

# Graduation Starts a New Chapter

Alumni Involvement on the Rise as Tau Bates Look for Ways to Stay Active When College Days are Over

by Colleen L. Hill-Stramsak, Southeastern Michigan AC; Edward D. Basta, Ohio's North Coast AC; and Tricia E. Gomulinski, Great Smoky Mountains AC

**T**AKE A LOOK around Tau Beta Pi and you will see the new faces of the organization's alumni emerging. Recent college graduates are eager to maintain their activity and are looking for ways to do so.

Kyle J. Dominguez, president of the California Nu Chapter at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, last year, wanted to be more involved as an alumnus in TBI. Kyle recalls, "When I was at our District 16 Conference, I asked our main District Director, Scott Eckersall, about becoming more involved as an alumnus and what he would suggest. He filled me in on the situation for the Alumnus Chapter and I decided to take on the challenge of reactivating the chapter." The Southern California Alumnus Chapter, based out of Los Angeles, was reactivated in October.

Kyle is not alone. Carlo N. Domaon, *MA Z '12*, and chapter president last year, with the help of District 1 Director Matt Paragano, reactivated the Central Connecticut Alumnus Chapter in November. Meghan C. Ferrall, *FL A '12*, chapter president last year and now a graduate student at Georgia Tech, got alumni together and submitted a petition to charter an alumnus chapter in Atlanta, which the Executive Council approved in November.

It's not just former chapter presidents who are taking the reins. Haridayal Jaswal, *NY H '09*, in Houston, was his chapter's webmaster, and Stacey K. Stanton, *MA H '10*, at Treasure Valley in Boise served as her chapter's corresponding secretary. Still others were not officers or were not that active in Tau Beta Pi during college. The Virginia Alpha Chapter was not that active when Michael F. Autuoro was a student, but he is now the president of the New York Alumnus Chapter. Lydia M. Haid, *OR B '03*, did not hold an officer role in college, but wanted to meet fellow Tau Bates in Charlotte and arranged an alumni event in October (and

is already thinking about events for 2013). Wayne B. Paugh, *FL I '93*, did not serve as an officer during college, but he is now a director of the Front Range Alumnus Chapter and training to become an Engineering Futures Facilitator. After becoming a lawyer, Wayne says, "I never forgot my engineering roots. And after relocating to Denver in 2010 to serve as a federal prosecutor, I sought to reconnect with my engineering colleagues and to actively seek vol-

unteer opportunities related to the engineering profession through Tau Beta Pi."

## Why Alumnus Chapters?

The February 1971 issue of *THE BENT* suggested the following roles for alumnus chapters:

- To promote social and professional interchange among alumni of Tau Beta Pi
- To promote interchange

among undergraduates, "on-campus" alumni, and "off-campus" alumni

- To foster greater interest and activity in continuing education
- To encourage selection of engineering courses by qualified high school graduates

## 'Great Networking Opportunity'

The reasons may have changed over the years, but the first two remain: social and professional development among Tau Bates and interaction between alumni and the student members. Alumnus chapters still serve as a way to network with other members in the local area and perhaps meet possible vendors, co-workers, or employers. Stacey Stanton, president of the Treasure Valley Alumnus Chapter, stated, "Personally, I see them as being a great networking opportunity. Members can get together for social or volunteer events around the area. We are a young alumnus chapter and so far our members have really enjoyed getting to know



Members of the Central Connecticut Alumnus Chapter meet for pizza and to reactivate the Chapter recently at a restaurant in Glastonbury, CT.

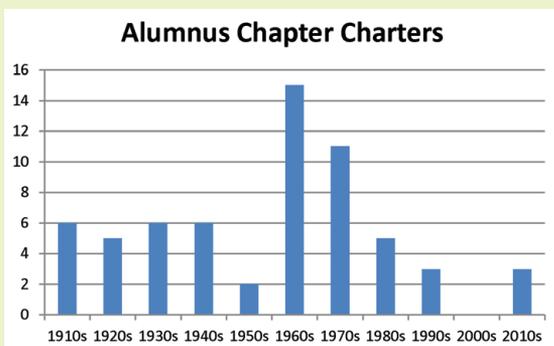
## “Maintenance of loyalty to Alma Mater and Tau Beta Pi”

The first alumni organization was the Chicago Alumni Association that formed in 1907. Their object was the “maintenance of loyalty to Alma Mater and Tau Beta Pi, and the promotion of the welfare of local brethren by social intercourse.” Dues were one dollar per year, and they met weekly over lunch. Other alumni associations followed: Pittsburgh in 1907; Schenectady, New York, in 1908; Boston in 1909; Washington, DC, in 1909; and New York City in 1912.

