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TIMES UNION

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Frat official claimed he called in ‘favors’ from Cornell police

Recordings offer firsthand account for period when the department was investigating ‘Cornell 7’ case

By Gabe Levin
STAFF WRITER

ITHACA — Within weeks of the Cornell University Police Department investigating an alleged gang rape at the school’s Chi Phi house two years ago, a top official of another national fraternity privately boasted that he could get his “friends” inside the campus police force to brush aside alleged miscon-

duct from his chapter’s members — one of whom was facing a sexual assault allegation. Those claims are included in hours of recordings from December 2024 obtained by the Times Union in which Dennis Paese, who serves as the national Sigma Alpha Mu Foundation’s vice president and a longtime adviser to the fraternity’s Cornell chapter, said university police had helped fra-

ternity brothers avoid punishments — including for drug use, underage drinking, egg-throwing vandalism and a feud with a rival fraternity — by overlooking reports as “favors” for him. In one of the recordings, Paese referred to the chief of Cornell’s police department as “a good friend of mine.” Paese also said he and the chief’s “boss, the guy that’s in charge of campus security overall, ... go back even farther.” Anthony Bellamy, who was *See CORNELL, A6*



Matt Rourke/Associated Press

The chapter adviser to a Cornell University fraternity claimed in recorded conversations that he could tap connections in the campus police and administration to help minimize potential disciplinary concerns.

A soldier returns

82 years after his death in World War II at 29, Pfc. Albert Marks comes home to Kingston

By H.R. Schneider
STAFF WRITER

The afternoon of Dec. 7, 1944, was cold and damp, and just outside a small German town near the border with France, American soldiers were fighting for their lives. The 357th Infantry had spent the days prior capturing three German villages before crossing the Saar River. Pfc. Albert Marks and the rest of Company G crossed in the early morning hours of Dec. 6 and were holding a district called Pachten on their own as others faced attacks from German pillboxes — small guideposts, sometimes dug into the banks of the forest floor, where soldiers hid. As the companies advanced the next day, German forces launched a counterattack around 2 p.m. Company G’s sharpshooters “had a field day” and artillery support *See MARKS, A13*

Photos courtesy of Jolie Dunham; Matt Hunter/Albany International Airport

The remains of U.S. soldier Albert Marks were transferred on Oct. 9 at Albany International Airport in Colonie. Marks’ remains were identified more than 80 years after he was killed in action during World War II in Germany. At top, a portrait of Marks and his military ID tags. His remains will be buried on Oct. 24 in Kingston.

ELECTION 2026

Gov. Kathy Hochul, Democrat running for reelection

Bruce Blakeman, Republican candidate for governor

Hochul’s second-term test

And Blakeman’s crusade to stop it as both share cost concerns with very different solutions

By Dan Clark
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — While the two major-party candidates in this year’s race for governor diverge on a host of issues, there’s at least one thing they agree on: New York’s cost of living is too high. But that’s where their alignment ends. Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat seeking a second full term in office, and Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, her Republican challenger, have vastly different views on the state’s future. Voters might not know that unless they’ve closely followed the race. Neither candidate has a platform of proposed policies on their campaign websites. Hochul’s campaign has largely operated on two major themes: what she’s done since taking office, and her opposition to President Donald J. Trump. She has predicted that voters will view her as a political pragmatist. Blakeman has sought to portray Hochul’s record as a series of decisions that have done little to improve the lives of New Yorkers since she took office in 2021. He has sold himself to voters as the solution to those sorrows. Republicans claim to view the race as winnable, in part, because of Hochul’s electoral performance four years ago. That’s when she defeated former U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin, a Republican, by less than seven percentage points. It was the closest margin of victory in a *See GOVERNOR, A4*