Chad R. Fusco, E.I.

Chad Fusco, Ohio Alpha '09, is a Tau Beta Pi Laureate for his achievements in the arts. He is a civil engineering graduate, with a minor in theater, of Case Western Reserve University and plans to obtain a master's in structural engineering there.

His commitment to the arts began during high-school years with involvement in school plays and web development, all while holding a perfect G.P.A.  Chad joined student theater groups during his first semester at Case and was soon the only engineering major in a group cast of primarily theater majors. He also proved himself as a director, with The Pajama Game.

It didn't stop there. Chad served as public relations officer of the Case Footlighters during his sophomore year, promoting plays and designing flyers. He redefined the role, working on fundraising, websites, and program advertising sales. He worked with others to introduce a patron program and even made an arrangement to obtain free food for the cast and crew.

Chad also became Ohio Alpha's Public Relations Chair, marketing the annual Bookswap program and making that semester's event the most successful ever—with activities like sidewalk chalking. He achieved a 4.0 G.P.A. in his major and other academic honors, including first place in the ASCE North Central technical-paper competition.

His goal this summer was to obtain an internship in structural engineering and continue to grow as a design engineer. He previously helped to develop several building projects and worked as a summer intern on code conflicts at Seattle's department of planning and development.

Kathryn C. Kellogg

Kathryn Kellogg, South Dakota Alpha '09, is a Tau Beta Pi Laureate for her achievements in the arts. She is a mechanical engineering graduate of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology and also graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in music from Texas Christian University in 2006.

A lifelong dedication to music began when she learned the violin at the age of four. Katie went on to be a soloist with the Black Hills Symphony Orchestra and concertmaster for the South Dakota All-State Orchestra.

Devoted to cultivating a love for music among people of all ages, Katie began teaching violin when she was 14 and continued with lessons while balancing her schedule as a student.

She stretches her talent over a wide range of music beyond the classical, which includes bluegrass, country-western, and Latin American. During the summers, Katie performs nightly as Cowgirl Kate with the band at the Fort Hays Chuckwagon. In 2007, she was crowned Miss Rapid City, largely because of her performance of Bach's Sonata No.1 during the pageant. She went on to be third runner-up for the title of Miss South Dakota after she and her violin won the talent portion of the contest.

Her musical and engineering skills merged when she developed a music stand that turns pages automatically. She has served as Corresponding Secretary of South Dakota Alpha and made the dean's list every year. Katie's internships have included an assignment on an engineering team that used fiber-optic strain gauges to monitor cracks on Mt. Rushmore.
Four Laureates have been selected in the 28th year of Tau Beta Pi’s annual program to recognize gifted engineering students who have excelled in non-technical areas. Award categories include arts, athletics, diverse achievements, and service.

The Laureates join 65 other outstanding Tau Bates who have been cited since the program began in 1982. They will be honored during ceremonies on October 17, 2009, at the 104th annual Convention in East Brunswick, NJ, where each 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 16 nominees from 12 chapters.

Uchechukwuka D. Monu

Uchechukwuka Monu, District of Columbia Alpha ’09, is a Tau Beta Pi Laureate in athletics. An electrical engineering graduate of Howard University with a 4.0 G.P.A., Uche will attend Stanford University to work on a Ph.D. in her field. TBP Matthews Fellow No. 12 and TBP Record Scholar No. 386, she also served as Chapter President.

She is also a swimmer, training to qualify to represent her native Nigeria at the 2012 London Olympic Games.

Uche is from a family of swimmers. She and her sister tied for the record of seven individual gold medals won at a Nigerian national sports event. She still holds national records—in both the 50-meter and 2,000-meter backstroke.

Uche was awarded her university’s swimming and diving athletic scholarship for four years and holds the school record in 400-yard and 800-yard freestyle relays. She also qualified for the North East Conference all-academic teams in 2005 and 2006, as well as the Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association all-academic teams in 2007 and 2008.

Uche was able to represent Nigeria at the FINA world swimming championships in Melbourne, Australia, in 2007 and Manchester, England, in 2008. She was also a Nigerian junior tennis champion and received a piano scholarship there.

Uche has completed two internships as a summer analyst at Goldman Sachs & Company and at the former Lehman Brothers. She led her chapter to a TBP Greater Interest in Government initiative to teach high-school students about electromagnetism, and she tutored underclassmen in basic and advanced engineering courses.

Samantha van der Drift

Samantha van der Drift, Texas Beta ’10, is a Tau Beta Pi Laureate based upon her diverse achievements. She is a senior at Texas Tech University, majoring in civil and environmental engineering.

Samantha grew up in the Netherlands and began playing tennis at the age of six. She went on to rank fourth in her country in the under-17 category and started playing in international junior tournaments. At the age of 16, she moved to Eindhoven to train at an academy with professional players and coaches, while continuing her high-school education.

Samantha could not combine her tennis career with college at home because Dutch universities do not have competing athletic teams. So she decided to pursue an engineering degree in Texas while continuing to play, and she has become a top NCAA athlete. She co-captained the tennis team for two years, before being unanimously voted captain for her senior year. Samantha currently holds the school record for the most wins in singles matches. She has served as an athletic mentor for local schoolchildren, as well as a volunteer for an elementary-school reading program.

Growing up in one of the most densely populated countries of the world has made her aware of environmental issues, so she is preparing for a career that could help future generations enjoy the world that she has experienced. Samantha has enrolled in a sustainable building class and is planning to become LEED accredited. A member of ASCE, she has joined Engineers Without Borders and serves as fundraising chair of a project to create a water-sanitation system for a native tribe in Panama.