At the 1912 Convention, a new Article was added to the Constitution to create Alumni Associations. “Alumni Associations shall consist of bona fide members of Tau Beta Pi, and may be chartered by the Executive Council when application is made in writing by at least ten members of the society living in a city or its vicinity, and upon payment of a charter fee of ten dollars.”

Several existing alumni associations petitioned for a charter, including Seattle in March 1913, Chicago in May 1913, Schenectady in June 1913, San Francisco in November 1914, Washington, DC, in October 1915, and New York City in 1917.

By November 1935, 15 alumni associations were



listed in *THE BENT*. The late 1930s saw an increase in alumni activity as more associations formed and were chartered.

In the middle of 1947, Alumni Associations became Alumnus Chapters. Secretary-Treasurer R.H. Nagel ordered permanent sheepskin embossed charters for the alumnus chapters “where there is the slightest sign of life or even the hope of a sign of life.” In July 1947, charters were delivered to Baltimore, Chicago, Dayton, Detroit, Long Island Suburban, Milwaukee, Portland (Oregon), Salt Lake City, and Washington, DC; New York and Los Angeles were on order; and Birmingham had received its permanent charter back in 1941. By July 1950, 25 alumnus chapters had been chartered.

The decline in the 1950s turned around in the 1960s which brought the greatest growth of chartered alumnus chapters, gaining 9 between 1968 and 1969 alone. The 1970s continued the trend and added 11 more chartered alumnus chapters, bringing the total to 51 in 1978.

Until recently, the last alumnus chapter chartered was Southern Tier in 1993. TBPi went 17 years without a new alumnus chapter until the Philadelphia AC was chartered in 2010. There are 62 chartered, with 25 active, today.

one another, especially our members who recently moved to the Boise area.”

The alumnus chapters also provide a way for alumni to interact with the local collegiate chapters. Kyle Dominguez, organizer of the Southern California Alumnus Chapter, “would love to see the chapter grow to the point where a mentoring program could be established at many of the local chapters. I want to see engineers currently in the field passing on their wisdom and lessons learned to the students in the collegiate chapters.” Stanton also states, “We are looking for ways to support our local chapter as well. Boise State’s chapter is still relatively new so we are excited to help them.” Aaron Alpert in the San Francisco Bay area also wishes to “provide support to collegiate chapters for their industrial relations, outreach efforts, professional development—anything where it would be helpful to have people with more experience in industry or academia.”

The alumnus chapters also support the local implementation of Association programs. Alumnus chapters can find candidates for the Distinguished Alumnus Award from their membership and other Tau Bates in their community. Alpert adds, “A MindSET program in which we have a presence in local schools is going to require ambassadors. TBPi officials can’t be expected to be in every school everywhere, so local alums can serve that function.”

Tom M. Yackish of the West Michigan Alumnus Chapter imparted that “The role of alumni chapters is obviously to relate to the needs of our alumni. As alumni, their needs are all in career building and/or retirement activities. My experience has been that TBPi alumni will get jobs after graduation. But then doubts begin to set in concerning career direction and I think this is a topic that can be handled by an alumni chapter. For retired alumni, their volunteer direction turns to helping younger students get engaged in STEM studies. Motivating this level of student is the key. Personal stories are really important to this level of student.”

### What Do We Do?

Alumni Representative David J. Jay, *MI E* ’48, stated the obvious in the Winter 1973 issue of *THE BENT*: “to be active, you must have activity.”

