Athens of the South Hosts Annual Convention

Nashville, Tennessee hosted Alpha Chi’s April 4-7 national convention. The 464 delegates representing 92 chapters from across the country converged on the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel for the event, with student presentations serving as the core of the programming. Here are some of the convention highlights:

Delegates were treated to two plenary addresses. Thursday evening Justice William Koch, justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, used images of doors to thoughtfully relate pivotal personal experiences and to motivate those at the Thursday evening dinner to reflect with gratitude on their pasts, learn and rebound from their missteps, and venture into the unknown. At Friday morning’s breakfast, Leigh Hildebrand, senior assistant chief parliamentarian of the U.S. Senate, accepted her Distinguished Alumna award from President Margaret FitzGerald, and after thanking her accompanying family for their consistent encouragement and support, talked briefly about her career while motivating delegates to consider a life of public service as a means of making their scholarship effective for good.

An increasingly vital component of the academic program is the research poster. To feature these presentations, a poster forum Thursday evening after the dinner allowed all convention delegates to browse the more than four dozen posters representing a robust array of academic disciplines and to speak with the presenters. Delegates could also view the fine arts display before attending the first round of oral student presentations that evening.

The National Service Project continues to expand each year, percolating on the local campuses and culminating at the convention. Under the leadership of National Council Vice President Dr. Judy Cheatham, Alpha Chi continued its partnership with Reading Is Fundamental to support a year-long emphasis on literacy. As chapters registered for the convention on Thursday afternoon, they delivered boxes of new books they’d collected for elementary-aged children. On Friday afternoon, Dr. Cheatham and Dr. Ellen Millsaps from the Carson-Newman delegation led a caravan of university vans to a local public elementary school where Alpha Chi students visited classrooms, read to the children, and gave each child a new book to take home with them. Delegates used their Friday afternoon and evening free time to tour Nashville’s ample cultural and historic venues.

To emphasize Alpha Chi on campus, on Friday and Saturday, all delegates attended chapter-strengthening sessions developed by the Chapter Workshops Committee of the National Council. The results of these multiple sessions, coordinated by Dr. Patricia Williams, will be posted to the Alpha Chi website so those sponsors and chapter officers not at the convention can benefit from the presentations and discussions.

Many who returned to the hotel by 10:00 on Friday night participated in Alpha Chi’s first ever open mic night. Original and “cover” poems and songs, offered by students, alumni, and faculty, entertained an enthusiastic audience, who enjoyed late-night snacks provided by affinity partner Nationwide Insurance.

Whether delegates recall this as the convention where the hotel was undergoing sometimes noisy renovations or the convention with new technological components (pre-convention survey, YouTube election process, electronic program, Twitter feeds), all who attended received exceptional student scholarly work, networked with compelling colleagues, and participated in a lively academic forum befitting an Athens of any state or century.
UTSA Chapter Receives President’s Cup

The Texas Alpha Pi chapter at the University of Texas at San Antonio received the coveted President’s Cup at the national convention this spring. Alpha Chi awards the Cup to the chapter judged most outstanding in the nation. Each nominated chapter must keep track of their activities over a three-year period to prepare its application package.

The chapter at UTSA received the award for implementing academic and service programs on campus and in the community, sending students and sponsors to the annual conventions, nominating students for society scholarships and fellowships, and encouraging student academic research.

The panel of judges noted the variety and quality of programs offered or cosponsored annually as a signature aspect of this chapter’s merit. Dr. Trisha Yarbrough, executive director of Alpha Chi, commends the chapter sponsor, Dr. Patricia Graham, the assistant sponsor, Ms. Charlin Jones, the student officers, and the many members who together make this chapter successful. She says, “Dr. Graham and the chapter at UTSA illustrate Alpha Chi’s core values of academic excellence, campus engagement, and civic improvement, so I’m delighted they received the President’s Cup. Their commitment to enriching campus life and improving their community exemplifies our ideal to make scholarship effective for good.”

The impressive traveling trophy will be displayed at UTSA until the 2015 convention. Upon bringing it back for presentation to the next recipient, the Texas Alpha Pi chapter will receive a beautiful trophy to keep as a permanent reminder of the chapter’s esteemed status.

Executive Director’s Awards

The executive director and staff of the national office honored three sponsors who have distinguished themselves in their service to Alpha Chi. Recipients of the Executive Director’s Award, which carries a $500 stipend, are chosen based on responsiveness to requests from the national office and their dedication to their chapter members and to Alpha Chi in general.

