

President Blackford Reports to the 2016 Convention

I WANT TO START by showing you the organization chart for Tau Beta Pi.

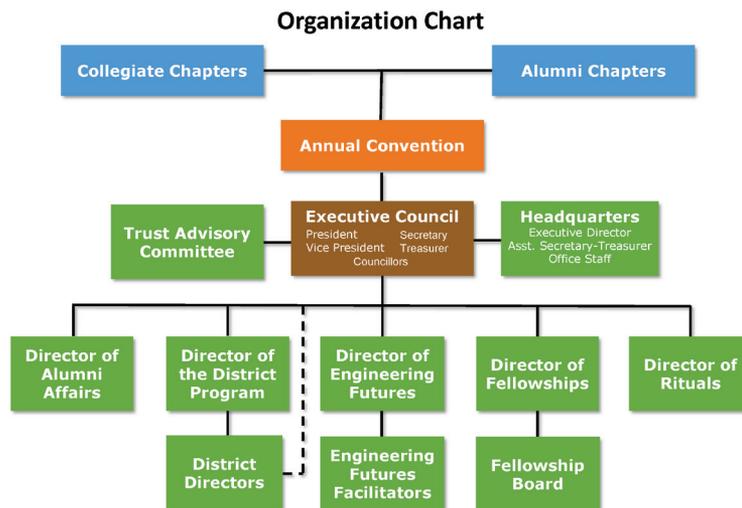
You will notice one key characteristic: as the representative of the collegiate and alumni chapters at Convention, you are the leaders of Tau Beta Pi. The Convention is equivalent to a meeting of the shareholders of a company; you are here to set our policies and direction. I am proud that

we are a student run organization, with the Executive Council leading the organization between Conventions and providing overall management and expertise. Please take your role as leaders in this student run organization seriously and review the material you are voting on and debating as you are making decisions for and representing all 570,000 members.

When I went to the District 10 Conference this past spring, my update on the activities of the Council was called *The State of the Association Address*. As I live in Washington, DC, I very much enjoyed the analogy and think it is as appropriate here as you are the deliberative/legislative body of TBPi and will be making the “laws” and policy for our Association.

While there is less pomp and circumstance here than on Capitol Hill (there was no Sergeant at Arms to announce the President of Tau Beta Pi, no member of the EC needs to be moved to a bunker in an undisclosed location, and I hope that no one will scream “you lie” at any point during my report), nonetheless, I am pleased to present an overview of what the Executive Council has accomplished this past year and our plans for the future.

In short, Tau Beta Pi is as strong and active as ever, and we owe that to all of you here at Convention and others who could not join us—the student chapter leaders, alumni chapter leaders, chapter advisors, the dedicated volunteer Association Officials, the Headquarters staff, alumni who are here to impart their knowledge through professional development sessions, the recruiters and graduate school representatives participating in our Recruiting Fair, our award recipients whose accomplishments are a testament to what is possible to achieve as a Tau Bate, and the members of the petitioning society who are eager to join our Association. We also owe our success to all of our members—you are the face of Tau



Beta Pi and your pride in membership will increase our visibility and recognition in the engineering profession and beyond. All of you play an essential role. I encourage those of you who are students to continue your involvement after you graduate and our alumni to continue lifelong engagement.

There is one other group of individuals who I need to recognize, for without

their support, none of the programs and opportunities of membership would be possible. Our scholarships and fellowships, this Convention, District Conferences, the Engineering Futures program, and even the low cost of your lifetime membership dues is made possible through our generous donors. All donors have purple ribbons on their badge; please take the opportunity to thank them for their generous support. I hope that, when circumstances allow, you will consider joining them in supporting our Association so that future Tau Bates will have the same—and even more—opportunities.

It is a privilege to lead the largest engineering society, and one that not only recognizes academic achievement and integrity, but is also active in the community and on campus. We will present Chapter Project Awards and Chapter Excellence Awards at Convention to recognize the outstanding activities of our campus chapters and to recognize exemplary performance. We welcome one new chapter to our Association—NC Z at East Carolina University—which I had the honor of installing in March. We have representatives from the petitioning society at Brigham Young University-Idaho, which seeks to join. We welcome new and reactivated alumni chapters, and continuing the welcoming theme, last year, we initiated nearly 10,000 members, the largest class in nearly 20 years. I hope that we exceed that number this year so that we can recognize even more deserving engineers.