The opportunities for social events are numerous. Alumni could meet at a restaurant, attend a sporting event, host a barbeque, have happy hour, go on a wine tasting tour, visit a microbrewery, go bowling, see a comedy show, or put on an alumni dinner banquet, maybe in conjunction with the local collegiate chapter initiation. The Southeastern Michigan Alumnus Chapter (SEMIAAC) makes a trip each spring to the Smoky Mountains, where they rent cabins outside Gatlinburg, TN, and usually visit TBPi Headquarters in Knoxville.

Volunteer opportunities are just as abundant. Some chapters have cleaned up trails, visited the children’s hospital during Christmas, volunteered at the annual conventions, held blood drives, collected food for local food banks, and provided local science fair judges. To find more ideas, visit your local volunteer website or ask your fellow alumni for ideas.

For professional development, chapters have arranged local industry and factory tours, hosted speakers on various topics from interviewing to handling change, and had their own alumni members talk about their own work during their meetings. From West Michigan, Tom Yackish reported, "We have had meetings devoted to career building which we call 'The Next Step'. The 'Next Step' meetings have involved everything from grad school leading to careers in research and academia to panel discussions with CEOs on promotion and careers as an executive."

And, of course, there is the interaction with the collegiate chapters. Whether it is via mentoring one on one or speaking to the collegiate chapter membership, alumni find the experience rewarding. Opportunities to involve alumni at the collegiate level include attending initiations, Order of the Engineer ring ceremonies, Engineers Week events, MindSET sessions, and other activities of the chapter. Alumni can also speak to the collegiate chapters about their backgrounds, experiences, and/or research at a regular membership meeting or at a formal initiation banquet. Student members could be invited to attend a variety of the social events listed above. Financially speaking, the alumnus chapter could also present scholarships to deserving collegiate members, sponsor chapter projects if necessary, and/or pay for an additional non-voting delegate from the collegiate chapter to attend the annual Convention. SEMIAC provides volunteers for the Michigan Science Olympiad hosted by the Michigan Iota Chapter at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Ohio's North Coast Alumnus Chapter (ONCAC) pioneered the "MVP" Award concept in District 7 chapters, where Ed Basta reports "we have sponsored the special recognition of those 'Most Valuable Persons' (normally non-officer helpers) in student chapters that go well above their fellow student members with regard to chapter assistance, activity, and even school spirit." Additionally, SEMIAC and ONCAC sponsored last year's District 7 Spirit Award which was presented to the two collegiate chapters in the district that best demonstrated the spirit of Tau Beta Pi and had gone beyond expectations to improve their chapter in the area(s) of membership, leadership, and/or image.

#### **Why Should I Get Involved or Stay Involved?**

As Wayne Paugh from the Front Range Alumnus Chapter says, "It is an unparalleled way to connect with professional colleagues, both locally and nationally, to engage in rewarding volunteer opportunities, and to share in student mentoring while helping strengthen and perpetuate America's leadership in science and engineering achievements."

Thinking to the future, alumnus chapters can provide many opportunities. Kyle Dominguez says "Done right, the alumnus chapter can allow a networking environment that is hard to find in other locations. Alumni can meet fellow alumni (and students) who will become valuable connections. Additionally, the chapters can provide talks and such to help fuel intellectual stimulation for its members. Finally and foremost, it will allow alumni to become involved with helping to inspire future generations. It is my belief that this is a fundamental part of the chapters. Being able to

## **Alumnus Chapter Members Look to the Future**

### **What do you hope to see your alumnus chapter accomplish in the next two years?**

•I hope that there will be enough activities to make sure all alums feel there is something that they would like to participate in. We had a great suggestion at the Lexington Convention—set up a calendar that rotates the kind of event and have a different event (but just one) every month—social one month, outreach the next, etc.—Sue Holl, Sacramento AC

•We would like to create director positions for local collegiate chapters to keep lines of communication open by providing information about what alumni are doing and finding out what might require alumni help (borrowed from Front Range). We would also like to continue annual activities and add new volunteering and social/networking opportunities. Finally, we plan to establish the "Welcome Program" for relocating or new graduates (Borrowed from DC Alumnus Chapter).—Colleen Hill-Stramsak, Southeastern Michigan AC

•Actually host events. We haven't had one since 2010. Let's start there.—Aaron Alpert, San Francisco Bay Area AC

