

UC San Diego Engineering Honor Society Wins Most Outstanding Chapter Award

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Daniel Kane

Flip through the 133 page record of the 2006-2007 activities of UCSD's engineering honor society, Tau Beta Pi, and you'll see why they recently took home the "nation's most outstanding chapter" award. You'll also learn about a pie toss fundraiser.

You'll find the detailed lesson plans that honor society members used to teach engineering and science fundamentals to 75 fifth grades at Spreckels elementary school last year. You'll find all kinds of information about the tutoring the honor society provides to fellow UCSD undergrads. (The current tutoring schedule is available [here](#).)

Honor society members also cleaned up local beaches, cooked a full Thanksgiving dinner for a local family in need, helped with trail restoration, walked in MS Walk 2007, helped run the Sally Ride TOYchallenge and participated in the Sally Ride Festival, which is an event that exposes 5th to 8th grade girls to opportunities for careers in science and engineering.

This is just a sample of the group's service activities.

And then there are the social events for engineering students. UCSD's Tau Beta Pi chapter brings students together and encourages interactions with engineering professors because they know that education is not a solitary enterprise.

Sometimes professional development is the goal of the events. Sometimes the goal is fun - and sometimes the fun comes from throwing pie - as outlined in project number 24 "UCSD Tau Beta *Pie* Toss." For a small donation, students threw whip cream-filled pie tins at Tau Beta Pi members as a part of E-Games, one of the colorful events that make up Engineer's Week at the Jacobs School.

Even with a pie toss, the students continued their quest for improvement and innovation, as noted in the annual report.

Tau Beta *Pie* Toss Special problems: "More thought should have been given to the cleanup since whipped cream is oily and did not come off very well."

Overall Results: "People were excited to get pie-d and other students liked the idea of throwing pies at other people."

The official name of the award is the RC Matthews Most Outstanding Chapter Award. The award is given to one Tau Beta Pi chapter out of currently 232 active chapters across the United States based on the activities the chapters hold. Last year, the UCSD chapter initiated 94 new members and held about 70 events, many of which are open to the entire campus

Tau Beta "Pie" members put on a pie-in-the-face fundraiser at this year's E-Games, part of Engineer's Week at UCSD. For a \$2 donation to a Jacobs School student organization, students could throw a pie in the face of classmate.

"We were selected not only because we hold many events throughout the year but also because of the quality of our events," said Nadia Cheng, the 2006-2007 Tau Beta Pi president. Cheng graduated from UCSD in June with a degree in aerospace engineering and has started a Masters Degree program in mechanical engineering at MIT. She will be working on a robotic slug that can change shape and move through small holes.

Alex Lee ('08 Bioengineering) served as last year's tutoring coordinator and Matthew "Max" Gianas ('07 Mechanical Engineering) was the outreach coordinator.

Tau Beta Pi is open to the top eighth of juniors and top fifth of seniors at the Jacobs School. To be initiated, you need to put in 15 hours of work for the honor society. Members are encouraged to continue participating in activities long after the minimum service requirement is met.

Madeline Chiu - ('08 Bioengineering) - is the current president of UCSD's Tau Beta Pi chapter.

"I think our department mixers are really great. They are open to any student and you get to interact with professors and other students in a relaxed environment," said Chiu, who encouraged all engineering students at UCSD to participate in chapter events.

"We're here for all Jacobs School students. Don't be a stranger!" she said.

Computer science professor Geoff Voelker is the faculty chief advisor with additional support coming from Mechanical and Aerospace engineering professor Keiko Nomura and computer science lecturer Rick Ord.

Media Contacts: Daniel Kane, 858-534-3262



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2006-2007 Chapter Report



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