This year’s awards went to Dr. Danny Moore and Ms. Syble Shellito of Chowan University, for bringing record-breaking numbers of students to convention several years in a row, and to Dr. Alison Mostrom of the University of the Sciences, for encouraging the national office staff by regularly meeting national deadlines, consistently bringing at least one student to the annual convention, being happy to serve as a moderator or judge at convention, and for her dedication to and passion for Alpha Chi.

Star Chapters for the Academic Year 2011-12

Abilene Christian University, Texas Psi • Anderson University, Indiana Alpha • Azusa Pacific University, California Gamma • Belmont University, Tennessee Eta • Carson-Newman College, Tennessee Delta • Catawba College, North Carolina Omicron • Chowan University, North Carolina Phi • Christian Brothers University, Tennessee Theta • East Central University, Oklahoma Gamma • Evangel University, Mis-
Seven Honored for Distinguished Service

Seven campus sponsors received the Distinguished Service Award at the national convention. The award is a peer recognition that honors influential service.

The following are the recipients:

**Dr. Al Clark** is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of La Verne. He has helmed the chapter at the university for 20 years, as well as participated in regional and national organization leadership for another 12 years. Under Clark’s direction the chapter has received multiple Star Chapter Awards.

**Dr. Mikee Delony**, professor of English at Abilene Christian University, served as a regional Vice President and currently serves as the Region I President of Alpha Chi. Additionally, the chapter at Abilene Christian University recently received a Star Chapter Award.

**Dr. Malinda Fitzgerald**, professor of biology at Christian Brothers University, serves as Region III Vice President of Alpha Chi and, under her direction, the chapter at Christian Brothers University has received multiple Star Chapter Awards.

**Dr. Joseph Lehmann**, Associate Professor of English at Grace College, has served in both local and regional leadership roles, leading the Grace College chapter since 2004, and as a Region V executive officer for the last four years. Under his mentoring, a Grace student was elected to the National Council and the chapter has received several Star Chapter Awards.

**Dr. Julie Maina**, Associate Professor of Health and Human Performance at Roanoke College, has served as chapter sponsor at Roanoke since 2010, and under her direction the chapter has received numerous Star Chapter Awards.

**Ms. Teresa Taylor**, chapter sponsor at Goldey-Beacom College, serves as Region VI Vice President and, under her direction, the chapter at Goldey-Beacom College received a 2013 Star Chapter Award. She also served a two year term, beginning in 2010, on the National Council as the student representative for the region.

**Dr. Jeanne Tunks**, Associate Professor of Teacher Education and Administration at the University of North Texas, has served as chapter sponsor at UNT since 2003, and under her direction the chapter has received multiple Star Chapter Awards.

Registrations by Region

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2013-14 Pryor Fellows Selected

Jenny Wakefield, in her third year as a doctoral student in the Department of Learning Technologies at the University of North Texas, and Brent Bailey, a graduate student in Abilene Christian University’s Master of Divinity program, are recipients of the 2013-14 Joseph E. Pryor Graduate Fellowships.

Inducted into Alpha Chi in 2007 as an undergraduate at Texas Eta, University of North Texas in Denton, Wakefield will receive a $5,000 award to support her studies. Bailey was inducted in 2011 as an undergraduate at Texas Psi, Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas, and will receive a $3,000 award.

One of the fellowships, named for the society’s first executive director, is awarded to a doctoral student who has completed at least two years of graduate study, and the other goes to a graduate student in the first or second year of graduate study. At the time of application, candidates must be in Alpha Chi’s active alumni program or must be a graduate student member at an Alpha Chi institution.
Trunk-mounted racks are a third option and are generally easy to install. They are easier to load, unload and remove, and it can carry gear beyond the bikes. These racks are safe, Fix says, but they can be hard to load. They also increase wind resistance, and they’re unfriendly in parking garages. A rear-hitch is the best solution for most people, Fix says. Fix suggests you check the manuals that came with your vehicle and trailer to see what’s next to your vehicle and trailer with the load, Siler says. Consult your manual to find out if your vehicle can handle the trailer hitch, tongue weight and load of the haul.

Be cautious about factory-supplied racks.

Many Alpha Chi members will find themselves moving home or moving on to new schools or jobs this summer. Our affinity partner, Nationwide Insurance®, wants to make sure you’re ready to make those moves safely.

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Make your getaway fun and safe with these packing hints.

As temperatures rise, so does the load factor on your vehicle. That’s the way it often works out, given our enthusiasm for hauling luggage, bikes and boats for that much-needed summer break. Follow these tips to minimize the impact to your car.

Make appropriate adjustments for towing.

