



SIGMA ZETA

August 29, 2011

Dear Sigma Zeta Friends:

The National Officers hope your academic year is off to an exciting beginning and that you had a good summer with time to take on some of those projects that are impossible to manage during the fall and spring semesters. We especially hope you had time for some rest and relaxation with family and friends. I personally got in so much of the latter, after an unbelievably busy year, that I failed to keep the chapters updated on **a major exciting new initiative that was approved by the National Chapter** (the Executive Council = National Officers plus all the members attending the National Convention) by a vote on March 26, 2011 at the Convention here in San Antonio.

Before describing this new initiative, I want to briefly comment on the outstanding year enjoyed by our organization. I will send out the final details in the normal September mailing from the National Office with information about our November 2011 Officers/Advisors meeting, but I want to share that **Sigma Zeta inducted almost 800 new members in 2010-2011, up from around 550 each of the past two years.** In addition, **we welcomed four new schools to our organization in spring 2011, approved the charter application from another university to be installed this fall and recently received yet another charter application, which will be voted on for approval by the National Officers.** Please see more information about our four new chapters on our updated webpage and join me in thanking Bob Kistler, our Webmaster, for continuing the outstanding work he does to ensure that our webpage not only provides us with easy access to valuable information, but also provides a great first impression to visitors learning about Sigma Zeta from a web search.

The new initiative, born from discussions at the November 2010 Officers/Advisors meeting, matches beautifully with the stated purpose of Sigma Zeta in our Constitution "1) to encourage and foster and 2) to recognize and honor scholarly achievement in the natural sciences, computer sciences and mathematics". The National Chapter voted:

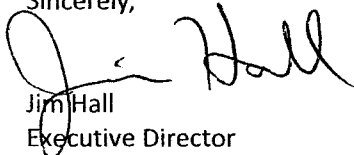
- **To begin awarding grants for student research beginning this 2011-2012 academic year**
- That up to \$2500 be made available during 2011-2012 for these research awards
- That the awards each range from \$250 to \$500
- That in future years the total amount to be awarded and size of the individual awards be based on the number of new memberships received the previous fiscal year
- That a simple research proposal from current student members should include a one-page maximum narrative, a budget, a timeline plus a letter of support from the research mentor
- That this year proposals must be submitted to the National Office by October 15 to be voted on by the National Officers and advisors attending the November 2011 Officers/Advisors meeting, with up to three at-large advisors to ensure that there is an appropriate representation of all disciplines.
- **Please note that more details of the grant submission process, the criteria for selecting the awardees and the timing of the awards will follow soon from the National Officers.**

To help fund these student research awards, the National Chapter also voted to increase the Sigma Zeta membership fee from \$25 to \$35. This increase goes into effect for all new inductees submitted after June 30, 2011 (note: I have received no new membership submissions yet since this change went into effect). Much of this increased revenue will go towards the research awards, but some will go towards funding increases in travel costs by attendees of the National Convention and November Officers/Advisors meetings.

A National Science and Mathematics Honor Society

I sincerely apologize for my tardiness in passing on this important information to all of the chapters who were unable to attend the March 2011 Convention. I confess to some feeling of burnout after serving concurrently as a department chair on our campus with no course release time (a position from which I have stepped down after serving for 25 consecutive years) and as the Sigma Zeta National Director during an extremely busy spring when our chapter hosted the National Convention, I traveled to four campuses to help with new chapter installation ceremonies, and I helped my student assistant process a record number of new member applications and jewelry orders. I am pleased to say that after my extended summer break, during which I did my best not to answer much e-mail, I feel much refreshed and ready to serve Sigma Zeta without the distraction of department chair duties. Again, you will be receiving more information in the regular September mailing from the National Office, but I also welcome questions, as always.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Hall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" and last name "Hall" clearly distinguishable.

Jim Hall

Executive Director

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