PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2010-2011

University of Southern California Tau Beta

A. Initiation

The Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma holds two initiations for new members every school year. Members are invited to join the USC chapter of Pi Tau Sigma by fulfilling the following academic requirements, calculated by cumulative GPA:

- Seniors must be in the top 30% of their class.
- Juniors must be in the top 25% of their class.

These class standings are determined by completed unit count, as determined by the University of Southern California:

- Juniors: 64-95 completed units
- Seniors: 96 or more completed units

The initiation ceremony consists of the Tau Beta chapter faculty advisor, Dr. Paul Ronney, reading about the history and traditions of the Pi Tau Sigma organization. Members who are being initiated recite a phrase stating that they will uphold the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Code of Ethics for Engineers. This ceremony is ended with an official introduction into the Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. Immediately after each initiation, the Tau Beta chapter hosts a social event with food to help new and existing members get to know each other better and talk about the organization.

In the course of the past year, these initiations were held on October 1st, 2010, and February 4th, 2011. The initiation in October introduced 18 new students into the Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma, and the initiation in February introduced 7 new students.

B. Chapter Activities

At the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year, the Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma set several goals:

- Increase visibility on campus and member involvement for events
- Improve infrastructure to keep the organization sustainable for future years
- Encourage members to apply for Pi Tau Sigma scholarships since the Tau Beta chapter was now "In Good Standing"
- Host at least:
    - One community service event
    - One industry related event
    - One social event
    - One field trip
    - One faculty mixer
    - An initiation in both the fall and spring semesters

To begin the school year, the Tau Beta chapter enlisted the help of a second faculty advisor, David Salter, to both find prospective members of our Pi Tau Sigma chapter as well as send out invitation emails and letters. David Salter was the undergraduate advisor to the Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering department at USC, so he was extremely helpful in encouraging many of the eligible mechanical engineering undergraduates to join Pi Tau Sigma.

After the initial invitations to join Pi Tau Sigma were sent, the first meeting was held for all members and all potential members on September 10th, 2010. During this meeting, the President and Vice President were introduced. This meeting explained the goals of our chapter, the events that our chapter was planning on organizing, as well as the benefits of joining Pi Tau Sigma. The first initiation was held three weeks later, on October 1st, in which the new members officially joined the Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. Immediately after initiation, elections for the 2010-2011 school year were held. The results of that election were as follows:

- President: Jason Walker (senior)
- Vice President: Nathan Pandian (junior)
- Secretary: Amy Klein (senior)
- Treasurer: Damian Pherigo (junior)
- Service Chairs: Felipe Figueroa (junior) & Brett Erickson (junior)
- Social Chair: Matt McCormick (junior)

The first event for Pi Tau Sigma members took place a couple days before initiation, on September 29th, yet all members and potential initiates were invited to attend. This event was an information session from Boeing, in which recruiters, alumni, and current USC students who held intern positions with Boeing spoke about working for the company and their experiences. The event was organized for a few of the engineering honor societies on campus, and many of the attendees were members from Pi Tau Sigma. This was a great opportunity for members to speak to Boeing recruiters, hand out resumes, and enjoy pizza while hearing about the company.

The next event was an event hosted by the Tau Beta chapter called the Student-Faculty Forum. This event took place on October 22nd, and this past fall was the first time the event had ever taken place on campus. During the event, many of the aerospace and mechanical engineering faculty who taught elective courses gave a short presentation on what each elective class was about and what material was taught in the courses. This event was extremely beneficial because it provided students with a much more in-depth overview of the upper-division engineering elective classes than the short description provided in the course catalog. Additionally, the information given by the faculty was posted on the chapter's website to be available to all students in the department. Food was also provided at the event to allow students and faculty to socialize after the course presentations had concluded. Since the event was hosted by Pi Tau Sigma, yet was open to the whole aerospace and mechanical engineering department, recognition of our organization on campus was improved.