The Executive Council has been busy. Last April, you ratified changes to our Constitution and Bylaws to restructure the EC, expanding its size and changing the term lengths and frequency of elections. You will be electing three new members to the Executive Council this year and Councillor Holl has already introduced you to the candidates who have so far indicated their intent to run for election.

The Executive Council has made great strides, with the help of an outside consultant, on formulating a mission, vision, and strategic plan for our Association. You will see evidence of our new vision and mission at this Convention and it has been presented in *The Bent*, but, let me share it again with you now:

Our Vision

Tau Beta Pi Engineers Making Extraordinary Contributions to Create a Better World.

Our Mission

As the only honor society for engineers in all disciplines, Tau Beta Pi:

- Recognizes academic and professional excellence rooted in personal integrity,
- Promotes a well-rounded education essential for success,
- Provides opportunities for leadership development and promotes lifelong learning,
- Cultivates a community of dedicated high achievers.

I would also like to share the highlights of our strategic plan. This plan has not been created in a vacuum—we have solicited the input of Association Officials, alumni, and the attendees at the 2015 Convention.

We have identified the following Strategic Goal Areas:

- Enhancing the Image, Visibility, and Branding of Tau Beta Pi
- Strengthening the Finances and Fundraising of the Association
- Advancing Collaborative Member Engagement
- Providing Relevant and Recognized Leadership and Professional Development
- Developing the Organizational Processes of the Association
- Improving Chapter Support and Operations

A survey for all members is available and a link to it was published in *The Bent* to solicit the input of all members to help refine our plan as we look to implement it over the coming year. I welcome your feedback and comments as these areas will guide our programs and projects.

We have made a number of changes to the San Diego Convention:

- Our Professional Development program has been expanded and we have made schedule changes to give more opportunities for voting delegates to participate.
- We will have a more informal welcoming poolside BBQ tonight and closing dinner in a park near the water, as well as entertainment by Only Won, Larissa Lam, and Don McMillan.
- We have changed the committee scheduling and size. I

encourage all of you who were not assigned to a committee to go to the meetings tonight starting at 7:30 p.m. and learn about the business that has been discussed.

- We again have our Recruiting Fair tomorrow. Please visit these supporters, both employers and grad schools. If any of you have contacts or suggestions for companies or graduate schools to include at next year's fair, please let us know.

The Council is also continuing to revise our governing documents. Executive Director Gomulinski and I have been meeting regularly to make revisions as guided by discussions of the Governing Documents Revision Committee and the EC. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee will be reviewing these revisions to prepare them for consideration by the 2017 Convention.

Our governing documents last underwent major changes nearly 50 years ago, and are among the longest of any honor society. The idea behind the current revision is not to make substantive changes, but to streamline them and remove items, such as fines for not submitting reports in a timely manner, that would be better relegated to policy (approved by Convention).

Even if you are not on the Constitution and Bylaws committee, I encourage you to review these documents and make suggestions. With these revised documents, we hope to not need to make annual changes to our governing documents, especially for such trivial matters as reimbursement for travel via Pullman train car!

The Constitution and Bylaws also require me to announce to the Convention the salary of our Executive Director; however, unless there is objection, I will simply state that that information is available on Tau Beta Pi's IRS form 990 for anyone who is interested.

The Council received 24 recommendations during the New Business portion of the 2015 Convention and I have responded individually to all of them. Our responses are also available on the TBPI website for anyone interested in reviewing them. We are always open to receiving your recommendations at any time.

I am confident that all of you, as the leaders of your chapters, will be making extraordinary contributions here at Convention, back at your chapters, and throughout your career as together we create a better world. I look forward to meeting all of you at Convention. I remember well my first Convention in Rapid City, SD, nearly 20 years ago and the fellow Tau Bates that I met there and remain in contact with to this day. While there will not be a blizzard here in San Diego or a snowman gracing this year's Convention picture, I know you too will long remember the fun times, new friends, and accomplishments at Convention.

