

# President Simonson Reports to the 2007 Convention

**T**HE 2006-10 Executive Council (The Foundation Executive Council) was elected by the 2005 Convention in Salt Lake City and installed at the 2006 Convention in Denver to lead the Association and guide national programs through Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer Jim Froula, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Roger E. Hawks, the Headquarters staff, District Directors, chapter advisors, and many additional outstanding volunteers. We receive guidance from and report to the Convention. Therein lie your responsibilities.

## THE CONDITION OF THE ASSOCIATION

At the end of September the Tau Beta Pi trust value exceeded \$19 million, an increase of approximately \$3 million from last year. It is important to realize that the majority of trust funds are restricted for fellowships, scholarships, life subscriptions, and Convention delegate support. Without the generous support of our alumni, we could not support the Headquarters operations, District Programs, Engineering Futures, scholarships, fellowships, the K-12 initiative, spring conferences, and other important programs. The Association's financial position, as described in detail in Secretary-Treasurer Froula's annual report, continues to be excellent. The growth during this past year is due to a number of significant bequests in addition to market gains.

The Association initiated 7,641 members last year, which is slightly down from the year before. The number of active members is most important to the health of the Association. I challenge you to allow me to report an increase in initiation numbers at next year's Convention in Sacramento. Let's have a great Tau Beta Pi year. I also challenge you to convert the energy that many Tau Bates have for the Tau Beta Pi National K-12 Math & Science Initiative into productive projects to benefit your chapter's members and to impact the future of the engineering profession positively.

## NEW CHAPTER INSTALLATIONS AND PETITIONS

With the installation of New York Upsilon at the United States Military Academy and California Alpha Gamma at San Francisco State University, there are now 232 Tau Beta Pi collegiate chapters. Final petitions from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and from Miami University (Ohio) are being considered by the 2007 Convention. Tau Beta Pi has opportunities to have chapters at other universities, but there will not likely be any final petitions to present to next year's Convention. We need to continue to explore opportunities for having additional Tau Beta Pi chapters.

## SUBJECTS REFERRED BY THE 2006 CONVENTION

There were no Constitution and Bylaw amendments

passed by the 2006 Convention. The Executive Council responded to other subjects referred by the 2006 Convention as follows:

- Establishment of an Advisor Recruitment and Development Committee. Vice President Solange C. Dao has led that effort and has met with this committee twice during the past year.
- Investigate the use of an electronic-voting system. We have received information about implementing such a system, but have found the cost and logistics to be excessive.
- Review the criteria used by the Committee on Curriculum Review. The Constitution is specific about the appeals process, resting solely with the Convention.
- Review the eligibility of any programs granted under bachelor of arts degrees. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee will work with that issue beginning today.

## OTHER COUNCIL ACTIONS SINCE THE 2006 CONVENTION

The number of \$2,000 scholarship awards was increased from 123 for 2006-07 to 135 for 2007-08. There were 293 scholarship applications submitted last spring. We expect that an even larger number of Tau Beta Pi Scholarships will be available for next year's senior class.

The number of Tau Beta Pi Fellows remains about constant with 36 being named this year. Fifteen of the Tau Beta Pi Fellows are receiving \$10,000 awards. The remaining 21 have other extensive financial aid to support their graduate studies.

Tau Beta Pi has awarded \$5.67 million in fellowships and scholarships since 1929, the first year fellowships were awarded. The Scholarship Program was started 70 years later, in 1999, and has grown rapidly.

I will now share a few additional highlights from the past year:

- The Executive Council met eight times since the last Convention with three of those meetings being conducted by conference call.
- The Council is recommending that the Convention assessment be raised from \$5 to \$7 and charged the Committee on Financial Affairs to study this issue.
- The Council initiated actions to meet with more alumni. Meetings were hosted at the Vineyards Country Club in Naples, FL, and at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, MD. Additionally, alumni were invited to join the spring District Conferences. The net result was that well more than 100 alumni were able to reconnect with Tau Beta Pi. This initiative will be enhanced next year.
- The Engineering Futures Planning Committee has developed a new module on Effective Presentation Skills. This resulted from student input, and sessions will be presented on Friday. Facilitator Kathleen Colbry did much of the work on this project, and we thank her.

