One Laureate has been selected in the 25th year of Tau Beta Pi’s annual program to recognize gifted engineering students who have excelled in non-technical areas. Selected for his accomplishments in the arts, Devin T. Wiley, Arizona Alpha ’07, joins 58 other outstanding Tau Betas who have been cited since the program began in 1982. He will be honored during ceremonies on October 7, 2006, at the 101st annual Convention in Denver, CO, where he will receive a $2,500 check and a commemorative plaque.

The Laureate Program was inaugurated to further Tau Beta Pi’s second basic purpose as stated in the preamble to the Constitution: “to foster a spirit of liberal culture in engineering colleges.” A committee of District Directors considered six nominees from six chapters.

Devin T. Wiley

DEVIN T. WILEY, Arizona Alpha ’07, of the University of Arizona, is the 2006 Tau Beta Pi Laureate in the arts for his achievements in his chemical engineering studies, at the piano keyboard, and in his community.

At an early age, something about Devin caught the attention of a local piano teacher. His interest grew, despite the limitations of living in an isolated rural community. His mother supported and encouraged the development of his musical talents. In time, he needed more instruction than his small community could provide. His parents made some sacrifices and relocated to a larger community where his talent could meet with more advanced teachers, and soon his abilities increased dramatically.

Devin’s talents went well beyond music alone. His aptitudes in science and mathematics were encouraged by his father. By high school, he was winning praise for his demonstration of superconductivity in his chemistry and physics courses. His school gave him special recognition for performing 1,000 hours of local volunteer work in four years.

During a year in France as a Rotary exchange student, Devin lent his musical and organizational talents to a fundraiser. The event raised roughly $3,000, which helped establish a sustainable drinking-water program for 5,000 people in rural Madagascar. He later used his performance skills repeatedly to benefit local and national causes.

Devin chose chemical engineering as his college major, but auditioned to qualify for a piano minor. The faculty instead placed him into the piano-performance-major track. He soon was competing against upper-class and doctoral piano students in the prestigious University of Arizona president’s competition, in which he won the grand prize.

When he taught piano at an elementary school for two semesters, he found he could instill a love of music in his students and intrigue them with the physics and mathematics involved. In college, he applied this integrated pedagogical approach as a teaching assistant. According to one faculty member, Devin’s effectiveness led some students to skip classroom lectures in favor of his presentations.

While at the university, he helped found the local chapter of Engineers Without Borders. He reasoned that engineers could be most effective when teamed with students from business and anthropology, and he recruited accordingly. His 20-person group built homes for families in Nogales, Mexico, using materials cast off by maquiladoras—assembly plants.

He has continued his involvement while maintaining a high grade point average in his rigorous engineering program.

His ultimate goal is to become certified as both a doctoral engineer and as a medical doctor who can develop unique research and teaching programs to help solve critical problems regarding human health. And without doubt, his future will include a continuing piano accompaniment.