PI TAU SIGMA - TEXAS KAPPA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

Fall 2012 - Spring 2013

Initiates and Initiation

Selection and Recruitment Process

To be eligible for membership in the Texas Kappa chapter of Pi Tau Sigma, Mechanical Engineering students at The University of Texas at Austin must have completed 60 or more credit hours for a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, while maintaining an overall GPA of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. At the start of each semester, the PTS faculty advisor works with the M.E. department to identify those students from this group who are also in the top 25% of the junior class or the top 35% of the senior class as defined in the Pi Tau Sigma Constitution. Once the list of eligible members is determined, PTS officers hand-deliver invitation letters from the department to all of the prospective members and send an invitation via email written by the current president. The letter and email explain the purpose of Pi Tau Sigma, describe some of the programs and events that the chapter participates in, and invite the prospective members to attend information sessions where they can learn more about the organization and the requirements for membership.

Initiation Requirements

In order to get the new initiates accustomed to carrying out the core values of Pi Tau Sigma and to make membership in our chapter meaningful, our chapter calls for the candidates to meet several requirements for initiation. A points system is in place to ensure candidates get involved in both social and service events. Candidates must have 15 points by the time of initiation. A maximum of 5 points must be earned by participating in social events, and a minimum of 5 points must be earned by participating in service events. Candidates can also earn 1 point for each of the six general meetings that they attend. Additional requirements for initiation include submitting a resume to the recording secretary; paying membership dues by the 2nd general meeting; passing a "PTS Constitution Quiz;" obtaining signatures from all officers, membership candidates, and the faculty advisor; and attending initiation.

Initiation Ceremony

Our chapter's initiation ceremony typically occurs two weeks before the end of each semester. For the 2012-2013 year, initiations were held on December 4, 2012 and April 25, 2013, and we initiated 10 new members in each of the ceremonies. We consider initiation to be a formal affair, and all in attendance are required to wear business formal attire. Our long standing tradition has been to conduct the initiation ceremony on the roof of our Mechanical Engineering building. Prior to going to the roof, our initiates each semester were given a tour of some of the most

cutting edge labs in the mechanical engineering building. After the tour, the initiation ceremony was conducted following the guidelines as set forth in the rituals of Pi Tau Sigma. Once the initiation was completed, each pledge and officer signed their name in our Initiation Record Book that contains names from each pledge class and officer team since our chapter's charter year, 1931.

To celebrate the accomplishments of the new initiates, we held a banquet both semesters at the famous Salt Lick BBQ restaurant in Driftwood, TX, where top candidates were recognized. Through fundraising, we were able to afford to pay for the meals of all members, both new and old, that elected to attend.

Chapter Activities

Fundraising

Each year our chapter raises money through several programs. Our most common fundraising event is PTS Cheap Lunch, where we serve food and drinks to students of all majors on the lawn between the engineering buildings. In general, we sell pizza, chips, sodas, and candy at an extremely low cost--about $1 per slice of Domino's pizza. We feel that, in addition to fundraising, our version of Cheap Lunch simultaneously serves our community by giving students the opportunity to enjoy an affordable lunch right outside of their classes with their peers. Labor from PTS members and candidates is procured on a volunteer basis, and therefore the lunches count as a service event for candidates to earn their required points.

This year, we hosted a total of eight lunches, the most our chapter has ever organized in a single academic year. Not only did this significantly increase our success in raising funds, but it also greatly improved our campus visibility and recognition amongst younger mechanical engineering students. Chapter recognition has been and will continue to be an important goal for us, so there is no doubt that we will continue this event moving forward. Furthermore, we also served lunch to middle and high school students from all across the country who attended the annual Explore UT day, an event where campus is open to visitors who want to learn more about the university and all the different programs its departments offer. We sold over $1,000 worth of food at this year's event. Finally, we continued our popular morning coffee sales from the chapter office. In addition to coffee, however, we began selling popular snacks (e.g., Sun Chips, Starbursts, and Snickers) throughout the day as well. The combined fundraising efforts raised over $3000 this year, which is one of our most successful years on our record.