•I would like to see our chapter double (or triple) our active membership; elect a new officer team in 2013, send two or more members to Conventions, increase involvement in local chapter events and initiations, and work more closely with collegiate chapters' college administrations/deans to let them know we can be a valuable resource.—Ed Basta, Ohio's North Coast AC

•We are hoping to expand our membership and offer a variety of activities for members to get to know one another. We are also looking at ways to support Boise State in purchasing a Bent for their campus. We are mainly focused on networking and supporting Boise State's chapter and continuing the Tau Beta Pi mission with helping others and giving back to the community. We also want to help establish a MindSET program for the Boise area.—Stacey Stanton, Treasure Valley AC

### **What are your hopes for the next five years?**

•Ideally, I would love to see a bridge between alumni and students that has not been seen for quite some time. Additionally I would hope that our chapter not only has a good footprint among college chapters but also is very active in the community. This is an essential part of being a Tau Bate.—Kyle Dominguez, Southern California AC

•Active membership in the 50+ range. (Considering this is Silicon Valley, I know there are many more in the area.) Have a range of new grads to people with 25+ years experience. Connect Tau Bates across various companies and industries to form a mutually beneficial cadre of friends and professional associates.—Aaron R. Alpert, San Francisco Bay Area AC

•I would like to see installation of a national Director of Alumni Affairs by 6/1/13, and an increased awareness of and involvement by alumnus chapters in the Association beyond just alumni giving. I also hope we can achieve a recognition for alumnus chapters so that collegiate chapters EXPECT us to be there, to be a big help to them, and to look forward to joining an active alumnus chapter as soon as they graduate.—Ed Basta, Ohio's North Coast AC

•I think it is important to maintain a presence within the organization so we can help our community and help members in times of need. I think alumnus chapters offer a unique opportunity to allow these connections, as well as to support local chapters. One struggle is that officers constantly graduate and move on. By having alumnus chapters, there is a more permanent presence with the school and community.—Stacey Stanton, Treasure Valley AC

inspire young minds is one of greatest things an alumni can do.”

It is a way to stay connected to Tau Beta Pi, the organization, and Tau Beta Pi, the people. Aaron Alpert says, “Especially for new grads who move to the area, it would be great to have a ready-to-go group of people to meet socially.” For Tom Yackish, “It’s a way to volunteer and possibly support the alumni’s Alma Mater.” Stacey Stanton agrees, “Some of the alumni may have been part of the local chapter and this is a way they can continue to support their Alma Mater.”

Sue L.R. Holl reiterates, “There are SO many opportunities to connect with your fellow members of Tau Beta Pi. I think that the reasons vary with the age of the alumni. Right after college, people want to have that same WONDERFUL experience they had while in college, but then as they get older, establish relationships, and maybe have a family, the focus might shift to helping create better school programs and opportunities to make sure kids know about engineer-



Great Smoky Mountains alumna Bonnie L. LaPierre, TN A '08, and volunteer Trevor F. Grieco, TN A '13, work with Knoxville, TN, students during a recent MindSET session.

ing. Later on, alumni might be interested in networking, and when they retire, they might like to do outreach to kids, support the collegiate chapters, and just socialize. We want to be able to have enough members at a variety of ages so that some will ‘connect’ with a ‘pub crawl’ while others ‘connect’ over a monthly lunch meeting.”

Sue continues, “Alums should stay involved because we have a responsibility always to try to make things better in our world. Engineers are

the ones that can make the most difference.” Ed Basta agrees, “I would say to stay involved in (and with) a great Association that is dedicated to recognizing excellence in our Engineering colleges, and to ‘pay forward’ what we all received as benefits of being Tau Bates—it’s a ‘Noblesse Oblige’ thing, really.”

•If you would like to join your local alumnus chapter, please contact one of the persons listed below. If there is no one in your area, please email [tbp@tbp.org](mailto:tbp@tbp.org).

