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Tau Beta Pi Leaders Attend
107th Convention

Lexington, Kentucky, was the site of the 107th annual Convention of Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society. Leaders of the organization met at the Hyatt Regency to conduct the Association’s business. Members from Kentucky Alpha (University of Kentucky) hosted the event.

Three hundred and thirty-eight engineering students from 227 collegiate chapters received leadership and management training and practiced their skills in conducting the business of the Convention, held this year on September 27-29. A total of 453 members of Tau Beta Pi were on hand for this gathering of talented engineers.

The growth of the Association is a testament to the steady and enthusiastic 127-year involvement of students in the world’s largest engineering society.

Three schools were awarded charters to establish Tau Beta Pi chapters: The College of New Jersey to be known as New Jersey Zeta; Penn State Erie to be known as Pennsylvania Mu; and Saint Louis University to be known as Missouri Epsilon.

Awards to outstanding members and chapters were presented.

The R.C. Matthews Outstanding Chapter Award for 2011-12, the top honor to a collegiate chapter, went to Florida Alpha at the University of Florida. Honorable mentions were given to Alabama Epsilon at the University of South Alabama and Michigan Kappa at Western Michigan University.

The R.H. Nagel Most Improved Chapter Award for 2011-12 was presented to Kentucky Gamma at Western Kentucky University. Honorable mentions were given to Georgia Alpha at the Georgia Institute of Technology and Michigan Kappa at Western Michigan University. Both the Matthews and Nagel awards are named for former Secretary-Treasurers of the Association.

The J.D. Froula Most Improved Membership Award for 2011-12 was presented to Illinois Epsilon at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Honorable mention was given to Massachusetts Zeta at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The award was presented by James D. Froula, P.E. (ret.), Tennessee Alpha ’67, Executive Director Emeritus.

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Dr. Abigail M. Richards, Washington Beta '99, Chief Advisor to the Montana Alpha Chapter and assistant professor and biological engineering program coordinator at Montana State University, was recognized as the 2012 Outstanding Advisor. Dr. Richards received a cash award of $1,000 and a grant in the same amount will be presented to the dean of the college of engineering at Montana State University for his discretionary fund.

The McDonald Mentor Award celebrates excellence in mentoring and advising among Tau Beta Pi educators and engineers. Dr. Derrick K. Rollins, Iowa Alpha '79, professor of chemical and biological engineering and professor-in-charge of community based recruitment and transition at Iowa State University, was named the 2012 McDonald Mentor, receiving $1,000 and an engraved medallion. Another $1,000 grant will be presented to the Iowa Alpha Chapter of Tau Beta Pi.

The Laureate Program recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding expertise outside the field of engineering. The Tau Beta Pi 2012 Laureates were: Carl J. Kirpes, Iowa Alpha '12, cited for diverse achievements; Steven Limpert, Arizona Beta '12, cited for achievements in the arts; Jason D. Metzger, Maryland Gamma '12, cited for achievements in the arts; Steven D. Prendergast, Indiana Gamma '12, cited for diverse achievements; and Kyle E. Zobeck, Indiana Delta '12, cited for achievements in athletics. Recipients received a $2,500 cash award and a commemorative plaque.

Ray A. Rothrock, Texas Delta ’77, general partner at Venrock and member of the Tau Beta Pi Vision Development Group, delivered the keynote address at Thursday’s Welcoming Dinner. His talk entitled “Being Your Own Boss – Engineering Entrepreneurship” discussed opportunities in venture capital and entrepreneurship. Rodger F. Smith, Wisconsin Alpha ’64, managing director of Greenwich Associates and the Tau Beta Pi Trust Advisory Committee Chair, and Harry W. Lange, Michigan Zeta ’75, portfolio manager for Fidelity Management and Research Co., and member of the TBP Trust Advisory Committee, conducted investments and personal finance sessions on Thursday and Friday night.

Fifteen scholarships of $500 each were presented for sustained excellent performance in project activities to the following chapters: Alabama Epsilon (University of South Alabama); California Alpha (University of California, Berkeley); California Epsilon (University of California, Los Angeles); California Psi (University of California, San Diego); Florida Alpha (University of Florida); Iowa Alpha (Iowa State University); Maryland Beta (University of Maryland); Michigan Gamma (University of Michigan); Michigan Epsilon (Wayne State University); Minnesota Alpha (University of Minnesota-Twin Cities); New Mexico Gamma (New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology); Ohio Iota (Ohio Northern University); South Carolina Alpha (Clemson University); Texas Alpha (University of Texas at Austin); and Wyoming Alpha (University of Wyoming).

Tau Beta Pi is the Engineering Honor Society, founded at Lehigh University in 1885. It has collegiate chapters at 238 engineering colleges in the United States and active alumnus chapters in 22 cities. It has initiated nearly 536,000 members in its 127-year history and is the world’s largest engineering society. (See www.tbp.org)