



2009 TBPI-MCDONALD MENTOR

*Established in 2006, the Tau Beta Pi-McDonald Mentor Award celebrates excellence in mentoring and advising among educators and engineers who have consistently supported the personal and professional development of their students and colleagues. It recognizes those who have shown true concern for individuals, supported an environment for developing talents, and earned respect and recognition for their contributions to their field and the greater community.*



## Dr. Thomas E. Wade

**f**OR HIS OUTSTANDING SUCCESS in mentoring engineering students, **Dr. Thomas E. Wade, Florida Alpha '67**, is the 2009 Tau Beta Pi-McDonald Mentor. He is a retired professor of electrical engineering at the University of South Florida, where he served as Chief Advisor of Florida Gamma.

Dr. Wade gained his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in electrical engineering from the University of Florida. In 1976, he moved to Mississippi State University and served as Advisor of Mississippi Alpha until 1985. He became Chief Advisor of Florida Gamma in 1986 after relocating to the University of South Florida as the associate dean for research within the college of engineering, where he worked for 22 years.

Professionally, Dr. Wade specializes in solid-state microelectronics and related topics; VLSI/ULSI multilevel interconnection systems; fluctuation phenomena (electric noise) in semiconductors and solid-state devices; and fabrication and characterization of solid-state devices.

He has been an active member and officer of collegiate chapters of Tau Beta Pi for more than 40 years. Initiated at the University of Florida in 1967, he became President of Florida Alpha in 1969. During that academic year, the chapter was named the Tau Beta Pi Outstanding Chapter. The chapter repeated the feat in 1970, and, when Dr. Wade returned as interim president, achieved that honor for a third consecutive year.

A true believer in the values of Tau Beta Pi, Dr. Wade had his class ring inscribed with the letters TBPI. For several years his personalized car tag read "USF TBP."

As an associate dean of engineering, Dr. Wade has acted as an *irreplaceable liaison* between the chapter and the college, obtaining student eligibility lists and completing essential mailings. His access to the dean and other administrators allowed him to maintain a high profile for the chapter, to promote Tau Beta Pi and its



members for inclusion in meaningful projects, and to recruit the best students.

Dr. Wade not only mentors students with his time and energy, he also supports them with his pocketbook. With personal funds, backed by award prize cash and college matching amounts, he has established scholarships that helped Tau Bates and many others.

Named as the 2007 TBPI National Outstanding Advisor, he also served as a faculty advisor for Eta Kappa Nu, USF Rotaract Club, the IEEE student branch, the college of engineering student council, and the Baptist Student Center. Dr. Wade has been recognized widely for his teaching and mentoring abilities, receiving four collegiate outstanding teacher awards and the 1998 State of Florida teaching incentive pro-

gram award. He has proven that involvement with students outside class has a big impact on their performance in class—and that a little humor can sustain attention as well as prevent boredom.

As a senior faculty member, he mentored young faculty new to the teaching and research environment. He chaired several key departmental groups, including the ABET-accreditation committee, and has served on the board of directors of ASEE.

Florida Gamma's nomination letter stated: "We as students have grown not only scholastically as a direct result of his instruction, but also have grown personally as professionals, leaders, and most importantly as people. Dr. Wade draws out the best of our leadership abilities within our chapter of Tau Beta Pi, as well as in students in other organizations who are honored to have his guidance and involvement."

In recognition of his leadership abilities, selfless contributions, and talent for inspiring students to create and maintain an effective chapter, Tau Beta Pi hereby recognizes Dr. Thomas E. Wade as the 2009 Tau Beta Pi-McDonald Mentor.