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Tau Beta Pi Names Major General William A. Anders as 2006 Distinguished Alumnus

Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, has named the 2006 winner of its Distinguished Alumnus Award. Now in its tenth year, the award was established to recognize alumni who have demonstrated adherence to the ideals of Tau Beta Pi (integrity, breadth of interest, adaptability, and unselfish activity) and to fostering a spirit of liberal culture on local, national, and international scales.

Major General William A. Anders, *Ohio Eta '62*, astronaut on the 1968 Apollo 8 lunar-orbit mission, is the *2006 Tau Beta Pi Distinguished Alumnus* and will be honored on October 7, 2006, at the 101st annual national Convention to be held in Denver, Colorado. Tau Beta Pi President Matthew W. Ohland, Ph.D., will present a commemorative plaque, and a \$2,000 scholarship will be given in Major General Anders' name to a deserving student member of Tau Beta Pi.

Major General Anders' selection as 2006 Distinguished Alumnus is a testament to his dedication and diverse, distinctive accomplishments that have resulted in a positive impact on our society, exemplifying the ideals and capturing the spirit of Tau Beta Pi. His educational history includes graduation from the United States Naval Academy in 1955 with a B.S.E.E. and a commission into the U.S. Air Force, earning his pilots wings in 1956. In 1962, he completed a master's degree in nuclear engineering from the U.S.A.F. Institute of Technology, graduating with honors. He was inducted into Tau Beta Pi by the AFIT's Ohio Eta Chapter in 1961.

As a young man, Bill Anders seemed to have an inward force propelling him toward the highest realms of technical knowledge. As a student, he would master the known facts, then push relentlessly towards discovering what lay beyond them, a habit he called *finding out what's on the other side of the mountain*. In school, his eagerness for sharing knowledge with others became the genesis of several popular study groups.

Even as he busied himself with his classmates, his thoughts turned increasingly to future students who would one day follow them. As a young officer-student at the Air Force Institute of Technology, he adopted a creed: "We always try to leave a community where we serve a little bit better than we found it". With this as his theme, Anders began personally soliciting funds from hundreds of other students to establish a new university. His single-minded efforts fueled the founding of Wright State University, it's 17,000 students now sharing in the same technical subjects toward which he felt such passion.

After graduation from AFIT, he was selected to train as an astronaut. His capabilities and character shone through, and he was given the nod as the spacecraft systems engineer and pilot for Apollo 8. Their assignment was to orbit the moon and return, thereby testing the Saturn V rocket—the largest rocket ever flown—and the new lunar orbiter. While Neil Armstrong would later step onto the surface of the Moon, Anders and the others were the first to examine it's entirety, including an elusive dark side, never seen by human eyes.

With the flight of Apollo 8, the theoretical became proven. The mystique of the Moon would soon be parted by the science to which Anders devoted himself. Ironically, he is remembered for two personal acts on that mission, neither one part of the protocol. Even as the world sat spellbound by photos of the Moon itself, he snapped a picture now famously known as “Earthrise.” His startling photo of the pristine blue Earth—common now, but unthinkable then—was later called “the most influential environmental photograph ever taken.” For Anders, it was another example of his lifelong impulse to glimpse “the other side of the mountain.” His second unscripted act was to read a passage from the book of Genesis during a live transmission to Earth on Christmas Eve.

His completion of the Apollo 8 mission was followed by several presidential appointments, including executive secretary of the cabinet-level National Aeronautics and Space Council, R&D commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission, first chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and U.S. ambassador to Norway. Anders served pro-bono in the Air Force reserves throughout his time in civil service and retired from the reserves in 1988 as a Major General. After returning from Norway, Anders held key positions in industry including vice president of General Electric Company, executive vice president for operations at Textron, and chairman and CEO of General Dynamics Corp. For leading the company’s impressive turnaround, he was named the National Security Industrial Association’s CEO of the year in 1993.

Over the course of his distinguished career, Anders has held six world-flight records and has received numerous prestigious awards and several honorary doctoral degrees. An abbreviated listing includes the USAF, NASA, and AEC’s distinguished service medals, the American Astronautical Society’s Flight Achievement Award, the National Geographic Society’s Hubbard Medal for exploration, and the 1968 *Time Magazine*’s “Men of the Year” along with his Apollo 8 crewmates. He was honored as a distinguished alumnus of AFIT in 1990 and the U.S. Naval Academy in 2000. Anders was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1984 and the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 2004. He is a trustee of the Battelle Memorial Institute, the Center of Occupation R & D, and the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation.

His instinctive passion for bringing others along in his journey never diminished, even after leaving the Apollo program. He became one of the founding organizers of the Yosemite National Institute, which lets disadvantaged adults and students experience the secrets of biology, chemistry, and earth science through visits to national parks. He has supported special learning materials to teach algebra to at-risk students. He never forgot his alma mater, helping to enlarge and improve the Glen Warner Soccer Facility at the U.S. Naval Academy. Anders and his wife moved to Orcas Island in Washington after retiring from General Dynamics in 1993. They support educational and environmental concerns through the Anders Foundation and founded the Heritage Flight Museum, which preserves vintage aircraft and “warbirds.”

For his outstanding dedication and exceptional accomplishments as an engineer, astronaut, governmental and civilian executive, and humanitarian, The Association hereby recognizes Major General William A. Anders as the 2006 Tau Beta Pi Distinguished Alumnus.

Tau Beta Pi, the world’s largest engineering society, has initiated 485,000 members since it was founded in 1885. Headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee, the Association has 230 active collegiate chapters and 16 active alumnus chapters throughout the country.