When you’re hauling a boat, Jet Ski or other summer-pleasure toy, adjust your concept of appropriate speed, says Steve Siler, a contributor to Edmunds.com. Slow down to achieve the smoothest ride. “Also, check your mirrors to see if they still allow you to see what’s next to your vehicle and trailer with the load,” Siler says. Consult your manual to find out if your vehicle can handle the trailer hitch, tongue weight and load of the haul.

Be cautious about factory-supplied racks.

Most factory-supplied racks and rails are designed for cosmetic appeal, not function. “They’re usually only capable of handling stable loads of up to 100 pounds,” says vehicle expert Lauren Fix, Time Warner’s national automotive correspondent. “If you’re hauling heavy or irregularly shaped loads, you’ll probably need an aftermarket rack, such as a roof rack or rear-hitch one. For hauling long objects like canoes, kayaks and surfboards, a heavy-duty roof rack is the only way to go. On the other hand, skis, bikes, snowboards and cargo boxes can be carried either on the roof or a rear-hitch.”

About that bike…

There are many choices here, so find the one that works for you. Roof racks are safe, Fix says, but they can be hard to load. They also increase wind resistance, and they’re unfriendly in parking garages. A rear-hitch is easier to load, unload and remove, and it can carry gear beyond the bikes. Trunk-mounted racks are a third option and are generally easy to install and remove. There’s a drawback, though: “You have to remove your bikes to get into the trunk,” Fix says. “You have to lock your bikes when you leave the car. And if you get rear-ended, bye-bye bicycles.”

Ensure loads inside your car are piled safely.

Check your vehicle’s payload limit. If possible, center and secure the load from side to side to keep it from affecting your vehicle’s handling. “If you’re hauling something in a pickup or SUV, try to keep the heaviest items as close to the center of the vehicle as possible,” Siler says. Also, don’t overload the trunk or cargo area. That adds strain on the rear suspension and other components.

Don’t forget about the tires.

Your tires must be in tip-top shape to handle a heavier load. That’s especially true in the summer, because the rubber wears out more quickly on dry, hot pavement. Changing tires before the summer hauling season will improve your vehicle’s handling of the added weight. Siler says. Also, check your air pressure, since proper inflation helps maintain the best contact with the road and helps avoid blowouts and tread separation. “Check it often,” Siler says. “With every passing month, the average tire loses about a pound of air pressure.”

Sponsor Service Pins Presented

The society recently honored forty-five of its chapters’ valued faculty sponsors. Most notably, Dr. Terrell Tebbetts received accolades for 40 years of sponsor service at Lyon College and Dr. Norman Beck was recognized for 37 years at Texas Lutheran University. In addition to Drs. Tebbetts and Beck, those with the longest service were Dr. Sharon Behl Brooks, 30 years, Hastings College; Dr. Clark Youngblood, 30 years, Grand Canyon University; Dr. Patricia Williams, 32 years, Sam Houston State University; Dr. Blake Janutolo, 27 years, Anderson University (Indiana); and Dr. James King, 25 years, Midwestern State University. An additional thirty-eight sponsors received pins for 10, 15, or 20 years of sponsorship for a combined total of 773 years of loyal service.

Leigh Hildebrand with the Westminster College delegation at the national convention in April.

Leigh Hildebrand was chosen as Alpha Chi’s 2013 Distinguished Alumna and addressed the delegates at the annual national convention in Nashville.

After eight years in the Parliamentarian’s office, she currently serves as the Senior Assistant Parliamentarian of the U.S. Senate. She was selected for Alpha Chi membership as an undergraduate student at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, in 1997, a private liberal arts campus, and this chapter nominated her as an ideal representative of Alpha Chi’s values of scholarship and service. Hildebrand graduated from the University of Georgia College of Law and also served five years as an attorney for the Federal Election Commission.

Drive Safely With Your Summer Gear

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Presentation Prizes Awarded to 26 Students

Twenty-six members of Alpha Chi received prizes for making the best scholarly, creative, or artistic presentations in their fields at the Society’s national convention in Nashville. The cash prizes were funded through discipline-specific endowments established by supporters of the society. Among more than 260 students making presentations, the following received prizes:

Walden S. Freeman Prize in American History: Laura Joy Stevens, East Texas Baptist University, “The Camp Harmony News-Letter: From Notices to Newspaper”

Ellen Millisaps Prize in American Literature: Sara Plummer, Gardner-Webb University, “Self-Objectification and the Female Tribute: Viewing The Hunger Games through a Feminist Lens”

Avery Grenfell Church Prize in Anthropology & Sociology: Emily Tucker, Anderson University, “The Ethical and Sociocultural Dimensions of the Kiribati Dilemma”

