PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2015-2016
UIC ALPHA SIGMA

A. Initiations

Junior and senior level undergraduates in the top 25% and 35% of their respective classes are considered eligible for membership in the UIC Alpha Sigma chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. The selection process began with obtaining a list of mechanical engineering students who meet these requirements. The chapter Vice President sent out an email to the potential pledges containing information about Pi Tau Sigma, the requirements and benefits of membership, and the initiation process.

Those interested were required to schedule an interview with an active Pi Tau Sigma member. The interview process assessed each candidate's personal, academic and professional goals, as well as their intended level of participation and leadership in UIC Alpha Sigma. This crucial step of the initiation process not only guaranteed that only those who were believed to uphold the values of Pi Tau Sigma were selected for membership, but also gave current members an opportunity to gain service hours and form relationships with new initiates.

The initiation ceremonies were held in the last few weeks of each semester. The chapter President and Vice President, sat opposite the pledges, reviewed the expectations, missions, values and history of Pi Tau Sigma. Each pledge was required to state his or her name and promise to uphold the values expected of a PTS member. After the ceremony, a celebration dinner was held at a local restaurant. Pledges, active members, and the chapter officers attended.

Fall 2015
10 Members initiated November 20, 2015

Fall 2015 Initiates

Spring 2016
9 Members initiated March 18, 2016

Spring 2016 Initiates

B. Chapter Activities

Academic & Professional Development

Tutoring: UIC Alpha Sigma hosted tutoring sessions twice a week, open to undergraduates needing extra assistance in math, science, and engineering classes. Officers and active members ran the sessions and anyone was invited to attend. The sessions provided not only an academic service to students, but also exposed the College of Engineering student body to learn about Pi Tau Sigma and interact with its members. Many tutoring attendees have gone on to become PTS members themselves.

Software Workshops: Mechanical engineering students are exposed to a variety of modeling, simulation, and coding softwares throughout their undergraduate educations. Because these programs are not only useful for coursework, but essential tools for engineering professionals in both industry and academia, UIC Alpha Sigma established a new program of workshops designed to increase its members' proficiency in the engineering softwares. Executive board members spent the fall semester developing a comprehensive lesson plan for both Matlab and SolidWorks. The series of hour-long workshops launched in the spring semester and were offered exclusively to PTS members. Members also received access to the workshop PowerPoint presentations to serve as a useful reference tool and to supplement those who were unable to attend. An additional workshop for ANSYS has been prepared for the following academic year.

Resume Book: Beginning this year, active members have the option to submit a résumé to be featured in the UIC Alpha Sigma résumé book. The book is distributed to guest speakers, PTS alumni, and other industry professionals and it is expected to promote the relationships between local employers and Pi Tau Sigma in the upcoming years. It also serves an incentive for members to maintain active status each semester, as it is kept current at all times. Members were encouraged to attend the College of Engineering's résumé workshops before submitting, however they may submit an updated résumé at any time.

Guest Speakers

Dremel: A design engineer from Dremel gave a first-hand look at the journey of a product from conception to reality. Based on his various job experiences in the product design industry, the speaker provided valuable and personal insight about what considerations and expectations a prospective design engineer should have. This presentation was open to everyone and had the highest turnout of members and nonmembers. A one-on-one tour of the Dremel facilities was raffled off to PTS members after the presentation and Q&A session.

Alumni Panel: Each semester UIC Alpha Sigma assembles a group of PTS alumni to participate in a panel discussion about the differences between graduate school and industry employment. This year's panels were very informative and gave PTS members insight into the decisions they will be faced with upon graduation.

Departmental Volunteering

Often throughout the semester, the College of Engineering and other engineering societies on campus reached out to PTS members to volunteer at their events. The MIE Open House, ASME

Luncheon, and Engineering Expo are some of the events UIC Alpha Sigma members volunteered at this year. Members gained service hours for their participation in addition to the valuable networking experience.

National Laboratory Tours

This year, UIC Alpha Sigma members had the unique opportunity to tour both Argonne National Laboratory and Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. These visits gave members the chance to tour state of the art laboratory facilities while exploring potential career paths and internship opportunities.

Social Gatherings

Bent & Plaque Polishing: A bent polishing event is held every semester in the weeks following initiation to ceremonially welcome new members into the society and renew the honor of continuing members. Due to the team-bonding nature of the ceremony and the casual, creative workshop environment where it is held, the polishing ceremony consistently has one of the best turnouts of all the social events.

Bent & Plaque Polishing Ceremony

Bar Crawl: Both semesters, UIC Alpha Sigma hosted a bar crawl targeted at all engineering students, but open to everybody—including PTS Alumni. T-shirts, a requirement for participation in the activity, were sold on campus for $12-15 each. These bar crawls proved to be a lucrative fundraiser, with over 120 shirts sold in the Fall and Spring semesters combined.

Chapter Meetings

Officer Meetings: PTS officers met weekly during the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters. The officer meetings ensured accurate and timely communication about events and chapter goals. The president ran each meeting and the secretary took notes which were distributed to all officers at the end of each meeting via email.

General Body Meetings: The purpose of our general body meetings is to communicate information about PTS events and member expectations. These meetings also serve as an opportunity for the members to socialize with each other. Attendance is taken at each meeting and recorded by the secretary. Five of these meetings were held each semester.

C. National Convention

Ten members and two alumni represented UIC Alpha Sigma at the 2016 National Convention hosted by the University of Southern California. The budget from previous years provided the funds for registration fees and lodging costs for the ten attending members. Our primary sources of revenue are t-shirt sales and contributions from various departments and organizations within the college. To be considered for receiving financial support from our campus partners, we must demonstrate the value of Pi Tau Sigma's role in the college and community. This requires multiple presentations and meetings with our department head, the Engineering Council Student organization, and Chicago Organization Funding. Our contributions to the college on a volunteer basis and our commitment to improving the educational value of the school has given our benefactors every reason to stay involved with and supportive of Pi Tau Sigma. This successful fundraising provided the financial support for members to attend the National Convention and we are both proud an honored to have had such a strong presence at the event. The convention was a great time to develop professionally and intellectually, network with industry professionals and invest in relationships, both old and new, from chapters across the nation.