## Active Alumnus Chapters

Dist.	Alumnus Chapter	Contact Name	Contact Email
1	Central Connecticut	Carlo Domoan	<a href="mailto:tbp.ct.alumni@gmail.com">tbp.ct.alumni@gmail.com</a>
2	New York, NY	Michael Autuoro	<a href="mailto:autuoro@gmail.com">autuoro@gmail.com</a>
2	Rochester, NY	Denis Lee	<a href="mailto:DLee1@idexcorp.com">DLee1@idexcorp.com</a>
2	Southern Tier, NY	Andrew Steinmann	<a href="mailto:southernertierytbp@gmail.com">southernertierytbp@gmail.com</a>
3	Philadelphia, PA	Michael Craner	<a href="mailto:mcraner@ieee.org">mcraner@ieee.org</a>
4	Washington, DC	Leonard Sadauskas	<a href="mailto:TBP.DCAumni@verizon.net">TBP.DCAumni@verizon.net</a>
5	Atlanta, GA	Meghan Ferrall	<a href="mailto:ferrallmgator@gmail.com">ferrallmgator@gmail.com</a>
5	Central Florida, Orlando	Solange Dao	<a href="mailto:scdao@att.net">scdao@att.net</a>
6	Great Smoky Mtns, TN	Robert W. Bowers	<a href="mailto:BowersRW@cdmsmith.com">BowersRW@cdmsmith.com</a>
6	Bluegrass, KY	Nick Such	<a href="mailto:nicksuch@gmail.com">nicksuch@gmail.com</a>
6	Louisville, KY	Patricia Ralston	<a href="mailto:patricia.ralston@louisville.edu">patricia.ralston@louisville.edu</a>
7	Dayton, OH	Steven Schuldt	<a href="mailto:schuldt12@gmail.com">schuldt12@gmail.com</a>
7	Southeastern Michigan	Colleen Hill-Stramsak	<a href="mailto:chill@hrc-engr.com">chill@hrc-engr.com</a>
7	West Michigan	Wesley Repke	<a href="mailto:wesleyrepke@gmail.com">wesleyrepke@gmail.com</a>
7	Ohio’s North Coast	Edward D. Basta	<a href="mailto:edbasta@aol.com">edbasta@aol.com</a>
8	Central Illinois, U-C	Daniel F. Hang	<a href="mailto:d-hang@illinois.edu">d-hang@illinois.edu</a>
8	Chicago, IL	Bohdan Bodnar	<a href="mailto:tbpchicago@gmail.com">tbpchicago@gmail.com</a>
10	Houston, TX	Haridayal Jaswal	<a href="mailto:hjaswal01@gmail.com">hjaswal01@gmail.com</a>
11	Minnesota, Twin Cities	Becky Perkins	<a href="mailto:tbp.twincities@gmail.com">tbp.twincities@gmail.com</a>
12	Front Range, CO, WY	Catherine McCarrell	<a href="mailto:catherinemccarrell@gmail.com">catherinemccarrell@gmail.com</a>
12	Treasure Valley, ID	Stacey Stanton	<a href="mailto:treasurevalleytbp@gmail.com">treasurevalleytbp@gmail.com</a>
14	Puget Sound, Seattle	Malena Foster	<a href="mailto:malena.foster@gmail.com">malena.foster@gmail.com</a>
15	Sacramento, CA	Alex Barszap	<a href="mailto:SacAlumni@tbp.org">SacAlumni@tbp.org</a>
15	San Francisco Bay Area	Aaron Alpert	<a href="mailto:alpert8@tbp.berkeley.edu">alpert8@tbp.berkeley.edu</a>
16	Southern California, CA	Kyle Dominguez	<a href="mailto:SoCalAlumni@tbp.org">SoCalAlumni@tbp.org</a>

**AUTHORS:** Colleen L. Hill-Stramsak, P.E., MI E '00, President of the Southeastern Michigan AC, is also an Advisor of her chapter. Edward D. Basta, OH E '82, President of Ohio’s North Coast AC, served the Association as President from 1994-1998, and is Chief Advisor of his chapter. Tricia E. Gomulinski, SD A '98, a Director of the Great Smoky Mountains AC, served as District 12 Director from 2000-2012. The authors would like to express their appreciation to the many alumni who contributed their thoughts about alumnus chapters and staying involved in Tau Beta Pi.