PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT

2016-2017

Georgia Southern Beta Iota

A. Initiations

Student eligibility was based on academic standing per Pi Tau Sigma's guidelines. Juniors who were in the top eighth of their class and seniors who were in the top fifth of their class (based on a ranking by GPA and credit hours earned) received invitations to come to an informational session, which amounted to approximately 100 eligible students. As our chapter was only formally chartered last spring, we are still trying to generate increased interest in our organization. Those choosing to join our chapter then paid the $65 membership fee to receive membership materials and a chapter t-shirt at induction. Induction ceremonies, with all appropriate rituals as read from the provided ritual booklet, were performed on September 21st, 2016 and February 15th, 2017. These inductions were registered with the national chapter approximately a week after each was performed. Both induction ceremonies were held in the Skybox and adjoining conference room of The Clubhouse (local popular bowling allwy), and all members were invited to participate in two hours of free bowling and food catered by the Clubhouse after the initiation rituals were read from the chapter guide. The rental of The Clubhouse Skybox for the two hours of bowling was partially funded by our university's Student Government Association (SGA), after the funding request process was completed.

Table 1. 2016-2017 Academic Year Initiations

Semester	Active	Graduate	Honorary
Fall 2016	19	0	0
Spring 2017	15	0	0

Below are several of our inductees and existing members at the initiation, including the bowling that was hosted afterwards in the SkyBox (pictured below).

(Above: Fall 2016 Induction, pictured with Dr. Vlcek [department chair])

(Above: Spring 2017 Induction, pictured with Dr. Vlcek [department chair])
(Below: Pictures from both inductions)

B. Chapter Activities

Community Service:

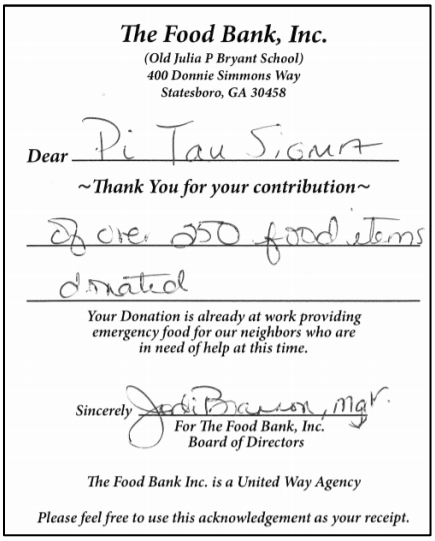
Each member was required to complete at least 4 hours of community service and 4 hours of Pi Tau Sigma "involvement" in meetings, career fairs, and/or activities before the end of each semester. Our chapter had approximately 20-30 active undergraduate members and two graduate student members each semester, excluding members who had since graduated. Approximately eight to ten members were out participating in either fall or spring co-ops and were excluded from the service requirement for the semester during their co-op. Newly initiated students in the spring were only required to complete 2 hours community service during their induction semester, along with 2 hours of "involvement" in Pi Tau Sigma meetings/activities. **Overall, our active members completed just over 250 service hours for the 2016-2017 academic year.**

Members were encouraged to keep the service hours as engineering-related as possible; however, exceptions could be made at the discretion of the President and the Faculty Advisor. Community service activities included a wide variety of events, including peer tutoring in the department's peer tutoring lab and helping build houses with the local Habitat for Humanity group over spring break.

Many members also participated in two of the local elementary schools' STEM spring outreach nights in February and March, where our chapter hosted a table that featured the construction of "candy catapults" for children grades K-5. These events are coordinated by the local elementary schools, but university groups are encouraged to participate to provide the supplies and knowhow for their selected age-appropriate activity. The catapults were constructed using five popsicle sticks and two rubber bands each, with one popsicle stick having a ketchup cup pre-hot-glued to it (to avoid possible burns from the hot glue for the children). Children of all ages and families were invited to complete either activity.

(Above: Pictures from Elementary School STEM Nights (previous year, same activity))

Our chapter also hosted a canned food drive in late April 2017 with all donations given to the Statesboro food bank. We managed to raise over 250 cans and two Styrofoam coolers to be donated during the two-week drive (shown below).



The Food Bank, Inc.
(Old Julia P Bryant School)
400 Donnie Simmons Way
Statesboro, GA 30458

Dear Pi Tau Sigma

~Thank You for your contribution~

Approx. 250 food items donated

Your Donation is already at work providing emergency food for our neighbors who are in need of help at this time.

Sincerely Jodi Brannon, Mgr.
For The Food Bank, Inc.
Board of Directors

The Food Bank Inc. is a United Way Agency

Please feel free to use this acknowledgement as your receipt.

(Above: Can Collection and Proof of Participation for Canned Food Drive, Spring 2017)

Convention Participation:
This year our chapter was able to send two student representatives to the 2017 Pi Tau Sigma National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, including our outgoing president (Jennifer Shaffer) and our newly elected 2017-2018 president (Elizabeth Robinson).

(Above: Our student representatives enjoying the scenic "Rocky" view of Philly)

Chapter Meetings:
Chapter meetings were held twice a month each semester. Members were given a list of the meeting dates at the start of the semester, and the meetings were held every two weeks at 6:30pm on a Wednesday night. A digital copy of the meeting minutes in the form of a PowerPoint presentation was then sent along with reminders by email to all members after the meeting.