Alexander Bendazzi/Strayer University Prize in Art/Music/Dance Papers: Kendra Bragg, Gardner-Webb University, “Rhapsody in Orange: The Inward Reality of Synesthesia in Music”

Robert Blake Prize in British Literature: Angela Ellington, Fresno Pacific University, “Julia’s Rise and Fall: Sex and Feminism in George Orwell’s 1984”

Gayle Webb White Prize in Business Administration: Erbnil Ribari, Texas Lutheran University, “Try Giving Away $20 for $10”

Joseph E. and Bessie Mae Pryor Prize in Chemistry: Timothy Horton, Ouachita Baptist University, “Application of Computational Docking to Examine Metabolism of Chiral Drugs by CYP2C9”

Brown’s Graduation Supplies Prize in Communication: Leila Shurburne, Harding University, “Cultural Communication Among the Karimojong”

Floyd Tesmer/Strayer University Prize in Computer Science & Engineering: Hannah Swanson, Hastings College, “Building an iPhone Kiosk App for Campus Events”

Thelma Hall Prize in Creative Writing: Zachary Tackett, Saint Vincent College, “Attempt at Definition: A Documentary”

Patricia A. Williams Prize in Education: Diana Grace Jose, Lindwood University, “Writing in Mathematics: Will Writing Increase Students Comprehension in Mathematics?”


Kathryn Hoyle Bradley Prize in Health Sciences: Leah Starkey, West Liberty University, “The Role of Gustin in Zinc Perception and Nutrition: A Double-Blind Pilot Study”


Bonnie Revelle Prize in Molecular & Cellular Biology: Samantha Scanlon, Harding University, “Myristoylated Alanine-Rich Kinesin Substrate (MARCKS) is a Key Regulator of Cell Survival in Glioblastoma”

Blake and Trish Janutolo Prize in Ecological & Organismal Biology: Mary Jones, Angelo State University, “A Re-Examination of the Paratypic Series of The Fossil Land Snail Lysinoe breedlovei (Gastropoda: Pulmonata) of West Texas Using X-ray Computed Tomography”

Floyd and Rosana Tesmer/D.C. Gamma Prize in Original Visual Art: Louise Brenner, Grace College for her art collection titled “Compilation of Most Recent Works”

Johnny and Frances Williams Prize in Performing Arts: Margaret Gregory, Hastings College for her performance titled “A Flight of Flute Fantasy”

Jim Kirby Prize in Physics/Geology/Astronomy: David To, Angelo State University, “Measurement of the Top Quark Pair Production Cross Section in Proton Collisions Using Muon+jets Data at CDF”


Mary Waterstreet Prize in Psychology: Felicia Mirghassemi, University of Texas at Tyler, “Norm-Following Behavior During Informal Conversations”

Clark Youngblood Prize in Religion: Sarah Dalton, Belmont University, “Eve Was Framed: A Feminist Interpretation of the Pauline Letters”

Michael Flachmann Prize in Shakespeare: Anthony Cohen, University of Texas at El Paso, “‘Seeming So’: Iago’s Narrative Efficacy”

Patricia Graham Prize in World History: Emily Masseo, Roger Williams University, “Denial and Polemics: Redeﬁning the Assyrian Genocide”

Bill Short Prize in World Literature: Kenna Neitch, Texas Lutheran University, “The Prince & the Satire: Machiavelli in Context”

Dennis M. Organ Graduate Student or Alumni Member Prize: Claris Smith, University of Texas at Tyler, “Role of Vitamin D & Celecobix on Expression of Breast Cancer Biomarkers”

