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CONTACT: Patricia McDaniel
865/546-4578

Tau Beta Pi Announces Clara C. Shih as 2005 Laureate

Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, has named a Laureate in the Association's annual program to recognize gifted engineering students who have excelled in areas beyond their technical majors.

The 2005 Tau Beta Pi Laureate is **Clara C. Shih** who graduated this spring from Stanford University with a bachelor's degree in economics and co-terminal degrees (B.S., M.S.) in computer science. In addition to her outstanding scholastic accomplishments, Shih is lauded for excellence in her vastly diverse achievements. She joins 57 other exceptional Tau Bates who have been named Laureates since 1982.

The Laureate Program exists to further Tau Beta Pi's second fundamental purpose as stated in the Association's Constitution: ". . . to foster a spirit of liberal culture in engineering colleges." The primary concern of the Society is to recognize students of superior scholarship and exemplary character and to honor eminent practicing engineers. The Society also encourages excellence in engineering education and in the ethical practice of engineering.

Shih will be honored with other 2005 national award winners on October 8, 2005, at the 100th annual Convention to be held in Salt Lake City, Utah. Tau Beta Pi President Dr. Matthew W. Ohland will present Shih with a \$2,500 cash award and a commemorative plaque. Her biography follows:

Clara C. Shih was nominated by the California Gamma Chapter of Tau Beta Pi at Stanford University for her diverse achievements in academics, athletics, the arts, and service to society.

As a first-generation immigrant from Hong Kong, Clara experienced the barriers of language, disparate cultures, and unfamiliar attitudes. She was encouraged by her father, an electrical engineer, to develop an interest in science and math, but also by her mother, who as a teacher, imparted in Clara an enduring passion for education and social equality.

In spite of the obstacles of adjusting to a new culture, Clara was accepted into one of the nation's top high schools, where her diverse interests and drive toward excellence took form. She was valedictorian, captain of the women's varsity tennis team, and concertmistress of the school orchestra where she played violin. She also served as editor of the school newspaper, captain of the debate team, and taught English to new immigrants.

At Stanford, cognizant of the apparent gap between humanistic and scientific intellectual cultures, she recognized that her technical expertise could be a valuable tool for helping the less privileged in her community and around the world. She co-founded the Stanford engineering public service center which bridges service initiatives between the school of engineering and Stanford's Hass center for public service. She co-organized the bay area community technology nonprofit conference in 2004, which helped 400+ non-profit community leaders identify, create, and adapt technology to better serve constituents.

As part of her global concern, Clara founded and now directs Camp Amelia Technology Literacy Group, a nonprofit organization that develops open-source educational software and offers free summer and afterschool computer camps for at-risk youth throughout the world. Because of her work, she has been invited to address international groups as well as serving as a delegate to the United Nations world summit on the information society.

Throughout her school years, Clara remained a meritorious scholar, a tireless worker, and a creative, effective leader, while working to help fund her education. She is a Microsoft women's scholar, a United States president's scholar, a Mayfield fellow, a Google Anita Borg scholar, and a Merage Foundation for the American Dream fellow, a member of Mu Alpha Theta honor society, and was a co-organizer of numerous Tau Beta Pi activities. As president of the campus chapter of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Clara saw membership grow six-fold after instituting new programs. While chairing the Society of Women Engineers chapter, she coordinated a networking banquet for more than 300 female engineering students. She has been editor of the *Stanford Daily* and a computer science teaching assistant. She has taken part in software research projects and has several academic publications to her credit.

Clara's interests are diverse as well as vigorous. She has won various awards for violin, poetry, and prose, and is fluent in several languages. Clara plays on an intramural tennis team and has been running half-marathons in preparation for the July 2005 San Francisco marathon.

As a Marshall scholar, Clara will attend the University of Oxford this fall where she plans to pursue a second master's degree in educational studies, with a focus on technology.

Tau Beta Pi, the world's largest engineering society, has initiated 477,000 members since it was founded in 1885. Headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee, the Association has 229 active collegiate chapters and 16 active alumnus chapters throughout the country.