

Beta Xi Newsletter

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President's Message

There is so much to love about the holiday season. It is a time to reconnect with family and friends. It is a time to honor past traditions and to make new ones. It is a time to reflect on the year. As 2005 ends and 2006 begins, it is time to ask yourself, "Did I accomplish what I resolved to do last January?"

As your newly elected President of Beta Xi Chapter, I recently had the opportunity to reflect on our chapter's growth throughout the last several years. As part of my duties as President-Elect, I worked with Patricia Drake, Archivist, and Donna Mower-Wade, Past-President, to compile our chapter's Key Award submission. The Key Award is a coveted honor given every two years to Sigma Theta Tau chapters that embody the mission and vision of the Honor Society. The application process is a painstaking one which requires thorough documentation of numerous criteria related to research funding, programming, awards and scholarships, outreach, philanthropy, publicity, and much more. I am proud to say that we did indeed win the Key Award, and I am even more proud to say it is was our third consecutive win!

As part of this thriving chapter of the only Honor Society of Nursing, you have access to some of the most powerful resources in the world. Are you aware of what Sigma Theta Tau has to offer you on both a chapter and

an international level? Are you familiar with our research grants for both individuals and teams? Have you heard of the Chiron and Omada Mentoring Programs? Have you ever been to a Sigma Theta Tau convention? Are you interested in networking with other professional nurses in the area by attending our Spring Dinner Meeting? If any of these questions are ones for which you would like an answer, you could resolve to become a more active member of Beta Xi Chapter this coming year.

I look forward to serving you in the capacity of President. In early January our board hosted a retreat during which time we reviewed last year's strategic plan and then created a new one. We have realigned ourselves with the newly revised strategic plan of International Headquarters under the direction of newly elected President Carol Picard. The new strategic plan emphasizes five key areas: knowledge, leadership, service, communities, and sustainability. Following a board vote, the new strategic plan will be adopted and a copy of it will be placed on the website. Check it out and tell me what you think!

I hope to continue the long tradition of chapter excellence. I look forward to meeting or hearing from each and every one of you throughout the year. Happy New Year!

Cynthia Diefenbeck

Hope you will join us for...

DNA/Delaware Sigma Chapters Annual Research Day—see enclosed brochure

Beta Xi Chapter's Annual Spring Dinner Meeting—see enclosed brochure

Fall Induction

Beta Xi Chapter welcomed 71 new members on November 18th. The induction ceremony, lead by chapter president, Cynthia Diefenbeck, MSN, RN, CS, included warm welcomes from Betty Paulanka EdD, RN, Dean, College of Health Sciences and Lisa Plowfield, PhD, RN, Professor and Director of the School of Nursing.

Linda Laskowski Jones, RN, MS, APRN, BC, CCRN, CEN, Director: Trauma, Emergency, and Aeromedical Services at Christiana Care Health System was the guest speaker. Her powerful presentation, "Strategies for a Successful Career," inspired both Beta Xi members and inductees.

Surrounded by family and friends, 57 BSN, 6 BRN, and 6 graduate students were inducted. All have GPAs higher than 3.0 and are in the top 35% of their class. Two nursing leaders were also inducted. Carol Sirkowski, BSN, MPA, CRRN, CNA, BC, a nurse manager, Center for Rehabilitation at Wilmington Hospital, has been active in both state and national nursing organizations. Elizabeth "Libby" Thomas, BSN, a school nurse at Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, has authored book chapters on school nursing and was the recipient of a National Association of School Nurses Recognition Award.



Pictured left to right: Donna Mower-Wade (Past President), Linda Laskowski Jones (Induction speaker), and Cynthia Diefenbeck (President).

*We are excited to welcome
all of our new inductees!
We look forward to working with you!*

Honors Day Awards Application Criteria

Each year on Honors Day, Beta Xi Chapter provides several awards to undergraduate students in the School of Nursing. They include:

A scholarship of \$750.00 to be used for tuition for a graduate course in nursing.

Application criteria include:

- A cover page with identifying information
- A summary of professional goals
- A one-page essay on

The Importance of Research and Scholarship in Professional Nursing

The recipient is selected by members of the Research & Awards Committee. Applications are due March 1, 2006.

