Greek Alumni Spotlight: Mike Benson

This month we would like to introduce Mike Benson, MSUM Tau Kappa Epsilon Alumnus. Mike graduated from MSUM with a Bachelors degree in Marketing. When asked what he was going to do he would reply, “The only thing I’m not going to do is sell insurance.” As it turned out, Mike did sell insurance and was quite successful at it. In fact, he went on to become Vice President of Warner and Company in the F-M area as well as serve on the MSUM School of Business Advisory Board.

Mike excelled in Greek Life while also working a part-time job at Moorhead Paint and Glass. Due to Mike’s busy schedule, he enjoyed the many social opportunities that Greek Life provided. “We used to have TKE and Alpha Phi’s and we would go bowling together. The socializing part was the key. Some of my best friends that I’ve been in contact with for a long time are people that I met through my fraternity.

One of Mike’s fondest memories coincides with his sophomore year when he broke his leg. Mike lived in the TKE house so he could crutch to school. “The 1st of January we had this big storm. I couldn’t go anywhere, so people came over and we played pinocle for 24 hours straight,” he smiled.

Mike also learned many life skills while in Greek Life. “Someone said we learn three ways: modeling, countering and prayer. I felt I learned a lot of skills by modeling and countering.” He really enjoyed having the opportunities to work with others to accomplish goals. Mike specifically remembers working on the float in the parade and the ice sculptures. “We had 20 good people and only 4 good workers. It was a good learning experience about people, organizations and working together.”

The brotherhood experience of Greek Life was also very important to Mike. Being in fraternity with students of all levels gave Mike the opportunity to learn from others. “You had a big brother that would help you learn the ropes.” The brothers helped the new recruits learn what are good things to do, and what are bad things to do. “It’s good to have fun, but you still need to get stuff done.” Mike learned to balance many aspects of his life as a Greek: financial, grades, time management and relationships. “[In Greek Life] people watch out for each other and network. You can get a lot done if you know a lot of people who are willing to help you.”

As a Greek Alumni, Mike stays connected with his fraternity as well as MSUM by participating in charity events, serving on the School of Business Advisory Board and being an advocate of MSUM by supporting sports teams and disciplines his Greek brothers participated in. “Someone bought a gold watch on Ebay years ago, and it turned out to be Solomon Comstock’s watch. TKE bought it and helped it transition over to MSUM.”

When Mike went through initiation, they were required to remember so many facts about MSUM. By memorizing them, MSUM and it’s legacy became important to the students, and helps to motivate their continued support to the school as Alumni.

Mike’s advice for any student at MSUM is to remember that “This is your chance. Education is a great equalizing factor. Once you get the education, you go out into the world. Then it’s what’s in your gut that really shows.”

When asked if Mike had any advice for students interested in joining Greek Life, he replied, “Go to the meetings and check it out. Talk with other Greek members: people who are happy with it, and people who have another opinion. Then make your own decision. In life you are better off focusing on things that work than things that don’t.”