

Greater Interest in Government Project Grant Reports — 1997

The purpose of the Greater Interest in Government Program, established in 1969 by Frederick A. Faville, Illinois Beta '19, is to stimulate interest among student members of Tau Beta Pi in civic affairs and public-policy issues. The Executive Council awards annual grants of up to \$750 each for these activities from the investment earnings of the Greater Interest in Government Fund. Reports of two of the winning projects for 1996-97 follow:

Alabama Gamma's Playground Construction Project



Alabama Gamma initiates sand the wood play structure.



Ron Loe (left) and Jamey Taylor discuss possible solutions for a broken springboard.

THE ALABAMA GAMMA CHAPTER of Tau Beta Pi celebrated its 20th anniversary by reconstructing a playground for a local elementary school on January 4, 1997. A teacher at Glen Iris Elementary, located next to the University of Alabama at Birmingham, had told an officer of our chapter that she had been forced to cancel recess because of the great number of injuries from the playground. An inspection by our chapter revealed that the playground had fallen into disrepair and had no swings on the swing set. The playground committee asked the elementary-school students to draw pictures of the playground that they wanted. Ninety percent of the kids drew swings, so that became our primary objective.

The officers and initiates of Alabama Gamma gathered on January 4 to reconstruct the playground, funded by the national Association. The morning work focused on sanding a wooden play structure which had given splinters to several children. It was then bleached and sprayed with a water sealant. Rust was removed from monkey bars and a swing-set structure. Six new swings were added by the end of the day. A springboard, which had been the cause of several falls, was fixed as well. The majority of initiates stayed much longer than the required two hours, and several officers stayed all day. The elementary-school students returned from their winter break to find happily that recess was back in session.

— **Stacy L. Griner**, *Corresponding Secretary and Project Coordinator*

Iowa Alpha's Disability Seminar

THE IOWA ALPHA CHAPTER hosted Dr. Arvid Osterberg from the Iowa State University department of architecture on February 27, 1997. He spoke about design issues which must be considered when buildings are to be made accessible for people with disabilities. He included a slide show with examples of both effective and poor designs. He also addressed how the Iowa State community was dealing with these issues, specifically, how the university was complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In addition to the seminar, our chapter is in the process of designing a ramp for a student who lives off-campus and uses an electric cart for transportation. We are also in the process of raising funds so that the project can be built. We hope to complete the design, fund raising, and building by the end of the spring semester.

— **Ryan J. Mattison**, *Vice President and GIG Project Chair*