Two awards of \$250.00, one to a newly inducted accelerated degree student and one to a traditional program student.

Application criteria include:

- Students who best represent the vision and mission of the honor society and who excel by integrating scholarship, knowledge, and technology into professional nursing practice

The recipients are selected by fellow student members of Beta Xi chapter during their final nursing course.

We also provide two book awards—one to a sophomore and one to a junior level undergraduate nursing students.

Pass the information along to anyone who might be interested.

Beta Xi Reaches Out to the Community during the Holidays

On December 13, nursing students and faculty of the Beta Xi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the Nursing Honor Society from University of Delaware, acted as Santa's helpers for the 7th Annual Holiday Outreach Program. They donated their time and resources to cheer up the holidays for clients who attend the SHARE Day Program at Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services, many of which consider the staff their only family. Members of the Honor Society brought 150 holiday gift bags and greeting cards, and various gift certificates to local stores, and they took the afternoon wrapping presents and stuffing the gift bags with an array of items donated by local individuals and organizations. The presents will be given to the SHARE clients on Christmas. Shown are: (back row, l. to r.) Jessica Rigby, Allyson Short, Shelia Cushing, Pat Drake, Antoinette Cubeta, Cynthia Diefenbeck, Lauren Bieri, and Brittany Moshen, and (front row, l. to r.) Season Litterine (UBCSS staff), Katie Buker, Sheila Murphy (UBCSS staff), and Judy Herrman.



"I thought participating in the Holiday Outreach Program was a very rewarding experience. It was amazing to see how many gifts and supplies were donated for our project. I am grateful for the opportunity to help enhance the holiday season for the Upper Bay community with fellow Sigma members." Lauren Bieri

"I enjoyed lending a hand to the outreach project. Donating a few hours of my time to help those who are less fortunate makes me feel like I am making a difference!" Antoinette Cubeta

38th Biennial Convention

The 38th Biennial Convention took place in Indianapolis, Indiana November 12-16, 2005. Beta Xi sent two delegates, as required by international bylaws. In addition, several other members attended the conference. Several members presented lectures and posters at the convention.

Three Beta Xi members ran for regional or international positions. Amy Johnson, Past-President, was re-elected as Region 12 Coordinator. She has been instrumental in overseeing the functioning of over 35 chapters in three states. Evelyn Hayes, Past-President, and Cynthia Diefenbeck, President, were both elected to serve on the International Leadership Succession Committee. As members of that committee, they will help mentors members to assume positions of leadership within the organization.

Outgoing President Dan Pesut gave an inspirational message summarizing his term. He has encouraged a spirit of renewal throughout the last biennium. Incoming President Carol Picard encourages us to

begin looking outward in this next biennium. She encouraged chapters to build bridges between our members and other non-member nurses, between our members and non-nurse health professionals, and between our members and the public-at-large. We need to spread the good news about what Sigma Theta Tau is doing and can do for the profession of nursing and for the health care of the world's peoples.

A record number of first-time attendees were at the conference. Nurses in all phases of the career span were present. Opportunities for networking abounded. There were lots of opportunities for learning and for having fun.

If you haven't been to a Sigma convention, you should reconsider! There are numerous opportunities to present research findings, and if you are presenting, Beta Xi has funds available to assist with the cost of travel. Contact Carolee Polek (cpolek@udel.edu) for more information.

Spotlight on Beta Xi Member



Norine Watson

Educational background:

I started out my nursing career with an Associate's Degree from Delaware Technical and Community College. After my youngest child started school I began taking classes at the University of Delaware and eventually completed both a BSN and a MSN there.

Last year I obtained my certification in Nursing Administration.

Previous positions that you have held: I've been a staff nurse, a nurse educator, a nursing quality professional and a nursing administrator

Current position: I'm currently the Director of Nursing Excellence at duPont Hospital for Children of Nemours

What do you like the best about your advanced nursing role?

Right now the focus of my work is advancing professional nursing. Every step I take moves nursing forward or highlights something wonderful about the profession of nursing. I find this work energizing because I get to focus on the very best things about nursing.

What do you like the best about being a member of Sigma Theta Tau?

