

# President Simonson Reports to the 2011 Convention

The Executive Council leads the Association under the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws and the Acts of the Convention. It provides leadership to 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. The Council receives guidance from and reports to the Convention.

## THE CONDITION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Tau Beta Pi is the largest engineering society in the world with more than 526,000 initiated members. The number of active members is most important to the health of the Association. Tau Beta Pi's 237 chapters had a very good year—initiating 8,747 members, an increase of 47 compared to the previous year and an increase of more than 1,000 since reported four years ago. I challenge you to help me to report another increase in the number at the 2012 Convention in Lexington, KY.

Tau Beta Pi is a very active honor society, providing many member benefits. Your attendance at this Convention is an opportunity for you to be involved in conducting the business of Tau Beta Pi. Your participation is important for the future of our Association. Please accept your responsibilities and be actively involved. This Convention is funded from many sources, including a portion of each member's initiation fee, contributions from 11,460 members, and earnings from the Association's Convention Fund. Tau Beta Pi's annual budget is about \$3 million with just under \$1 million each year provided by alumni contributions. The assets of the Association include nearly \$20 million of portfolio investments, an increase of more than \$2.5 million compared to last year. Tau Beta Pi's financial position is solid. Our staff is talented, loved by the Association, and efficient. We are supported by hundreds of volunteers and thousands of donors. Every year we are joined in our mission by several thousand top engineering students.

## 2010 CONVENTION BUSINESS

Each year the Convention has an opportunity to make changes to the Constitution and Bylaws. One constitutional amendment and one bylaw amendment were approved by action of last year's Convention in King of Prussia, PA.

## OTHER EC ACTION SINCE THE 2010 CONVENTION

The Executive Council has been very busy during the past year. The major activity was initiated by the announcement of Jim Froula's retirement at the 2010 Convention. Through a lengthy and thorough search, Curt Gomulinski has been selected to serve as only the

Association's fourth Secretary-Treasurer and second Executive Director. The final step of the transition process will occur on Saturday evening. Please take time to get to know Curt during the next couple of days and throughout the year.

Mr. Froula's retirement created an opportune time to revisit the vision of this outstanding Society. Rodger F. Smith, *WI A '64*, managing director of Greenwich Associates and Chair of Tau Beta Pi's Trust Advisory Committee since 1985, proposed a plan to accomplish this. The Vision Development Group was created to do *blue-sky* thinking for Tau Beta Pi.

A group of former corporate CEOs was assembled to work with Executive Councillor Norm Pih and me. Former CEOs Gil Amelio and Henry Schacht represented National Semiconductor, Cummins Engines, Lucent Technologies, and Apple. Others are Jay Light, dean emeritus at the Harvard Business School; Pat Harker, former dean of the Wharton school of business at the University of Pennsylvania and current president of the University of Delaware; Harry Lange, former manager of Fidelity's Magellan Fund; Ralph Rockow, founder and president of Exodyne, Inc., in Phoenix, AZ; Ray Rothrock, General Partner of Venrock Associates, a venture capital firm in Palo Alto, CA; and Rodger Smith. These gentlemen are all members of Tau Beta Pi, have a genuine interest in the Association, and have volunteered valuable personal time to serve our Society.

We are fortunate to have their commitment for this purpose. Our first meeting was in New York City in April 2011. Our second meeting was in Manhattan on October 26. I will give you only a brief summary of our thoughts. The discussions yesterday focused on the purpose of Tau Beta Pi and initiatives that we, as the honor society for the engineering profession, may want to embrace. Much of the agenda focused on integrity, continuing to honor high achieving engineering students, creating an aspiration for freshmen engineering students, enhancing the initiation process to create member pride, supporting our member's continued success, and establishing alumnus programs to serve Tau Beta Pi. We really want Tau Beta Pi to represent the *Gold Standard of Engineering*. The Vision Development Group will meet again in February 2012 to complete a set of recommendations to the Executive Council.

The Vision Development Group has recommended that we gather information from our members. Focus group discussions will be held at this Convention. Most groups will meet after lunch on Saturday and will be facilitated by national officials. How can Tau Beta Pi better serve its members? What is your vision for our Society? Your input is important and will play a critical role in the future of our Association. This is an historic time for Tau Beta Pi. Participate enthusiastically.

## SPECIAL WELCOME

I want to extend a special welcome to three delegates from the Middle East country of Qatar. These Tau Bates do not represent an international chapter, *per se*. They are members of the Texas Delta Chapter at Texas A&M University at Qatar. Welcome to Indiana!

## TONIGHT

You will have a chance to meet Rodger Smith, the driving force behind our Vision Development effort at tonight's Welcoming Dinner. Rodger will deliver the Convention keynote address and will be joined by Harry Lange to present two seminars on personal finance this evening. I encourage you delegates who are not on a committee and anyone else who is available to attend. I encourage all of the committee delegates to work efficiently in your first meeting after dinner so that you also can attend and benefit from the seminar.

## CHALLENGE

Let's have a great Tau Beta Pi year! I challenge you to convert the energy that you bring to this Convention into productive projects to benefit your chapter members and to impact positively the engineering profession. I hope that you will benefit personally from your experiences here and from your chapter activities throughout the year. We have the privilege to be guests of Indianapolis and the Crowne Plaza. Let's be responsible Tau Bates and represent our Society and our respective universities well in all that we do. Each delegate is responsible for attending all meetings according to the full Convention schedule, and many of you have already attended the Career Fair earlier today.

During the next few days, you will conduct the business of the Association, meet outstanding engineering students from other chapters, and have the privilege of helping us honor the five 2011 Tau Beta Pi Laureates, the 2011 Distinguished Alumnus, the 2011 Outstanding Advisor, and the 2011 Tau Beta Pi-McDonald Mentor. Enjoy the experience!

## 2006-14 PRESIDENT

**Larry A. Simonson**, South Dakota Alpha '69, Ph.D., P.E., received B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. de-



grees 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 associate dean for

advancement. 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 during 1990-2008. 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.

## WEBSITE REDESIGN CONTEST

The 2011 Convention Committee on Website Development recommended and the Convention approved a competition among TBPI chapters to submit sample designs for an updated Association home page and a consistent redesign across all pages of the [www.tbp.org](http://www.tbp.org) website.

Graduate and undergraduate members are eligible to compete in this design competition. The deadline for submitting a new website template, sample code, and design framework is March 1, 2012. Contest submissions and questions may be sent via email to [dylan@tbp.org](mailto:dylan@tbp.org).

The winning design will be selected by mid-March 2012. The Society will offer up to two members of the winning team a paid summer internship at Headquarters in Knoxville, TN, to work with the webmaster on implementing the new design.

Here are the basic rules to follow:

- The template must obey all current design standards (HTML or XHTML).
- The template must be compatible with leading web browsers: Firefox, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, and Safari (no flash-player content please.)
- There is a limit of two "team" entries per chapter. Each submission will be judged separately.
- No monetary refunds are available for any resources used in completing a contest entry.

For more information download the complete guide to the TBPI Website Design Contest. Here you will find sample websites with important features and creative ideas for inclusion in submissions.