naturally beautiful setting.”

Growing up in the town of just 15,000 residents, James was surrounded by mountains, lakes, natural forests and the ocean. In all his childhood and throughout his high school years, he’d never once heard of a fraternity.

“I didn’t even know they existed,” James remembers. “Most people who grew up in Canada don’t.” Wanting to stay on the coast for college, James chose “basically the closest and best” university that could keep him there. And suddenly the small town kid found himself alongside some 44,000 other students enrolled at the huge University of British Columbia at Vancouver. “On weekdays they say there’s over 100,000 people walking around campus.”

It was hard to find the close-knit family feel he’d left four hours to the north.

Until, that is, just before the start of sophomore year, when James was struggling to find a place to live. “I heard there was a spot open in the Psi Upsilon house – they will actually rent to some boarders to keep the house full. Once I met the guys there, I really liked that small family feeling.” James knew he’d found a home.

James Zago is an integrated engineering major at UBC. The two-time scholarship recipient was elected by the Psi U Convention delegates to represent undergraduates on the Executive Council. As philanthropy chairman he initiated the first “Psi U Think You Can Dance” event at UBC and has helped his chapter raise over $5,000 for community charities.
Gary Pan says he’s amazed and inspired by the academic, fraternity and civic leadership espoused by the “diverse and accomplished group of young men and women” in Psi U.

The depth of his connection with the Fraternity led Gary to give back through financial support for the Psi Upsilon Foundation dating all the way back to his first year as an alumnus. In recent years, he stepped forward with a major gift to the Leadership Initiative.

“Investing in others is who I am. It’s in my DNA. And I believe in investing in our fraternity and our future leaders. Psi Upsilon has so many wonderful programs and resources that really make a difference for our undergraduates. Beyond scholarships is our Archons Academy and this summer’s Leadership Institute. Establishing a financial foundation that continues to provide valuable resources for undergraduate education is investing in our collective future.”

Gary Pan is also a Boy Scout troop scoutmaster and mentor for 90 youth ages 11-21. He plans on leading a scout unit, including two of his three sons, at the World Scouting Jamboree in Japan during the summer of 2015.