



Sigma Tau Delta

SOUTHWESTERN

April/May 2005

REGENT'S COLUMN

By Dr. Sidney Watson

It's that time of the year when it's nice to pause and pat ourselves on the back for all of our accomplishments—and those of us in the Southwest Region deserve a few accolades.

We once again had strong representation at this year's convention, and a number of our chapters were recognized for their outstanding work. The awards presented the last night of the convention included recognition for Outstanding Sponsors. We had two winners in the Southwest, Dr. Sandra Mayfield of the University of Central Oklahoma and Dr. Terry Phelps of Oklahoma City University, both of whom are outstanding examples of the importance of chapter

sponsors to the success of Sigma Tau Delta.

So, a tip of the hat to Dr. Mayfield and Dr. Phelps, but also to all our Southwest sponsors. It's your heart and your commitment that make all the difference. (A note to chapter members: please take a moment to tell your sponsor how much you appreciate his or her efforts. Our Southwest sponsors really are some of the most dedicated and delightful people around.)

I'd also like to introduce you to our two new Southwest representatives: Student Representative Kassy Nicholson of Oklahoma City University and Associate Student Representative Elaine Almquist of University of

New Mexico. I had the opportunity to chat with both women at the convention, and I'm very impressed by their plans for next year. (For just one of example of the new ideas generated at that meeting, check out the article elsewhere in this newsletter on the new Southwest Regent's Project Grant.)

One more word about Kassy and Elaine—if you'd like to help them out next year (and I hope you will!), one of the best ways is to send them short articles on your chapter's activities. Also, if you have suggestions about newsletter topics—or any other regional concerns—please don't hesitate to contact one of us. We can serve you best when we know your needs.

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The International
English Honor
Society

Meet your new
Southwestern Region
Team.

Left to Right: Student
Representative Kassy
Nicholson; Regent
Sidney Watson;
Associate Student
Representative, Elaine
Almquist



Scholarships and Awards

The Southwest took home quite a few awards at the convention in Kansas City. We would like to congratulate all the winners:

Critical essay

Jenny Linscott (Runner-up)
Hendrix College

Creative Nonfiction

Crystal Elerson (1st Place)
University of North Texas

Poetry

Sharon Baker (Runner-up)
Arkansas Tech University

Outstanding Chapter

Oklahoma City University
Omega Phi

University of Central Oklahoma
Chi Gamma

Outstanding Regional Sponsors

Terry Phelps
Oklahoma City University
Sandra Mayfield
University of Central Oklahoma

Outstanding Web Awards

Oklahoma City University
(2nd Place)
Omega Phi

Project Grants

Texas State University, San Marcos
Printing a book of short stories composed by fourth graders in the chapter's Young Writers Program
Omega Epsilon

Scholarly Paper Awards

Undergraduate

Emily Cleghorn Seal
Schreiner University

Junior Scholarships

Kristina Riggs (runner up)
Oklahoma Christian University

Bad Poetry Contest

Kassy Nicholson
Oklahoma City University

CONGRATULATIONS!

Outstanding Chapter Award goes to the sponsor and members of Oklahoma City University's Omega Phi Chapter in Kansas City, MO.

Standing, left to right:

Dr. Terry Phelps, Donna Gregory, Matt Randall, Jennifer Luckenbill

Seated, left to right:

Kassy Nicholson, Kristina Brooks, and Avery Thompson.



NEW! Southwest Regent's Service Project Grant

By Dr. Sidney Watson

To encourage chapters to develop new projects or to expand on old ones related to our Regional Service Project commemorating Banned Books Week, the Southwest Region is offering a new Regional Project Grant of up to \$150, open to any chapter within the region.

Banned Books Week is designed to celebrate and to protect intellectual freedom and is sponsored by a number of organizations, including the American Library Association. A good source for more information on Banned Books Week is the ALA's website: <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.htm>>. The dates for Banned Books Week this fall are September 24-October 1.