Service

Service events of this year for our candidates and actives included a slew of the longstanding Texas Kappa service events, as well as the addition of a few new ones. Our service events included our usual Peer Advising, Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day, Explore UT, Austin Food Bank, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Ladybird Lake Cleanup, Barton Creek Trail Cleanup, Austin Pet's Alive, and a special Dog Rescue.

The first three of the service events listed above were on-campus programs. ME Peer Advising is one of our chapter's signature service duties. During registration, we provide suggestions to underclassmen on scheduling, classes, and professors. We are the only group in Mechanical Engineering besides the Advising Office itself with the qualifications needed to properly advise students, so our schedule for registration weeks is always packed. Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day entailed providing labor to the on-campus day-long program for introducing young girls to the world of science and engineering, including providing food and concessions to the over 5000 elementary and high school girls who turned out. At ExploreUT, in addition to the lunch fundraiser we ran, we also set up a booth to introduce visiting students of all ages to fundamental principles of Mechanical Engineering. We set up an exhibit of our 13-piece miniature steam engine collection and ran the engines using compressed air while describing each engine's principles of operation to the audience.

As members of Pi Tau Sigma, we also held volunteering within the community as a high priority. Volunteering for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure involved helping set up and tear down all the equipment, scaffolding, and banners for the finish line area. Our candidates and actives served hundreds of homeless and impoverished Austin citizens when we volunteered with the Austin Food Bank. To help keep our local parks clean and beautiful, we helped with two separate cleanup events at Ladybird Lake and Barton Creek Trail. Lastly, we looked after the lost pets of our community we volunteered with two animal shelter events with Austin Pet’s Alive by walking dogs and cleaning out cages and by helping setup for a special adopting session called the Dog Rescue.

Overall, our volunteering between the fall and spring semesters totaled 350 hours combined among our members. This year has been one of the most proactive and fruitful in our chapter’s history, with candidates and actives alike stepping up to provide as much of their time as they could afford to both the improvement of our school and the wellbeing of our community.

Departmental Activities

One of Pi Tau Sigma's core duties is to encourage participation in departmental activities. This year our departmental activities included maintaining the department's miniature steam engine collection, conducting ME faculty interviews, constructing a Job Interview Question Database, and conducting formal peer advising for over 400 undergraduate students in the Mechanical Engineering department.

Two years ago, Don Foster (BSME 1948), one of our alumni members, donated his collection of hand built miniature gas and steam engines to our chapter. Since then we have been entrusted by the ME department with the responsibility of cleaning and maintaining the engines so we could proudly display them in the ME building and at outreach events. A 1916 Case Steam Tractor, a Corliss Steam Engine, and a Hit and Miss gasoline engine are just a few examples of the 13 different engines. For both the fall and spring, our engines officer worked on creating documentation for each engine explaining how the engine worked and the history of its design.

The ME faculty interviews entailed gathering a group of PTS members together to meet with some of the job candidates the ME department was considering hiring in the spring. The department invited us to have lunch with each of candidates, ask them about their interests and areas of research, and give feedback to the department about whether or not we liked the candidate and would enjoy having him or her as a professor. These interviews were a lot of fun and greatly helped the department gather some student input to help them make their hiring decisions.

One of the most important activities that we participated in last spring was formal peer advising. In years past, our peer advising consisted of an officer and a couple of candidates sitting at a table in the Mechanical Engineering building lobby and informally answering questions about different classes and professors. This year, however, the advising department decided to officially incorporate us into the advising process, sending over 400 undergraduates to our office to be formally advised on prospective classes, different professors, and each student's plan to graduate in four or four and a half years. This program was particularly important for two reasons. First, formal peer advising gave officers an opportunity to directly give back to the Mechanical Engineering community and department at our school. Second, this program also greatly increased awareness of Pi Tau Sigma, especially among freshmen and sophomores that would have probably otherwise not have heard of us until their junior years. The students and department advisors thought that the first iteration of this program was so successful that the department plans to use Pi Tau Sigma to advise more than 33% of the undergraduate students in the Fall semester.

