PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2013-2014
Auburn Chi

A. Initiations

For this year's initiation, we selected the top fourth of the junior class and top third of the senior class to send out invitations to join our chapter. We held an initial informational meeting that gives an overview of our requirements, activities, and member benefits.

Before new members can be initiated, they must have three professors and all of their fellow initiates sign stating their good character, performed two hours of community service, attended one social event, polished a bent, and turned in the membership fee.

Our community chair sets up an optional community service project to aid the initiates in their community service requirement, and also to give the current members an opportunity to participate. This was a cleanup at the Chewacla State Park located in Auburn. Potential initiates were also encouraged to pursue their own service opportunities, such as volunteering with Auburn University's volunteer organization (IMPACT), working with Engineers Without Borders, and assisting at E-Day, an open house for potential engineering students.

There are three social events scheduled to give the new initiates opportunities to meet the current PTS members. These are a trivia night held at a local restaurant, a bowling night, and a bent polishing party. As a perk for the new initiates, the person with the best polished bent has their initiation fee waved.

After the above requirements are met, the initiates participate in an induction ceremony. The ceremony includes a blindfolded tour of the Mechanical Engineering building followed by a candle lit ceremony where the ASME code of ethics and the PTS ideals are read by the president. The vice president then explains the coat of arms and the significance of the colors. The initiates pledge to uphold the ideals of the engineering profession as fostered by PTS and then sign the Chi Chapter's initiation book. Following the initiation ceremony, the new members are invited to a celebratory dinner with the current officers and members.

The Auburn Chi chapter inducted 15 new members in the Fall 2013 semester and eight new members in the Spring 2014 semester.

B. Chapter Activities

During the past year, we continued to sell the Mechanical Engineering t-shirts to students and faculty. We sell the shirts out of the department office with the help of the department secretary. This proved effective as the shirts were more accessible to the students and were kept in a secure location. The shirts were also sold at E-Day.

The focus of the chapter this year was increasing activity of members and increasing the impact of Pi Tau Sigma on the department. The first goal was advanced by engaging new initiates to avoid losing interest. The new initiates were presented with the goals and plans of the

organization and were asked to contribute. They did so by accepting officer positions for the following year and by joining committees designed to accomplish various goals within the organization.

The goal of increasing the impact of our organization on the Mechanical Engineering Department was furthered by beginning a process to create opportunities and scholarships for undergraduate researchers in Mechanical Engineering. Officers worked with the department head, Dr. Jeffrey Suhling, to secure funding for ten $1,000 scholarships to be awarded in the fall. Pi Tau Sigma will host a meeting in which professors will present a brief summary of their research to a group of interested students. This will be followed by a poster session from both professors and graduate students. This will provide an opportunity to create relationships between professors and students. Students can then apply for the scholarships, which will be awarded by a council formed by Dr. Suhling. The winners will work for a year under a research advisor, either a professor or graduate student, and will present their work at the end of the term as a paper and a poster at next year's research meeting. The meetings will occur once a semester. Applicants who are not awarded a scholarship still benefit from the process by interacting with professors, which will ideally result in the professor offering students research positions that are either unfunded or funded by the professors.

The chapter's webpage has been updated over the past year by our webmaster Kevin Flansburg. It contains an announcement page, PTS history section, list of officers, service section, joining information and a gallery of pictures from PTS events. It also has a Google Calendar listing all events that the webmaster can easily update and share with members.

Our Social Chair, Tyler Sherer, planned several events this semester that provided the members and initiates with some relaxation from the usual school routine. The chapter went bowling, to several trivia nights at a local restaurant, and out to eat on several occasions during the semester.

Auburn Chi teamed up with Tau Beta Pi to provide support for E-Day, where high school students from around our region came to explore their interest in engineering. Stations for conservation of angular momentum, collision dynamics, frictional forces, and unique material mechanics were mixed with a bit of showmanship to engage young students in the possibility of entering an engineering discipline. Members gave tours to the visiting high school students, sold t-shirts, and assisted with displays. This same event has been set up as a coordinated effort between other societies of various disciplines at middle schools as well as at a yearly robotics competition which brings young students from around the country to compete in engineering.

Our vice president Samuel Johnson and treasurer Ryan Whitmore attended the 2014 National Convention at Texas A&M. They enjoyed meeting fellow PTS members and found the convention to be very informative. It inspired our work with increasing research opportunities and funding.