PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2014-2015
Auburn Chi

A. Initiations

This year we held our fall initiation on November 6th and inducted eleven students into the Auburn Chi chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. Our spring initiation was held on Thursday, April 23rd and six students were initiated then. These students were all juniors and sophomores who have excelled in their academic endeavors at Auburn University. Potential new members for the Auburn Chi chapter of Pi Tau Sigma are selected from the top quarter of the junior class and the top third of the sophomore class. Only these students are eligible to join Pi Tau Sigma at Auburn University. Every student that matches these qualifications receives an e-mail at the beginning of each semester inviting them to an informational meeting concerning the requirements to join Pi Tau Sigma and the opportunity to impact the Mechanical Engineering department at Auburn University through involvement in Pi Tau Sigma.

Each potential new member of Pi Tau Sigma must complete a number of requirements in order to join our chapter. First, each potential new member must obtain signatures from three professors in the Mechanical Engineering department who can attest to the character of the student. This encourages students to interact with their professors and gives our chapter an opportunity to judge the integrity of the individual. Each potential new member must also complete two hours of community service. Many of the potential new members complete this requirement by volunteering at E-Day, an exploratory program for middle and high school students interested in engineering. Current and future members of Pi Tau Sigma volunteer at this event as tour guides of the Mechanical Engineering buildings, sharing their experiences as a mechanical engineering student and passing on their passion for their school and their love for engineering. Other volunteer opportunities include IMPACT, Auburn's volunteer organization, The Big Event, a community-wide day of service, and Engineers Without Borders, an organization committed to helping developing countries with engineering solutions.

Furthermore, each potential new member must polish a bent. This requirement gives the students an opportunity to apply some of the knowledge they have learned in their machining classes and gives them a physical talisman to remember their initiation. Lastly, each member must attend one of three social events offered throughout the semester. This year's social events included a movie night in one of the engineering classrooms, a day in the senior design room spent polishing the bents together with other

potential new members and current members and officers, and a bowling night at the local bowling alley.

Once all of these requirements have been met and the students have paid the initiation fee, students can become an official member of Pi Tau Sigma. Our initiation ceremony includes a thorough explanation of the values and ideals of Pi Tau Sigma. The president and vice president also present the fraternity coat of arms and colors and explain the symbolic significance of these items. Following the ceremony, all new initiates are invited to dinner with the current officers and our chapter sponsor to celebrate their achievements.

B. Chapter Activities

Our chapter of Pi Tau Sigma has not been heavily involved with the Mechanical Engineering department for the past several years. Therefore, over the past couple of years our chapter has made a commitment to re-establishing our presence in the department. Although this is a process that will take much longer than a couple of years, the leadership of our organization has chosen to identify one obtainable goal each semester that will help us to achieve this goal.

Last semester, the chief objective that was identified by our officers was to hold an undergraduate research fair and increase the visibility of opportunities for undergraduates to get involved with research. Our initial proposal of this idea to Dr. Suhling, the department head, was very successful. In fact, he chose to include it in our department's proposal for the Excellence in Education departmental award given by the Auburn Senate. Our department actually ended up winning this award and was given $30,000 over 3 years to move forward with their proposed initiatives. However, the research fair did not happen this semester as we had hoped. This fair is slated to occur next fall and the department hopes to award up to twenty, $500 stipends to students who are interested in getting involved with undergraduate research.

This semester we decided that in order for our chapter to have a bigger impact on the Mechanical Engineering department, we must have more involvement from our members. Therefore, during this past semester we chose to hold a meeting with all of the current members of Pi Tau Sigma to discuss the direction that they would like the chapter to go in. This general meeting was held on March 31st of this year. At this meeting we discussed an expanded social agenda, expanded officer group, and held an open forum for current members to give ideas for what they would like to get out of their membership. Some of the ideas that were suggested by the current members of the Auburn chi chapter were to start a mentoring program that would allow younger members to come to older members for advice on selecting their class schedule,

preparing for their future career, etc. Another idea was to hold a Pi Tau Sigma student panel for any mechanical engineering student to attend where they could ask general questions about their experience as a student in Mechanical Engineering and how to avoid pitfalls along the way.

At this meeting we also discussed an expanded social agenda. Our officers made it an objective for this semester to increase the amount of opportunity our members have to be involved with the Auburn Chi chapter. This objective resulted in a movie night that was well attended by both current and future members of Pi Tau Sigma.

Another idea that was proposed at this meeting and will be put into full effect next semester was to add two additional officer positions. These positions will be called Alumni Relations Chair and Industry Relations Chair and will be appointed by the officers next semester. The purpose of the Alumni Relations Chair is to maintain better relations with the alumni from our chapter of Pi Tau Sigma. Our students go on to do great and amazing things and we hope to be able to tap into this pool of successful, influential engineers. One day, we hope that an alumnus of Pi Tau Sigma at Auburn University will be able to come back and speak to our students about his career and path to success. Additionally, the Industry Relations Chair position will be created in an attempt to build better relations between Pi Tau Sigma and the companies that come to recruit at Auburn University. One way that we hope to do this is by developing a Resume book containing the resumes of all of our members that the Industry Relations Chair can then distribute to all interested companies.

The chapter's webpage has been maintained throughout the year to advertise all of these events and meetings to all current members of Pi Tau Sigma. Furthermore, Pi Tau Sigma participated in E-Day along with another engineering honor society, Tau Beta Pi, and the Cupola Engineering Ambassadors. This event was discussed in detail in the previous section. Lastly, our Vice President Victoria Moffa and our E-Council Representative Dylan Gouletas attended the 100th anniversary national convention at the University of Illinois in February. They had the opportunity to meet several other passionate young engineers and chapter sponsors and very much enjoyed their experience. Many of the ideas that we have further developed this semester came from their experience at the National Convention.