PI TAU SIGMA OUTSTANDING AWARDS

Montana State Tau Rho

Preparer: Daniel Moore, President

This year, as always, initiates were chosen from the top third of the senior class and the top quarter of the senior class of mechanical engineers. This cutoff corresponded to a required GPA of 3.61 for the junior class and 3.44 for the senior class. Because our chapter is small and in need of new members, not additional requirements were placed on prospective initiates. In the Fall 2015 initiation, two new members were inducted on November 3, 2015. In the Spring 2016 initiation, seven member were initiated on March 23, 2016 and one more was initiated in a secondary ceremony on April 1, 2016. The initiation ceremonies included brief introductions and acceptance of the initiates' fees if not already paid. The reading of the Rituals of Pi Tau Sigma followed, which included the explanation of the coat of arms and the Fundamental Principles and Canons of Engineering from the ASME Code of Ethics. Upon completion, the initiates signed their names in the chapter's membership book, received their bents, and partook in pizza with any members in attendance.

The focus of our chapter this year was service work. During the 2015-2016 academic year, our chapter carried out multiple volunteer activities. We hosted a Family Science Night at the public library, an event focused on teaching elementary students STEM related topics. The event, which was attended by about 30 children and parents, focused on topography and sonar. First, the participants split up into groups and were given a small, open-topped wooden box. Inside this box they constructed an object using clay, balsa wood, and toothpicks. They then taped paper over the boxes, hiding the contents. The groups switched boxes, then used long toothpicks to penetrate through the paper. By creating a grid of the depths that the toothpick reached, a representation of the object within was found. Although the topic was a rather complicated one, it seemed to resonate with the children in a way that made it both fund and memorable.

Our chapter also volunteered at the Children's Museum Steam Lab, which focuses on teaching young children to wire and program an Arduino, among other things. This was not a single event; rather, each member decided individually when they would volunteer. The chapter mostly served to facilitate communication among members and with the Children's Museum.

In addition to these outreach activities, we also held our regular chapter meetings. These meetings were held once every two weeks in a small restaurant off campus. Here we discussed matters such as induction, funding, and volunteer activities. Before the end of the semester we voted on new officers, although this was uneventful since none of our current officers were graduating and were all reelected unanimously.

The President and Vice President of our chapter attended this year's national convention, where they both (separately) placed in the Autodesk design competition. In addition, our chapter received the first place Outstanding Service Award.