Special Events

This year we participated in several events with other engineering societies. These programs included various inter-organizational competitions, our Fourth Annual Engineering Honors BBQ, and our signature event, the Second Annual "Carnot Classic" Engineering Golf Tournament.

The Engineering Honors BBQ, which we held for the fourth consecutive year this spring, was an all-day event we held at a local city park to get to know members of engineering honor societies such as TBP, OXE, etc. from all engineering disciplines. This event was sponsored by Fluor, an engineering company that wanted to get involved with our PTS chapter and get their name on one of our events. Admission was free for all in attendance, PTS members and non-members alike. We barbecued ribs, sausage, and brisket, grilled hot dogs and hamburgers, and served meat, sides and drinks to all in attendance. We also had lawn games and volleyball for fun after the meal. We had a great turnout of PTS members and members of other organizations, and the event was quite a success.

Our biggest event this year, and certainly our most unique, was the "Carnot Classic" Engineering Golf Tournament. The tournament was held on April 13th at a local golf course in Austin, and served as a fundraiser for our organization and for all other student organizations in attendance. The program provided a way for engineering students and employers to get together for a relaxing networking experience that highlighted how our different organizations work together.

Engineering companies donated funds for several aspects of the event, including hole sponsorships, team sponsorships, tournament title sponsorships, etc. The net proceeds from the entry fees were divided among all engineering student organizations in attendance, directly proportional to the number of students present from each society. Corporate representatives and engineering professors were in attendance, and four our four-man scramble we tried to pair at least two professionals with a group of students so they could ask question and build networking and social experience without being in a formal sit-down event. We had prizes for each player on the overall first place team, a prize for the longest drive, several door prizes, and raffle prizes. We were sponsored by Pinnacle AIS to have a banquet at the end catered by the course, which provided a free dinner to all of our student and non-student players in attendance. We experienced a great turnout of golfers, and everyone had a ton of fun. One of the corporate sponsors' team, with two mechanical engineering students on it, won first place overall, and a member of ASME won the longest drive prize. As we continue to learn and adapt with this young event, we hope to continue to improve turnout and support each year. We had a lot of valuable feedback and suggestions from this tournament and anticipate an even larger tournament next year. We want to eventually make the Carnot Classic our biggest fundraising event and networking opportunity for the students.

Social Events

Our chapter believes strongly in building relationships between our members and in the importance of team cohesion. To foster these ideals, we engaged in social happy hours, outings to different unique local attractions, and attending sports events. The happy hours each semester were held at local restaurants for the membership candidates to get their signatures for initiation and to have fun together with the members of their candidate class, as well as actives who want a break from studying. We had an outing to Jumpoline, a local family attraction with an entire building full of trampolines and trampoline games such as dodgeball and basketball. We also had a mini-golf event at Peter Pan Mini Golf, a local Austin attraction that allowed our candidate to familiarize themselves with the officers. Finally, after having a very successful year of fundraising, we were able to take our candidates and actives to a few very fun and special events, such as Blazer Tag, a huge indoor laser tag studio and a trip to a Texas Stars hockey game. We also had a multiple opportunities each semester to network and have fun with companies on a small scale outside of the golf tournament. In the fall, we gave our candidates and actives an event to go bowling with DNV, one of our corporate meeting sponsors, which allowed our members again to have fun and network with a company at the same time. In the spring, we had an opportunity to get dinner with Peak6, giving out members a chance to sit down with company representatives in an informal event to ask questions ranging from job opportunities and resume building to transitioning from school to work. We also had two very large and special social events for our members, one each semester. In the fall, we took a large group of people to K1 Speed, an indoor go kart racetrack that features high speed karts and timed race events. In the spring, we took a group to an indoor skydiving wind tunnel at iFly Austin, a very special experience for everyone who wanted to go and a great way to get our actives excited for future social events.