To be eligible for the Regional Project Grant, projects must be directly connected to Banned Books Week and its goal of encouraging the appreciation of intellectual freedom. A list that might help your chapter's brainstorming of possible projects appeared in our September 2004 newsletter (http://www.english.org/reg_southwest.shtml>).

Your application for the Regional Project Grant should include three copies of the following:

1. A cover sheet on the chapter sponsor's official school letterhead. Include the project title, the amount of funding requested, and contact information (snail mail, phone, and e-mail) for both the sponsor and the student who will serve as project director. Both the sponsor and the project director should sign the coversheet.
2. A description of the project, not to exceed 300 words. This description should clearly describe the project and state its connection to Banned Books Week and its appropriateness to the goals of Sigma Tau Delta.
3. A budget indicating the specific dollar amount request and indicating how the funds will be spent.
4. Reference letters. If your service project involves cooperation with other groups (on- or off-campus), include a letter (on their letterhead) from each group indicating their support of the project.

The Regional Project Grant committee will consider the following criteria: the appropriateness of the project to the goals of Banned Books Week and Sigma Tau Delta, the concept and organization of the proposal, and the completeness of the application packet. No chapter may receive a project grant in consecutive years.

Deadline: Proposals must be postmarked by May 30, 2005 and mailed to Dr. Sidney Watson, Oklahoma Baptist University, OBU Box 61238, 500 W. University, Shawnee, OK 74804.

The winning chapter will need to submit a final project report by October 30. The final report should be on school letterhead, should detail final expenses of the project, and should be signed by both the project director and the chapter sponsor.

Summer Writing Contest

Deadline August 31st



What does this picture suggest to you? Write a poem or short story about it (limit 1,000 words), and it could be published in a future issue of this newsletter!

Email submissions to WillWrite4Food2@aol.com.

Submit to the newsletter!

What would you like to say to your region? This is your forum. We want news from the entire region. Does your chapter do any service projects? Throw any kickin' parties? Complete any lucrative fundraisers? Tell us about it! Please try to limit your articles to 1,000 words or less, and if you would like it to appear in the fall newsletter, make sure we receive it by August 31st. Email submissions in Word format to WillWrite4Food2@aol.com



Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Your SR But Were Afraid To Ask

By Kassy Nicholson

Hi! I'm Kassy Nicholson, the new Southwest Student Representative. You may be wondering why you should care, and the answer may very well be that you don't. If that is the case, please skip to the next article because the remainder of this one will be about me, and if I've failed to grab your attention so far, I probably won't manage to do so in the coming paragraphs. But if you're the kind of person who enjoys learning random trivia about perfect strangers, or if you're the kind of person who feels the need to read the entire newsletter lest some precious nugget of information escape your grasp, then read on!

I am a graduate student in literature at Oklahoma City University. I took a year and a half off between undergraduate and graduate school, not really voluntarily, but kind of by default. Suffice it to say, the fates conspired to give me a taste of the real world for awhile. During that time, I learned what I believe to be a universal truth: The real world sucks big time (at least it does if you work in a steakhouse). I decided that I would much rather be in school the rest of my life, and the only way to make that pay the bills would be to get a Ph.D. and teach. So that is my current goal.

Quotable Quotes: Kassy's Pick

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.
—Edith Wharton

I have been a member of Sigma Tau Delta since 2001. In my year and a half leave of absence from school, I was a member of the alumni chapter and attended the Daytona convention as an alumni member. This was an interesting experience and a somewhat disturbing one. Sitting through a regional caucus but not having a vote was very peculiar. I realized that although alumni members pay dues like the rest of us, they have absolutely no representation to the board. This is one of the areas I would like to change if possible while I am SR.

Another one of my goals for this year is to continue the Banned Books Week regional service project. This is a cause that is especially important to me. I believe in reading. It is my religion. I worship at the temple of literacy. Banning books is tantamount to sacrilege to me. But I won't go on a rant about it or anything...

