

PI TAU SIGMA OUTSTANDING AWARDS
South Carolina Delta Tau
Ilana Lu, President

Identification of potential PTS-DT members for Fall, 2015 and Spring, 2016 was performed through both distribution of letters in classes and focused email communications. After initiates completed the requirements for initiation, which includes attendance requirements for the seminar series and demonstrated service to the community and/or university, twenty-two undergraduates were inducted into PTS-DT; a fall, 2015 initiate (Chau Tran) is now serving as Vice President for 2016-2017.

Near the end of the spring semester, our PTS-DT members met and selected their officers for 2016-2017; a combined pre-meeting and in-meeting nomination procedure made the process more robust. The elected officers demonstrated the diversity of the active members, with two women and three men selected to lead PTS-DT in the coming year.

One of the most important service activities, and one that almost every PTS-DT member enjoys, is the annual selection by our members of Mechanical Engineering's best young educator, best senior educator and best service provider. The selection was finalized with 75% of all current PTS-DT members actively participating. The awards provided by PTS-DT are broadly acknowledged by the departmental faculty to be a worthwhile and valued honor. Sadly, the individual selected for best senior educator, Prof. Curtis Rhodes, unexpectedly passed away just before he was to receive the award.

PTS-DT members must demonstrate a commitment to providing service to the community and/or their department. This year, PTS-DT took the lead in assisting the Department of Mechanical Engineering during Engineering Week. During the week-long activities, (a) fifteen of our members and initiates set up and manned the well-attended "bottle rocket launch" event and (b) one member designed, built and then manned a special booth with hands-on activities entitled "What is a Lever?" A total of nearly 1,000 K-12 students attended these events, making it one of the most successful programs in recent years. In addition to the Engineering Week activities, ten of our members provided brief documentation of their service to the community at large, including activities with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Pets Inc. and the Gorman Home.

By far the most well attended and effective educational activity is our **PTS-DT Bi-weekly Seminar Series**. Organized entirely by members of PTS-DT, seminars are held on a regular schedule during both the fall and spring semesters. A total of 13 presenters, including engineers and engineering managers, gave presentations that focused on what it is like to be an engineer in their field and what is necessary to be successful as an engineer, with an average attendance of 30 PTS-DT members for each seminar.

Fund-raising by PTS-DT resulted in a charitable donation of \$2,000 to the USC Department of Mechanical Engineering. A portion of these funds was used to send two of our PTS-DT members, including the President, Ian Adkins, and senior, Josh Porter, to the 2016 Pi Tau Sigma national meeting in Los Angeles, California. Both attendees thoroughly enjoyed the experience and brought back a series of recommendations for our society to consider in the future.