General Meetings

The Texas Kappa chapter held chapter meetings every other week each semester. As mentioned previously, membership candidates were required to attend all meetings unless they had a hard conflict such as a class or an exam. We held five general meetings in the fall and spring semesters. Each general meeting included popular or classic music playing at the beginning while people entered, a presentation by the chapter President on chapter business and upcoming events, a free meal for PTS members and candidates sponsored by a corporate speaker, a message from the corporate speaker, and a chance for students to network with the corporate reps and ask them questions about their presentation or about employment opportunities. In the fall, the companies that sponsored meetings included Shell, Trane, National Instruments, Hess, and Schlumberger. In the spring, the sponsors were Texas Instruments, *National Oilwell Varco*, Tenaris, Wood Group, and BP. All of these meetings went very smoothly, and the music especially made the meetings a fun place to hang out. We especially enjoyed watching members and candidates talk with the representatives after the meetings to exchange information and business cards. We can happily report that several of our candidates established interviews as a direct result of talking to our sponsors during meetings as well.

Chords and Stoles

In the spring of last year, we made a strong push to improve participation with our non-officer actives of the chapter. In order to do this, we bought cords and stoles at the beginning of the semester and required seniors to earn points in order to be eligible to wear them at the graduation ceremony. Specifically, non-officer members had to earn two, four, and six semester points to be able to wear cords, stoles, and both cords and stoles, respectively. This program had an immediate impact on member participation - we went from having two actives attending meetings in the fall to twelve. Most impressive, however, is that this program also improved upon the actives' non-existent participation in service and social events to having them become driving factors at some of our events. We look forward to seeing how much we can expand on their involvement to keep our chapter healthy and thriving.

National Convention

This year, our president, Paul Tyger, had an enjoyable and productive experience at the Pi Tau Sigma National Convention hosted by the Ohio State University's chapter. Paul networked with several members from other chapters, learned about national goals and priorities, and applied advice that he received from other chapters' presidents to improve our organization in the spring. Due to financial constraints, we were unable to send as many members to the national convention that we wanted to. However, given that Texas A&M will be hosting next year's National Convention and travel expenses will be small, we hope to send at least four members to the event in 2014.

Scholarships

In the 2012-2013, we continued the relatively new tradition of awarding scholarships to outstanding members of our society. We believe that scholarships are a great way to recognize members and candidates who have shown a lot of dedication and effort to our society. Therefore, we set aside $250 for the Most Outstanding Membership Candidate, which was given to the winners at our celebration dinner for new members at Salt Lick BBQ. The selection criteria for the scholarship was heavily weighted on points (the number of social events attended and service hours recorded by each candidate/member), but financial need and leadership were also considered.

Society Organization

We have witnessed a lot of growth in our organization from both new candidates joining our organization to the participation of actives during the last year. We also saw growth in turnout from the new programs run by our chapter over the last two years. From these awesome additions, our officer group has had to adjust by reorganizing our officer positions. The officer positions carrying from last year include been President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corporate Liaison (formerly Corresponding Secretary), Parliamentarian, two Service Chairs, two Social Chairs, Engines Officer, Student Engineering Council (SEC) Representative, Special Events Coordinator, Fundraising Director, Actives Chair, and Historian. We have seen some of these positions get combined over the year, especially when the overlap in several functions. In the next fall semester, our Special Events Coordinator will also be our corporate liaison, for example, but in the spring (when we host the golf tournament) we expect those positions to separate again. We have also added seats to some of the positions, such as doubling our corporate liaison chair to allow easier contact with companies during busy times in the semester. Our elections are held per semester immediately following the initiation ceremony, allowing only fully-initiated PTS members will be elected to officer positions. Each candidate for a position gives a short speech on why they believe they can serve well in the position, followed by questions from the other members. Then the nominees leave the room while the other members cast their votes on written ballots. The officer group is run by the President, who runs the biweekly general meetings and officer meetings on off-weeks. The Vice President assists the President and keeps track of the progress of membership candidates. The Treasurer creates a budget for the year and handles reimbursements for members. The Recording Secretary is in charge of keeping track of attendance at general meetings and other events, up-keeping our email account, and sending out weekly emails. The Corporate Liaisons are responsible for finding speakers for general meetings. Our Webmaster updates our website and creates any event sign-ups that we need, and our Historian documents events by taking pictures. Our Service Chairs, Social Chairs, and Fundraising Director are in charge of planning events that accomplish the objectives of their respective positions. The Special Events Coordinator is in charge of planning the annual Carnot Classic Engineering Golf Tournament, advertising it to companies and student organizations, and procuring sponsorships. The Actives Chair creates new incentives for initiated non-officer members to stay involved, and organizes events for active members only. The Parliamentarian is in charge of learning Robert's Rules and facilitating their use during chapter meetings.

