Alabama Pi Omicron

University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
Chartered May 14, 1948. Number 40.

Goals for 2008-2009

Our goals for the chapter this year included increasing initiation size, increasing member participation, and recognizing outstanding students for their contribution to the mechanical engineering department. We tried to increase initiation size trough better communication of the benefits of being a member of Pi Tau Sigma. In the past we have just sent a letter outlying these principals. Better communication can be achieved through having more meaningful personal contact. Membership participation was increased through various new service projects such as helping feed the needy and social meeting at local establishments.

Activities

During the 2008-2009 school year, the Alabama Pi Omicron Chapter participated in several activities. Our focus was to develop each member's potential to become a more well rounded engineer. Our activities range from community service to social gatherings.

One community service project we did helped feed the needy through a west Alabama Presbyterian food pantry program called "Empty Bowls". The premise of this program is for several organizations to come together to benefit the food pantry. First local artists designed ceramic artwork in the form of serving bowls. Next, local merchants provide soup for to fill the bowls for a charity fund raiser. Tickets for the fundraiser provide patrons with the opportunity to have a meal and participate in a silent auction for the artwork afterwards, with all proceeds going to stock the food pantry. We assisted in this project by collecting food donations from local merchants and setting up for the event. We had over 6 members serve more than 10 hours of service for the Empty Bowls program.

Every fall, the University of Alabama College of Engineering host hundreds of high school students from all across the southeast to learn more about our engineering program. The event is known as E-day. Our chapter was involved with promoting the Mechanical Engineering Department by offering tours, creating posters, and counseling high school students on their possibilities in Mechanical Engineering. We had over 8 members serve more than 30 hours of service for our ME department.

This year we held several social meetings a local Pizzeria. The meeting place was decided through suggestions for meeting sites and then ultimately voted upon by members. The pizzeria was popular because it offered a bar and restaurant type setting. These meetings provided us with some of our highest member turnout. A major goal of these social meetings was to foster brotherhood through a setting outside of academia.

Our organization voted on several awards including outstanding junior, senior, and graduate student, as well as the Herbert Kuenzel Award, an award for any individual who has provided great service to the department of mechanical engineering. We also organized the annual Purple Shaft competition. The goal is to raise money by students donating money to the teacher that may have "shafted" them the most during the year. Each year the most "unpopular" teacher is the recipient of the purple shaft. This year we raised over $100 dollars to help our chapter fund food at our meetings. Due to the overwhelming student participation this year, we added a second place for the Purple Shaft competition known as the Blue Screw. The awards were given out at our Spring Picnic.

The Alabama Pi Omicron chapter hosted guest speakers from Eaton Aerospace. Mr. Robert Shown and Mr. Austin Kirsh presented some current projects underway at Eaton as well as their specific roles as a mechanical engineer. Mr. Shown and Mr. Kirsh are 2007 graduates of the UA ME program and offered valuable insight on the daily task that engineers face.

We held a fall initiation during December, and 7 new members were inducted. We also have a spring induction ceremony in May where we inducted 10 new members to our chapter. Two of the new initiates were honorary member who served substantial roles in educating ME students as well as engineers in industry. Also, we inducted two graduate students in an effort to promote more diverse thinking. Following the spring ceremony, we held a banquet for fall and spring initiates.

Graduates

Harry Benjamin Ayer, Jr. – Georgia Power, Augusta, GA
Zach Bryant – University of Alabama, Graduate School - Business
Katie Davis – Plans Unknown
John M. Ellenburg – Washington River Protection Solutions, Richland, WA
Adam Evans – TMC, Muscle Shoals, AL
Mark Glenn – Missile Defense Agency, Huntsville, AL
Sarah Grano – Northrop Grumman, Pascagoula, MS
Stephen Kyle Hamilton Plans Unknown
Alan Hewitt – University of Alabama, Graduate School – Mechanical Eng.
Ross Morgan – Alabama Power, Pell City, AL
Logan Oldham – Plans Unknown
David Rahm – Plans Unknown
Adam Roget– University of Alabama, Graduate School – Electrical Eng.
Josh Shaddix – Boeing, Huntsville, AL
Courtney Taylor - University of Alabama, Graduate School – Mechanical Eng.
Gregory Thomas – U.S. Military
Blake Williams – Plans Unknown
Garrett Waycaster – University of Alabama, Graduate School – Mechanical Eng.

Awards & Recognition

Lauren Bialoskurski – Outstanding Junior
Ross Morgan – Outstanding Senior
Michael Sealy – Outstanding Graduate Student
Dr. Robert Taylor – Herbert Kuenzel Award
Dr. Paul Puzinauskas – Purple Shaft
Dr. Keith Woodbury – Blue Screw

Names of New Members

Fall 2007 Pledges

Ben Ayer	Lauren Bialoskurski
Virginia Franco	Stephen Hamilton
William C. Warren	Blake Williams
Justin Williams	

Spring 2008 Pledges

Mebougna Brabo	John M. Ellenburg
Stephen M. Harris	Tyler N. House
Leah James	Justin Padinjaremury
Colby McNorton	Meisam Salahshoor
Keith A. Williams	Keith A. Woodbury

Transfer of Responsibilities

In order to sustain the integrity and reputation that the Pi Omicron chapter has strived to establish, several important steps were taken to transfer duties from the previous class of officers to the current class. Important chapter records and contact information are kept on file and are readily available for any required circumstances. A meeting of previous officers and newly elected officers was held to discuss position responsibilities and duties. The new officers also participated in the chapter report for the current year. An officer's meeting was then held to discuss best practices, establish semester and yearlong goals, and arrange meeting times. With successful integration into the Pi Omicron chapter, each officer is now preparing to turn over their experience and knowledge to the next Pi Omicron class.

Plans for 2009-2010

In the next year, the Pi Omicron chapter plans to continue to increase involvement in departmental activities. Participation in departmental freshmen orientation and recruitment will continue to be a priority. A faculty student forum will also be developed and departmental tutoring sessions will be created. In recent years, the departmental picnic, which was a yearly activity, has not been sponsored. In the spring semester of 2008, the departmental picnic was successfully reinstated thanks in part to participation from chapter members. In the upcoming year, the chapter will continue to support the picnic by striving to completely host the event and possibly sponsor a flag football or softball game.

Participation in community service events will also be encouraged in the next year. Current members will be asked to vote on activities they would like to participate in. Suggested activities will include feeding the needy, food drives, participating in the Adopt a Mile program, and helping with charity sponsored runs. By participating in these charity events, the reputation of the chapter will continue to improve.

The chapter will strive to increase the number of new initiates by improving communication between candidates and current members. Current members will be asked to meet with candidates and explain to them the benefits of joining Pi Tau Sigma. Current members will also explain to new initiates the activities that the Pi Omicron chapter is involved in.

Greater fraternity will also be a goal in the upcoming year. Participation in chapter recreational activities will be encouraged. A vote will be held in the beginning of the year to allow new initiates to choose which activities they want the chapter to participate in. Suggested activities will include bowling after meetings, intramural sports, sporting events, and having social gatherings at restaurants and local pubs.

Chapter Officers

President	Michael Sealy
Vice President	Mark Glenn
Treasurer	Courtney Taylor
Corr. Secretary	Ross Morgan
Recording Secretary	Alan Hewitt

Chapter Advisor

Dr. K. Clark Midkiff

Contact Information

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Reporter

Ross Morgan