I'm very proud to be a member of Sigma Theta Tau. I believe the meetings and conferences are the best thing about being a member. Every time I attend a Sigma event I make a new connection with a professional nurse or I bring something back to my practice. The projects and presenters at the Spring research conference were just amazing.

Last January the Beta Xi chapter supported me to attend the Sigma Theta Tau International, Chiron Leadership program. This program provided me with 4 days at the Sigma headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana. During these 4 days I worked with my mentor, Elizabeth Wykpisz, RN, to draft a proposal for a Center for Nursing Excellence. Our work was then reviewed by nationally recognized nurse leaders. This experience was intense and at times intimidating, but I left there with the courage and conviction to pursue the leadership position I'm in today. I would definitely recommend this program to other Beta Xi members.

Hobbies? I'm currently the co-editor of the DNA Reporter, partnering with Maureen Seckel, RN we manage to get an edition of the Reporter out quarterly.

Family/pets? My children have both graduated from college and are "out of the nest" so to speak. Right now my husband George, our cat, Kiya and myself are enjoying the peace and quiet of our home.

Spotlight on Beta Xi Member



Millie Boettcher

Educational background:

I received my undergraduate nursing degree at Villanova University. In 1983 I graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with my MSN.

Previous positions that you have held:

I previously worked as a specialty nurse at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and as a Clinical Nurse Specialist at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles.

Current position: I'm currently an Advanced Practice Nurse, Nurse Practitioner with the A.I. duPont Hospital for Children's Division of Gastroenterology and Nutrition.

What do you like the best about your advanced nursing role?

I really enjoy seeing patients and coordinating their care. I also run a multidisciplinary specialty clinic every Monday for children with Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

Have you ever participated as an advanced nurse out in the community? In what capacity?

Not currently in Delaware, but I previously enjoyed teaching at Long Term Care facilities for children in Philadelphia. I have also enjoyed teaching school nurses.

What do you like the best about being a member of Sigma Theta Tau?

I like networking and resourcing with others in the area that are experts in their field. I think that it is important for advanced practice nurses to be recognized by this organization.

Hobbies? I work out in the gym routinely and enjoy skiing every year in Colorado.

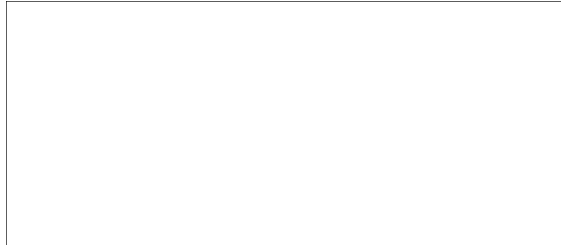
Family/pets? I have a 15 year old Cocker Spaniel named Remy.

Coming soon...

- Be on the lookout for member spotlights in each newsletter!
- We are in the process of overhauling our website. We hope to unveil it by summer.
- Our new Leadership Intern is developing an email user list so we can get information to you more quickly and efficiently. If your email is not on file with International, we may be contacting you.

A Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International

University of Delaware
College of Health and Nursing Sciences
Newark, DE 19716-3710



Sigma Theta Tau International

Calendar of Events

February 21, 2006 @ 5:30-7:30
Board Meeting; McDowell Hall

March 3, 2006
Research Day Conference
*See brochure included
with this newsletter

March 21, 2006 @ 5:30—7:30
General Meeting
Board meeting to follow

April 24, 2006
Spring Dinner Meeting
*See brochure included
with this newsletter

May 31, 2006
Officer Transition Meeting at
Amy Johnson's

July 20 –22, 2006
17th International Nursing Research
Congress in Montreal

Get Involved!!

*Looking for the opportunity to take
your career to the next level?
Desiring a chance to develop
your leadership potential?
Searching for a group of peers
with which to network and recharge?*

Consider volunteering for a position in the Beta Xi Chapter.
We are presenting calling for nominations to the ballot.
The following positions are available:

President –Elect
Secretary
Counselor
Leadership Succession (2 positions)
Governance Committee

We are also searching for additional appointed positions on the
Outreach and Publicity Committees.

*Not sure what the commitment would entail?
Contact a Leadership Succession Committee
member for details.*