

July 24, 2007

FOR RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 1, 2007

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Tau Beta Pi Announces Dr. Thomas E. Wade as 2007 National Outstanding Advisor

Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, has named its 14th National Outstanding Advisor in its program to recognize engineering faculty who make important contributions to students and collegiate chapters. While the primary goal of Tau Beta Pi is to recognize students of superior scholarship and exemplary character and to honor eminent practicing engineers, the Association also lauds excellence in engineering education and in the ethical practice of engineering.

Dr. Thomas E. Wade, *Florida Alpha '67*, Chief Advisor to the Florida Gamma Chapter and professor in the department of electrical engineering at the University of South Florida, is the *2007 Tau Beta Pi National Outstanding Advisor*. He will be honored on October 13, 2007, at the 102nd annual national Convention to be held in Dearborn, Michigan. Tau Beta Pi President Dr. Larry A. Simonson, P.E., will present \$1,000 and a commemorative plaque to Dr. Wade. Another \$1,000 grant will be presented to the USF engineering college's discretionary fund.

A faculty advisor to Tau Beta Pi chapters for nearly 31 years, Dr. Wade was cited by students and peers for his strong personal commitment to Tau Beta Pi, his enduring direct involvement with his chapter, his genuine concern, and ability to empower students as they strive for excellence under his caring, patient leadership.

Wade obtained a B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in electrical engineering from the University of Florida.

Dr. Wade has been an active member and exceptional advisor to collegiate chapters of Tau Beta Pi for the past 40 years. Initiated at the University of Florida in 1967, he became President of his Florida Alpha Chapter in 1969. Under his leadership that academic year, the chapter was named the Tau Beta Pi Outstanding Chapter, repeating the achievement in 1970 with a new president. After Wade stepped in as interim president in 1971, the chapter received the top honor for a third consecutive year.

Following a career move in 1976 to Mississippi State University, Dr. Wade was an advisor for the Mississippi Alpha Chapter, serving until 1985. He became the Chief Advisor for the Florida Gamma Chapter in 1986 after relocating to the University of South Florida as the associate dean for research within the college of engineering. There, he has remained for the past 21 years. A true believer in the values of Tau Beta Pi, the face of Wade's University of Florida's class ring is inscribed with the Greek letters TBP. For several years his personalized car tag read "USF TBP." With good reason, colleagues affectionately refer to him as "Mr. Tau Beta Pi."

A former dean of engineering describes Dr. Wade as an involved, caring, and concerned mentor for students, whose dedication is unique and genuine. Students note that he devotes time nearly every day to his chapter, “no matter how busy or tired,” and his involvement is quite diverse. He can be relied upon to motivate new candidates to join each semester with his fabulous speech at new candidate meetings, write countless letters of recommendation, reserve university meeting space and equipment, help set up bank accounts on campus, monitor chapter finances, regularly attend and participate in chapter meetings and initiation ceremonies, invite officers to his home for a homemade Christmas dinner and caroling, and participate in chapter fundraisers, most recently as the good natured target of the water balloon toss.

As a former associate dean in the college of engineering, Dr. Wade has acted as an “irreplaceable liaison” between the chapter and the college, easily obtaining needed student eligibility lists and completing essential mailings in a timely manner. His access to the dean and other administrative entities allows him to maintain a high profile for the chapter and to “market” Tau Beta Pi and its members for inclusion in meaningful projects and to recruit the best students.

Dr. Wade has always encouraged students “to strive for the best and he expects nothing less.” On a national level, the activities of Florida Gamma under his watch led to a Most Improved Chapter award in 1991-92, honorable mention for Most Improved Chapter in 2004-05, eight Chapter Project Awards, and five Secretary’s Commendations. The chapter officers and members are experiencing one of their strongest years to date and consider the chapter to be a serious contender for this year’s R.C. Matthews Outstanding Chapter Award.

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 and related materials. His research activities include more than 20 different contracts from the federal government, state, and industry, totaling more than \$3.1 million. Among his publications are 125 articles in refereed journals, conference proceeding and trade journals, and three books/manuals.

He has worked during the summers in industry and consulted year round for a diverse constituency that includes NASA, Applied Micro-Circuits Corp., Plessey Semiconductor, Stanford Research Institute, the Department of the Army, Harris Semiconductor, and World Book Encyclopedia. Dr. Wade has volunteered in a leadership capacity for a dozen technical/professional societies and civic organizations. In addition to Tau Beta Pi, he serves as an advisor for Eta Kappa Nu and for Rotaract, the Rotary International supported student service organization on campus. He has received numerous national and local awards for his professional contributions, service, and skills in teaching and advising students, the most recent being the 2007 USF distinguished service award.

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 2007 Tau Beta Pi National Outstanding Advisor.

Tau Beta Pi, the world’s largest engineering society, has initiated 492,000 members since it was founded in 1885. Headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee, the Association has 232 active collegiate chapters and 16 active alumnus chapters throughout the country.