Another event that the Tau Beta chapter participated in was a community service event in collaboration with another club on campus, the Society of Women Engineers (SWE). The Halloween Fun Fair, held on October 29th, was a Halloween-themed fair for children attending nearby elementary schools to attend. Volunteers from Pi Tau Sigma and SWE manned booths for these kids to trick-or-treat, bob for apples, get their faces painted, have costume contests, and play educational Halloween-related games. The neighborhoods surrounding the USC campus can be unsafe, so many parents are reluctant to let their children go trick-or-treating at night and prefer their children to attend safe events such as this. This event was important because it also helped increase the visibility of our organization; not only was it held with one of the most involved student organizations in the engineering school, but also the event was held in the engineering quad, so more and more people were able to see Pi Tau Sigma's influence on campus.

One of our goals this year was to organize at least one industry tour that would allow members to tour a facility of a company that hires many mechanical engineers. We were able to accomplish this by organizing a tour to SpaceX, a company that designs and builds rockets to provide commercial launch services. A group of members went on a tour of SpaceX on December 3rd, followed by individual meetings with a college recruiter from SpaceX. Members were able to hand out their resumes for internship positions, which eventually led to a couple members of the organization getting offers for internships.

We had three members attend the national convention in Chicago from February 11th through February 13th this year: Jason Walker, the president, Nathan Pandian, the vice president, and Amy Klein, the secretary of the Tau Beta chapter. This was the third straight year the Tau Beta chapter attended the national convention, and it was very helpful to learn about events and rituals done by other chapters. The convention attendees from our chapter also participated in the break-out session discussing the conventions for the following years and were able to add useful insight into the discussion. Furthermore, two of the members from the Tau Beta chapter won scholarships from the national office of Pi Tau Sigma.

On March 11th, the Tau Beta chapter was able to exceed the initial goal of having one industry tour by organizing another industry tour at the Rehrig Pacific Company, which is a plastics manufacturing company. In addition to touring the facility, the members were able to talk with

design and manufacturing engineers about the actual work they do for the company. At the end of the event, members also had an opportunity to give resumes and talk to one of the recruiters at the company. This event was provided much insight into how the industrial manufacturing industry operated—an experience many members had not been exposed to before.

The final event of the year was participation in Relay for Life, which was an event set up on campus by the American Cancer Society to help raise money for cancer research. The event took place on April 9th and 10th, and the Tau Beta chapter was able to raise $110 to donate to the cause. The Relay for Life event was another opportunity for our chapter to get involved with community service, and because the event drew so many different students from USC, having our club there also helped with the recognition of Pi Tau Sigma among students across the entire university.

In addition to all of the events mentioned above, the Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma held various meetings throughout both the fall and spring semesters in order to keep members updated of events and opportunities. These events always included either food or snacks, which provided members with an ideal time to socialize after each meeting.

C. Other

The Tau Beta chapter of Pi Tau Sigma is proud of the improvements that have been made to the organization throughout the last couple years. During the entire 2008-2009 school year, the Tau Beta chapter only held three meetings and did not have a single initiation. The following year, the 2009-2010 school year, the chapter began to organize events, schedule regular meetings, and have an initiation in both the spring and the fall. However, the member involvement throughout that year was somewhat low. Finally, during the 2010-2011 school year, the Tau Beta chapter became "In Good Standing" with the national organization and officially became a student organization registered with USC. Additionally, the roster was increased to over 50 members, and many of the members actively attended the organized events.

Throughout the past year, our website has also progressed (http://ame-www.usc.edu/students/pitausigma/USC_Pi_Tau_Sigma/Home.html). We were able to add a calendar so that members could see events held by our organization, as well as recruiting or career events taking place on campus. Also, detailed explanations of elective courses in the aerospace and mechanical engineering department were posted on the website, as a result of the Student-Faculty Forum that took place in October 2010.

While we feel like we have improved significantly over the past year, the Tau Beta chapter still strives to provide even more opportunities for members. A few goals for the upcoming school year are as follows:

- Continue increasing Pi Tau Sigma's visibility on campus
- Continue increasing member involvement
- Continue building relationships with other organizations on campus
- Organize a monthly forum for the whole engineering school that brings in members of industry to speak about their field
    - The goal is to collaborate with other engineering honor societies in order to find enough speakers for a monthly event
- Send three or four members to the national convention in San Jose, CA
- Continue to provide methods of connecting members with industry contacts and recruiters
- Host at least:
    - Two community service events
    - Two industry related events
    - Two social events
    - Two events involving faculty
    - An initiation in both the fall and spring semesters