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2012 Donors

Adomatia, Pamela
Ali, Memuna
Anthony, Stephen
Arendt, Cole
Banks, Bryan
Barnes, Barbara
Barrett, Katherine
Baucum, Rena
Beaver, Charlene
Belant, Grant
Bender, Melody
Bishop, James
Boggio, Clara
Brenman, Christi
Broumand, Kristina
Brown, Patricia
Bryant, Deborah
Buell, David
Buell, Laurie
Busby, James
Bush, Letitia
Caroll, Derek
Challeen, Amanda
Chicko, Joshua
Chilton, Kathleen
Clark, Diane
Cruse, Deborah
Davis, Charmaine
Dickens, Joyce
Donkin, R. Matthew
Doucette, Cara
Eastham, Kellie
Eilenstein, Beverly
Esparza, Arcelay
Faith, William
Farrell, Kim
Frias-McDaniel, Loundes
Gawronski, Charleen
Gerth, Shelby
Girard, Andrew
Graz, Kathleen
Gragert, Elizabeth
Gray, Mary
Green, Marion
Guthery, Liane
Guitierrez, Mark
Hacker, Joe
Hansen, Eve
Harris, Angela
Hill, Leigh
Holland, Waymond
Irvine, Stephanie
Jacobs, Timothy
Johns, Carol
Jones, Jr. Cordell
Jones, Jennifer
La Claire, James
Lansky, Sandra
Lawson, Chauna
Lewis, Ronald
McDermott, Sarah
McElroy, Helen
Melloy-Flores, Shirley
Morales, Jr., Alberto
Moss, Margaret
Norton, Luke
Organ, Dennis and Sherry
Page, Carl
Pai, Roger
Pann, George
Person, Ernest
Pitts, Darlene
Revelle, Bonnie
Rinchart, Lora
Rogers, Samuel
Russell, Christopher
Ryan, Ann
Santiago, Maria
Sartor-Unterbeck, Anett
Schmeckenbecher, Rose
Semlak, Donna
Serrano, Sharone
Shean, Stephen
Shepard, Catherine
Smith, Christopher
Smith, Teresa
Soydan, Deniz
Sparks, Annette
Staats, Suzanne
Sutton, Jes
Templet, Yvonne LeBlanc
Truax, Kaitlyn
Thomas, Lilian
Van Coney, Jane
Van Ronzen, Bill
Vandenhove, Jessica
Vega-Cruz, Aster
Warnick, Christopher
Weaver, Arla
Wes sel, Jessica
Wheatley, Avis
Wheeler, Sandra
White, Glyndra
Wilson, Tony
Yarbrough, Trisha
Zengen, Susan
Zollic, Riza
Eureka College
Illinois Alpha Chapter
(*$100*)
Council Gains New Members

Alpha Chi delegates elected one new regional secretary-treasurer and four at-large members to join the National Council at the annual convention in Nashville. The National Council, Alpha Chi’s chief governing body, is a 22-member governing body composed of 15 faculty members and seven students.

The four new at-large members were elected at Friday morning’s plenary session, following a new procedure this year which introduced delegates to each of the candidates via videotaped biographies available on YouTube in January (and playing on monitors during registration at the convention). Delegates had also received biographical information before the convention and in their registration packets.

Elected to Council membership to serve until 2017 were Dr. Bonita Cade, Associate Professor of Psychology and chapter sponsor of the Alpha Chi chapter at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island; Dr. Greg Clemons, Professor of Spanish and General Studies and sponsor at Mars Hill College near Asheville, North Carolina; Dr. Tim Lindblom, Associate Professor of Biology and chapter sponsor at Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas; and Dr. David Jones, Professor of Psychology, Associate Dean of the Faculty, and sponsor at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Dr. Jones is returning to National Council service, having completed his first four years as an at-large member of the Council.

Region VII elected Jennifer Jones to fill its vacant secretary-treasurer position and will serve until 2016. As secretary-treasurer, Jones, assistant sponsor of the Alpha Chi chapter at Grand Canyon University, also assumes membership on the National Council during her term of office.

The newly formed Council elected Dr. Bill Clemente, Region IV Secretary-Treasurer, as its new Vice President to complete the term in 2015 of the previous vice president. Dr. Clemente is well known to Alpha Chi members, as he has served as convention photographer for the past several years, compiling a popular photo slide show featured in the conventions’ final plenary sessions.

The Executive Committee will join Executive Director Trisha Yarbrough and Lara Noah, Director of Operations, for the annual summer meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. The entire National Council will work electronically throughout the year and will reassemble in St. Louis for its next formal meeting at Alpha Chi’s annual convention.

Executive Director

Dr. Trisha Yarbrough has begun her second year as the society’s executive director, having accepted this leadership role on June 1, 2012, as Dr. Dennis Organ retired. Her 25-year career at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma, as a professor of English and director of the University Honors Program supplies her with varied experiences as an educator and leader to serve Alpha Chi in this role. Yarbrough has a long history with the society, serving from 1990-2011 as a faculty sponsor of the Oklahoma Gamma chapter at East Central.

Dr. Organ’s retirement last year concluded an unbroken career of service with Alpha Chi that began in 1975 when he was appointed editor of publications and worked closely with the late Dr. Joseph E. Pryor, long-time secretary-treasurer of the National Council, a position that administered the day-to-day work of Alpha Chi before the society established a professional office. After Pryor retired from teaching at Harding University and became Alpha Chi’s first executive director, Organ eventually became assistant executive director and in 1994 executive director.

A conversation between Dr. Yarbrough and Dr. Organ can be found online at www.AlphaChiHonor.org in the fall 2012 issue of the Recorder in the article “Alpha Chi at 90.”