PI TAU SIGMA ANNUAL CHAPTER REPORT
2013-2014
Louisiana Tech Tau Xi

A. Initiations

The selection process for our candidates begins by selecting the top percentages of the junior and senior classes in accordance with the standards set by Pi Tau Sigma. We require that a first term junior be in the top 25% of their class, and second term junior be in the top 33%, and seniors be in the top 35%. If the situation arises where candidates with relatively low GPAs are in the top percentages due to small class sizes, we may consider implementing a GPA cutoff. The cutoff may vary depending on the number of candidates, but typically the cutoff will lie around a 3.3. The Tau Xi chapter believes that Pi Tau Sigma should be comprised of the highest scholastically achieving students. Afterwards, we conduct a screening process where we consider the candidate's character and college involvement. If a candidate does not seem worthy to be a member of Pi Tau Sigma, then he or she will be removed from the invitation list. Upon completing the selection process, we issue formal invitations to each candidate inviting them to a mixer. The mixer includes the new candidates, as well as active and faculty members. The mixer begins with conversing with new candidates while enjoying dinner. After dinner, the president will begin with introducing the officers and advisor. He or she will then review the qualifications and requirements for acceptance in Pi Tau Sigma. The advisor will then share a few words. At the closing of the mixer, the candidates will be given a Pi Tau Sigma key and study information. After the candidates are dismissed, the active members will vote on the candidates.

Requirements

After the mixer, the candidates are then required to pass a candidacy exam, where their knowledge of Pi Tau Sigma and mechanical engineering is tested. They are also required to attend the quarterly service project. This service project will involve providing some sort of service to our college or community. In addition, the candidates are required to prepare their Pi Tau Sigma key and plaque. Each candidate is expected to get the signatures of each officer, faculty member, and current members on the back of their plague. As a bonus, there will be a competition between the candidates for the best plaque and key; this is voted on by active members on the day of initiation. The candidate with the best key and plaque will receive a gift certificate to the campus bookstore.

Initiation Ceremony and Rituals

On the night of initiation, all the initiates gather in the room and place their finished keys on a table in the front of the room. Afterwards, out of tradition here at Louisiana Tech, we have the initiates line up outside in the hall. Then they are blindfolded and given a penny to hold in their right hand. Then they must hold each person's hand next to them with the penny clasped between one another's hands. We then require them to walk to familiar locations within our engineering building without talking, dropping the penny, or breaking the chain. If anyone drops the penny, talks, or releases someone's hand, they must start all over again. After the group has travelled to a couple of places, they must travel to the fourth floor of the building and enter the attic. In the attic, the candidates must recite the preamble word for word, but there's a catch. The first person in the line begins with the first word, the second person then follows with the

second word, and soon. Once we get to the last person, it begins again at the front until the preamble is completed. If someone forgets their word, the candidates must start over from the beginning. Once the preamble is completed, the group must travel back to the room where they gathered earlier. We do this to make the candidates realize the value of teamwork, that things great and small can be accomplished when we work together, and that we must encourage our brothers of Pi Tau Sigma to stay on course, even when things get tough. At this point they may remove their blindfolds. The candidates enter the dark room and sit in a row in front of the table with the president and vice president. The president and vice president then recite the required ritual set by Pi Tau Sigma. After the ritual is recited, each member walks down the line of officers shaking hand with the secret Pi Tau Sigma handshake. The officers then vote on the best prepared bent and recognize that member. At this point the initiation ceremony is completed. The new initiates pay their dues and the officers, faculty members, new initiates, and active members hang out for a while and chat.

Initiations

We had two initiations this school year. The fall initiation was on October 30, 2013, and 8 people were initiated. The spring initiation was on May 12, 2014, and 5 people were initiated.

B. Chapter Activities

- *Homecoming Parade Float Build*:

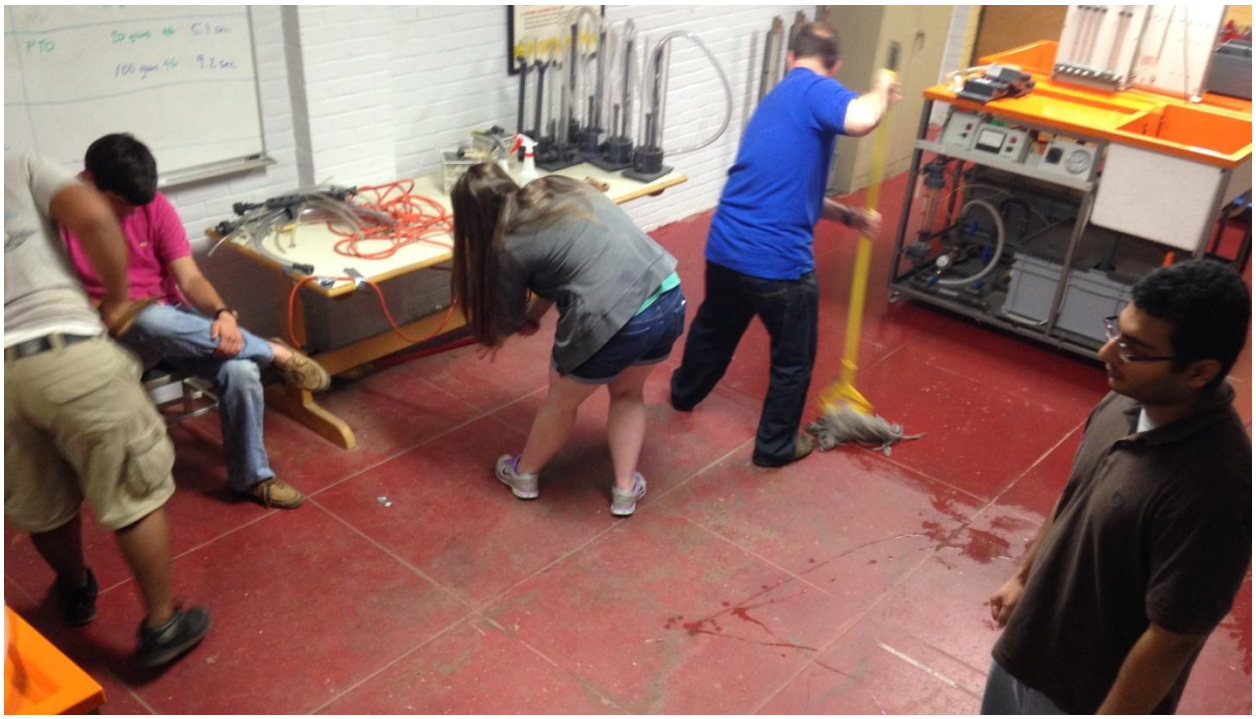
  During the fall quarter we built a float to represent the Engineering and Science Department in the homecoming parade. Our float went along with the theme of the parade (Surfin' the USA) as well as showing off some of the things we do in our department. We used our new laser etching machine to make Tech logos on surfboards that we cut out and used our foam router to make a large wave for the back of the float. On the front of the float we mounted two of our Eco-Cars that have won awards in the Shell Eco-Marathon. This was supposed to serve as cars parked at the beach. Members were divided into groups to paint, fabricate, and assemble the float. We received a lot of compliments on the float and were happy to represent the engineering department.

- *AE Phillips Elementary Set Build*:

During the winter quarter we built a set for AE Phillips Elementary School's kindergarten play. The name of the play was "A Barnyard Moosical" so we built a farm scene for the kids. Members used the foam cutter to make fence posts, clouds, and a barn. We also constructed a small fence at the front of the stage for the kids to stand behind. The play went great and we received many compliments from parents and teachers who would like us to build a set for next year's play as well.

- *Preparation for ABET Accreditation:*

During the spring quarter we were asked to help prepare the engineering building for our upcoming ABET accreditation. We performed various tasks to clean up and improve the building before it came under review. These tasks include cleaning and mopping labs, unloading tables and chairs, organizing all sheet/scrap metal, cleaning pencil marks off of walls, sweeping stair wells, emptying garbage cans, and painted podiums. We were thanked for our help and were happy to give back to the engineering department.



- *National Convention*:

  Our chapter's president, Seth Houston, attended the 2013-2014 convention in College Station, TX.

C. Other

<u>2013-2014 Officers</u>
President – Seth Houston
Vice President – Matthew Tarver
Treasurer – Gideon Ukpai
Recording Secretary – Kyle Johnson
Corresponding Secretary – Walter Miltenberger

<u>2014-2015 Officers</u>
President – Jacob Smith
Vice President – Courtney Allbritton
Treasurer – Ryan Gilbert
Recording Secretary – Richard Bennett
Corresponding Secretary – Riley White

2014 Pi Tau Sigma Graduates

Seth Houston	Gideon Ukpai	Kyle Johnson
Jenna Joseph	Evan Sanders	Thomas Gassiott
Tyler Tarver	Sean Karpa	James Salmon
Benson Hall	Taylor Ashton	Brantley Johnson
Austin Reed	Vinh Lam	Ethan Hilton
Tau-Ran Chen	Walter Miltenberger	