Meetings at the beginning of the year primarily dealt with professional development and guest speakers to help students improve their resumes and interview skills when applying for jobs and co-ops at our university's September and February STEM career fairs. Professional development activities included offering a resume workshop and critique session as well as mock interviews to members. Meetings at the end of each semester served primarily to promote networking, including hosting a departmental BBQ for the ME department as well as a members-only pizza party/ Jeopardy game before finals to improve members' morale. The pre-finals week pizza party/Jeopardy game experienced almost total chapter attendance, with 49 members attending and participating in the Jeopardy game.

Guest Speakers and Plant Tours:
Throughout the year, our chapter hosted company representatives from Heatcraft Worldwide (from Tifton, GA) to have an informational session that we opened to the entire

mechanical engineering department. This event was advertised in advance, and we had approximately 40-50 people arrive to participate in the information session.

This year, our chapter reached out to several companies for plant tours after requests by members. In the fall, our chapter paid for 14 members to drive to Daniel Defense in Blackwater Creek, GA for a two-hour long plant tour, which culminated in a Q&A session with two of their current firearms engineers. After the success of that tour, our chapter hosted a tour to the Textron plant in Augusta, GA, which 9 members participated in.

Another tour to Daniel Defense is planned for Fall 2017, as well as plant tours at Gulfstream Aerospace in Savannah, GA, and Morgan Advanced Materials in Augusta, GA.

Fall Graduation Banquet:

To celebrate the close of the year and the accomplishments of our graduating seniors, our Pi Tau Sigma chapter worked with our fledgling Tau Beta Pi chapter to organize a casual end-of-semester BBQ for the mechanical engineering department. A survey was sent out at the beginning of the semester to select a date as well as estimate the number of participants, and tickets were sold a month before the event for $5 to cover the cost of the meat. PTS members were not required to purchase a ticket, but were asked to provide two sides (or a side and a 2-liter drink) for the BBQ. The BBQ itself was catered from a local BBQ shop. This system proved to be effective, and our chapter experienced a good turnout for the inaugural event (approx. 80 students and 6-8 faculty members). Besides offering sports equipment for attendees to use, the main attraction of the event was the awarding of the newly created departmental awards that our chapter invented and paid for.

Voting for two of the awards was carried out using popular vote on a Google form, sent to all ME faculty, staff, and students. The “Golden Wrench” professor award was awarded to the professor whom students felt had been the most helpful professor in the department that semester, and students were encouraged to submit stories of their nominees on why that professor ought to be selected. The “Departmental MVP” faculty/staff/student award is an award for any person (faculty, staff, or student) in the ME department whom is thought to be the Most Valuable Player in the department, and voters were encouraged to submit a rationale for why their nominee deserved this award. These two awards have been awarded twice now (Fall 2016 and Spring 2017), and are pictured below with the first winners below.

(Above: "Golden Wrench" Professor Award and "Departmental MVP" Faculty/Staff/Student Award Plaques [mounted in ME main office])

However, the fan favorite award was the "Blue Shaft" professor gag award, which was 3D printed and customized with the Georgia Southern logo. This award was voted on using donation cups with professors' names on them. Students/faculty were told to use their spare change to vote on the professor that had "shafted" them the most that semester. The proceeds were donated to the local Habitat for Humanity, to be used towards a house build. A total of $65.34 was raised by voters of the "Blue Shaft" award this fall, and $62.58 was raised this spring. The BBQ and awards turned out to be quite popular, and requests were made by students for PTS to host the BBQ again in Fall 2018.

(Above: 3D-Printed and Mounted "Blue Shaft" Professor Gag Award)

Departmental Involvement:

Members were encouraged to volunteer in department outreach activities with the local elementary and middle schools, such as the 4th Grade "Quest" visit day and the 8th grade visit day by helping coordinate the mystery design challenge as well as leading laboratory tours for prospective students and their parents during the university's College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT) visit day for upcoming freshmen students. Lastly, our chapter also spearheaded the effort to unite all mechanical engineering-related organizations on campus to host an advertisement in our university's "Blue and White" publication that is distributed to all incoming freshmen during the orientations in the summer. Our chapter's executive board created interest in the endeavor and spoke to the presidents of all of the involved clubs to pitch the idea and collect the funds for the advertisement. This same design was created by a PTS member and was used last year for the same purpose.

Furthermore, to increase our chapter's ability to fund departmental activities, our chapter hosted its first ever percentage night fundraiser in March at Wild Wings Café, where we raised close to $356 in one night. All proceeds from the fundraiser are being used to fund departmental events, such as the BBQ in the fall and the finals week study room snacks.

Additionally, the newly elected '17-'18 PTS officers test-launched our first-ever spring finals "study room" from 8am-3pm on May 2nd. Our engineering building currently lacks a dedicated quiet study area, forcing many students to resort to the packed library during finals week; however, this study room was kept open to allow students a quiet study area, and PTS also provided coffee and some snacks to students in the study room.

In the future, PTS has been asked to spearhead the effort to create a student-friendly database where professors can post their current research endeavors and advertise different research tasks and become connected to qualified students who are interested in gaining hands-on research experience. PTS has also expressed interest to the department chair in helping host a faculty/student mixer in the coming semesters in an effort to better introduce students to faculty members with similar research interests.

C. Other

This year our chapter again won the university-wide "New Student Organization of the Year" award at the 20th Annual Leadership Awards Banquet at Georgia Southern University. This award is reserved for an organization that is less than three years old on campus and has significantly increased its level of effectiveness and involvement with campus life. Below is a picture of the award itself with its inscription, as well as a picture of our president accepting the award from Dr. Thompson, the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, on behalf of the chapter at the banquet. Our chapter has won this distinction twice (2016 and 2017).