- Councillor Norman Pih meets with the Trust Advisory Committee, which oversees the investments of Tau Beta Pi's trust funds. His diligence led to the appointment of Harry Lange, manager of the Fidelity Magellan Fund, to the committee. Having someone of Mr. Lange's caliber volunteering for Tau Beta Pi is huge.

- Councillor Jason A. Huggins is actively involved with Tau Beta Pi's District Program Planning Committee, which will have its initial meeting during this Convention.

- Councillor Jonathan F.K. Earle has led efforts to bring an outstanding National K-12 Math & Science Initiative to Tau Beta Pi. The organizational structure is taking shape, and there is a lot of enthusiasm among chapter members as they eagerly plan to become actively involved.

- Tau Beta Pi received three special national recognitions since the 2006 Convention.

- The Engineering Futures Program received the *Excellence in Education Collaboration Award* from the American Society for Engineering Education's Corporate Member Council.

- The Spring 2006 BENT cover won first prize in the 2006 *NewsStand Resource* cover contest.

- The Summer 2006 BENT won a 2007 American In-house Design award from GRAPHIC DESIGN USA.

The Association is even stronger this year than it was last year. Tau Beta Pi is performing well in every way: our financial situation is solid; our staff is talented, loved by the Association, and efficient; we are supported by hundreds of volunteers and thousands of donors; and every year we are joined in our mission by thousands of top engineering students. The Foundation Executive Council looks forward to another great year.

#### 2006-10 PRESIDENT

**Larry A. Simonson**, *South Dakota Alpha '69*, Ph.D., P.E., received B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and returned to his *alma mater* as a member of the faculty after working for Texas Instruments for three years. He is former departmental chair and current Hoffert Professor and assistant dean, college of engineering. He travels extensively to meet with School of Mines alumni and corporate officials throughout the country. Dr. Simonson also serves as a program evaluator for ABET.



He was initiated into Sigma Tau in 1968 and has served as Chief Advisor of South Dakota Alpha since 1986, District 12 Director during 1994-2006, and Engineering Futures Facilitator since 1990. He was recognized as his university's presidential outstanding professor in 2004 and as the Tau Beta Pi 2002 National Outstanding Advisor. Dr. Simonson is a registered professional engineer and has served as president of the South Dakota Electrical Commission since 1996. In 2001, he founded Youth Engineering Adventure, a week-long program for high-school students interested in mathematics and science.

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#### SEEKING DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD recognizes members who have demonstrated the ideals of Tau Beta Pi as stated in our Eligibility Code and have fostered a spirit of liberal culture throughout their lives after their college years. Their personal qualities of excellence and leadership serve as examples so as to influence the professional careers and personal lives of our collegiate members.

Members of Tau Beta Pi who should be considered for the award have made exceptional efforts to promote a spirit of liberal culture on local, national, and perhaps international scales. They demonstrate the integrity, breadth of interest, adaptability, and unselfish activity cited in our Eligibility Code.

Awardees are chosen by a committee of national officers. They are invited to the Convention, where they each receive a special plaque and their achievements are recognized. A \$2,000 Tau Beta Pi Scholarship is named in honor of each Distinguished Alumnus.

Any individual member or any chapter may nominate one (or more) alumnus member(s), except a national official, for the award. The following documentation, in four sets, must be sent to the Executive Director by April 1:

1. A one-page nomination summary containing biographical information and a summary of the achievements and/or contributions of the nominee exemplifying the objective of the award. (President's Book, C 32-33.)
2. A citation appropriate for presentation, documenting the nominee's outstanding adherence to the Tau Beta Pi ideal of *fostering a spirit of liberal culture* in our society. This citation (one-page limit) may be written by the nominating party.
3. Two letters of reference from persons other than the nominating party or the sponsoring chapter president, who are familiar with the nominee's contributions and achievements.