In the Fall 2012 semester, we purchased polos for the officers to add a level of poise and professionalism to our positions. We decided that they should be worn on campus each Tuesday that we had a general meeting. We decided to do this for a few reasons. First, some of the most popular engineering organizations on UT's campus (e.g., ASME and SHPE) had bought polos the year before and proclaimed the success the polos had in reminding members that they were hosting meetings that night when e-mails didn't suffice. Increasing participation on the part of active members was one of the most important goals for our chapter in the 2012-2013 year, so we felt that this would help. Second, by having our officers wear the polos every other Tuesday to their classes, we hoped to increase general awareness of our organization, which was another important goal that we are constantly trying to achieve. Finally, having all of the officers wear the same polos definitely increased the perception that our chapter was organized and professional, which said to prospective candidates that joining the Texas Kappa chapter would not be a waste of their time or money. The designs can be seen in the pictures below.

Last year in Texas Kappa went down as one of the most active in recent history. This year built on last year's success and was quite likely the most successful year in the 80-year history of our chapter. Not too long ago we were an underperforming society with very few events. Now, we have doubled the number events that we host and have greatly increased interest and membership in our chapter. We have built a strong house on a strong foundation, and now hope to continue building our chapter's prominence in upholding the Pi Tau Sigma core values of integrity, leadership, and service for years to come.

Websites

For more information about our chapter, please visit our website:

www.ptsut.com

For additional information on some of the events we participated in, please see the following websites:

Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure: http://www.komenaustin.org/komen-race-for-the-cure/

Austin Food Bank: http://www.austinfoodbank.org/

Austin Pets Alive: http://www.austinpetsalive.org/

Ladybird Lake Cleanup: http://www.keepaustinbeautiful.org/ladybirdlake

Barton Creek Trail Cleanup: http://www.austinparks.org/multi-project-list.html

"Carnot Classic" Tournament: http://www.ptsut.com/p/golf.html

Explore UT: http://www.utexas.edu/events/exploreut

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day: http://www.engr.utexas.edu/wep/k12/girlday

Jumpoline: http://jumpolinepark.com/

K1 Speed: http://www.k1speed.com/austin-location.html

iFly Austin: http://austin.iflyworld.com/

Pictures

The Texas Stars Hockey Game

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day

Carnot Classic Golf Tournament

Showing off engines at Explore UT

New initiates from Spring 2013

Texas Stars Hockey Game

Golf Tournament Winners

Polo T-Shirt Design

The Texas Kappa officers for the 2011-2012 academic year were:

Fall 2012

President	Steven Kanik
Vice President	Susan Conover
Treasurer	Sean Knight
Recording Secretary	Rachel Naylor
Corresponding Secretary	Paul Tyger
Service Chairs	John Slimp & Lauren Slattery
Social Chairs	Austin Wheeler & Wynn Kopriva
Fundraising Director	Colton Moseley
Engines Officer	Juan Trejo
Webmaster	Elfrey Shira
Historian	John Slimp
Special Events Coordinator	Colton Moseley

Spring 2013

President	Paul Tyger
Vice President	Steven Kanik
Treasurer	Wynn Kopriva
Recording Secretary	Lauren Slattery
Corporate Liaisons	Jeremy Carlson & David Galvin
Service Chairs	James Kendrick & Davis Ballew
Social Chair	John Slimp
Fundraising Director	Jennifer Lin
Engines Officer	Rachel Naylor
SEC Representative	Jeff King
Webmaster	Elfrey Shira
Historian	Albert Phan
Special Events Coordinator	Nick Meriwether

Report Written By: Paul Tyger and Jeremy Carlson