Finally, I would like to thank Donna Gregory and Leah Iknayan, our former Student Rep and Associate Student Rep, for all of their hard work and dedication. They did some truly wonderful things for this region last year. I can only hope to live up to the example they have set. Thank you, Donna and Leah! The region will miss your leadership.

Plea for Host of 2005 Regional Convention

As you know, the Southwest Region has held a regional conference for three years running now. This is an excellent tradition in our region and one we hope to continue this year. If your chapter would be interested in hosting the regional conference, the first step is to meet with your sponsor and your school to discuss finances. This is the biggest obstacle for most chapters. If you're still interested once you've duked it out over money, let Dr. Watson or Kassy know as soon as possible.



Funding your Travel for the Regional Convention

By Elaine Almquist

Have you read the above article? The one that begs and pleads for a generous, spirited chapter to welcome the rest of us into your city and school for the next regional convention? If so, then you may be wondering why we asking you to begin preparing for the convention when the destination has yet to be secured. Well, because maneuvering through the maze of university red tape in order to pay for school-related travel takes time, even for the seasoned student traveler. Here are some suggestions from a chapter treasurer—a treasurer who learned the hard way and now wants to smooth the path for all the Sigma Tau Delta members who follow.

STEP 1: Do your research. Learn about your student government and student accounting offices' rules. Find out what expenses will be covered and which ones will not. For example, how are the per diem monies distributed? Is the full amount of airfare covered or only a portion? If your chapter is eligible to apply for an appropriation bill, is it in the chapter's best interest to use it for travel funding? To find out the answers to questions like these, read through the budget packet prepared for student organizations. Check to see if your chapter treasurer has a copy or if it's posted online. But make sure you read the rules carefully. Don't make assumptions if something is not clearly explained. Don't let ambiguity and confusion reduce the amount of funding your chapter is able to obtain through your college or university.

Quotable Quotes: Elaine's Pick

Words, I will cherish. I will cultivate them to illuminate the nights, demolish walls, and dwarf gates. I will become a magician. I will chisel words to share the dream and render the frontiers useless.

—Mernissi

After you've waded through the written rules to the best of your ability, talk to your chapter's accountant, the finance committee chair, or your student senator. If you have your questions prepared ahead of time, you'll likely find these people to be more receptive, more willing to answer questions, and more willing to volunteer extra information. Also, don't forget that that previous chapter treasurers and convention attendees have trudged through this finance obstacle course and have lived to tell about it. Asking questions now will save you time later and more important, will keep those bureaucratic induced headaches at bay.

STEP 2: Explore other sources of funding. Fundraising is a hard, often thankless job. Unfortunately, it may a necessary task for school that want to send a handful or two of students to the convention. Another possible source of funding may be student travel scholarships. Check with your student services office or student accounting office to see if any travel scholarships are available, such as the Undergraduate Conference Award Program (UCAP).

STEP 3: Plan a timeline. Securing the funding for conventions always will always take longer than you expect. There are deadlines for submitting paperwork and applications. There will also be meetings you'll have to squeeze into your schedule for things such as defending an appropriation bill or meeting with the finance committee. If you're doing fundraising, keep in mind that it's not uncommon for outside funders to stall or even cancel a project. Plan and implement your fundraising events well in advance to help ensure that travel funds are available when your chapter members need them.

STEP 4: Remember that you don't have to do this alone! Chapter treasurers and presidents may take on a bulk of the work involved, but each member attending the convention should participate in the process. It will also give you the opportunity to become better acquainted with your fellow travelers before you leave on your exciting journey to a new city.

Obtaining funding for conventions is one of those time consuming, but rewarding activities. The earlier you prepare, the less stressful it will be when convention time rolls around. Also, the more organized you are, the less likely it will be for those extra dollars to slip through the cracks and bypass your chapter's account. So learn about the funding process now, so that you and your chapter members can enjoy yourselves at the convention later.