Here at Convention, the alumni chapters have buttons that say: "Tau Beta Pi for Life." I want all of you to remember that you are members as long as you live. I encourage you to join an alumni chapter, advise a collegiate chapter, volunteer at a MindSET event, or even

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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become an Association Official. I have heard too many people tell me that they were a member back in college. *You are always a Tau Bate!* Remember to stay connected and consider supporting us, even with something as simple as displaying your membership certificate or Bent in your office and letting others know that you are proud of your membership. At our Virginia Delta Chapter at the Virginia Military Institute, the cadets have a tradition of rubbing the Bent monument for good luck. In that tradition, I hope that your membership will bring you success in your career.

I am reminded of the first and last lines of the poem "Dream Big" that is included in the *President's Book*, and was in an advertisement for a Macintosh computer my freshman year in college: "If there were ever a time to dare, to make a difference, to embark on something worth doing, it is now..." I hope that you consider that now is the right time to do something that makes a difference for Tau Beta Pi. The last line, "...you will pass this way only once...do it right!" sums up for me the Convention experience. Many of you will attend Convention only one time—I hope it inspires you to "dream big" and to "do something that makes a difference" for Tau Beta Pi, the engineering profession, and the world.

Thank you for the honor and privilege of leading Tau Beta Pi. Let's "do it right" here at Convention, have fun, "dream big," and together make extraordinary contributions to create a better Association and world!

2014-16 PRESIDENT

Joseph P. "J.P." Blackford, District of Columbia Gamma '95, is a graduate of George Washington University with



has served as an Engineering Futures Facilitator since 2003 and was a District 4 Director from 2005-14.

a B.S. in civil engineering *summa cum laude* and an M.S. in environmental engineering. He is an adjunct faculty member in the engineering management and systems engineering (EMSE) department at George Washington University and previously served as director of doctoral programs for the EMSE off-campus programs office at GW. Blackford

\$\$ Benefit for Members

Members may be eligible for an additional discount off their automobile insurance.



Did you know that GEICO provides a discount to Tau Beta Pi members on their auto insurance, which benefits Tau Beta Pi whenever a member gets a quote? Members could save up to an additional 8 percent on car insurance. Also, GEICO can help you find great insurance rates on motorcycle, homeowners,

renters, boat, and much more. Get a free quote today to see how much you could save with GEICO. It will be a very wise decision! Visit www.geico.com/greek/tbp or call 1-800-368-2734 for your free quote.

TELL US THE TALE... WIN A T-SHIRT!

SEND US your best captions for this snapshot from Tau Beta Pi's photo archives, and if it is judged one of the best, you will win a TBP t-shirt of your choice!

The picture taken April 19, 1980, captured Michigan Gamma's dedication of its new Bent monument in honor of Prof. A.D. Moore, PA Γ 1915, shown seated on the right.

Chapter officers attending to the new Bent are

Michael T. Koinis, MI Γ '80, and Howard K. Fertel, Ph.D., MI Γ '79. Michigan Gamma President Bradley G. Titus, MI Γ '80, presided over the affair.

Submit your entries to pat@tbp.org, or mail them to HQ by January 30, 2017.

The photo for the Fall Contest, below, which appeared in the Winter 1987 issue, was taken on Halloween during the 1986 Convention in College Park, Maryland. The caption read: "The great 'pumpking' and Secretary Jim Froula at Convention."

The judges carefully considered 32 captions submitted by 13 readers. It was a dead heat until the very end when Dante A. Masnada, CA Z '75, was declared the winner for this caption: "I've been feeling a bit light headed lately..."

The second place entry was submitted by Jonathan C. Silver, CT Γ '08: "Moments before Jim Froula was turned into Betelgeuse."

There was a three-way tie for honorable mention: "Damn it Ichabod! This replacement does NOT meet original design specs."

and "Oh crap! Enrico, this was not mentioned on your list of possible side effects." both conjured up by George W. Sine Jr., GA A '68. From Brian R. Tilles, P.E., FL E '93, we have: "Oh my...does this jacket make my head look small?"

