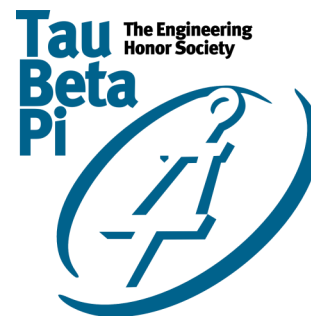


Alumni Notes



Volume 6, Issue 1

03/25/2015

MI-Gamma

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A Letter From the Editor

As we finally entered spring this past weekend, I hope you all have survived the winter! The first half of the Winter 2015 semester has been excellent for us in Michigan Gamma. As a chapter we have accomplished an incredible amount of service, outreach, professional development, and social events. We began the semester by hosting Book Swap, continue with our weekly Tuesday Breakfast Parties (handing out free bagels and coffee on North Campus), have been involved in a number of K-12 outreach events, have networked with multiple companies, and have held a variety of social events from TGs at Buffalo Wild Wings to IM Wallyball.

Our new officer corps has done a wonderful job of planning events, working together, and getting our new electees involved! We are excited to continue working and finish out what has been a great semester up until this point.

Michelle Kleinau, Historian

Alumni Spotlight: Mud, Sweat, and Gears

On an unusual (for us Michiganders) hot windy summer day, as we were stripping down a 1988 7.3 L diesel Ford F-350 dually, we asked ourselves how we ended up on the sets of Django Unchained. Actually, we were shooting for BBC's new automotive show: America's Mud, Sweat, and Gears!

It started with an innocent Skype audition. We remember back in February 2014, during one of the most extreme snow seasons in Michigan, we were racing back from work to have the Skype interview. One of the questions that stuck with us was when the interviewer asked about our opinion of Top Gear UK. Our joking answers were, "Top Gear UK is our Bible," and "We might forget our girlfriend's name, but we do not forget to watch new episodes of Top Gear." We feel the interviewer saw that we were smart, huge gear heads, and were game for challenging new endeavors. After months of waiting we were finally given conformation that we were selected to be in a Mud, Sweat, and Gears episode and would be going to Hollywood!

At the time, both of us were working as engineers at world renowned engineering companies, Roush and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. We informed our employers about this incredible opportunity; they were fully on board and very excited for us! We landed in Los Angeles in the first week of May. We were picked up from the airport and introduced to our opponents, PJ Burchett and Brett Melancon, from Knoxville, TN (they were as big of, if not bigger, motor junkies as us). The southern boys started with some friendly jibes, which made us realize it was going to be one hell of a time. Later that evening we were introduced to our team captains, Tom 'Wookie' Ford and Jonny Smith, and also given a rough idea about our mission. We were advised to have a calm night and get ready for next day. But of course, "boys will be boys," and we decided to spend the night out in a Jaguar F-Type Convertible, visiting Beverly Hills and Hollywood!

With little sleep, we started the next day in Simi Valley. Wookie introduced us to our new mate the 1988 Ford F-350 dually. We were tasked to make the ultimate truck of war! After breaking in the truck with a few donuts in the valley, we noted that this truck had potential but her transmission had shifting issues. Since we only had 24 hours to transform the vehicle, we disregarded her shortcomings and focused on creating a plan of action. We needed weapons, armor, and an aggressive styling. We started with our trusty plasma cutters and hammers and immediately took her on a Weight Watcher's diet.

To weaponize her we added armor and an isolated chamber with a short reach 120-degree pneumatic gun, which was attached to the rear of the truck in place of the truck bed. We also attached a high-power long reach gunpowder cannon to the hood. We then added rugged off-road tires, welded steel armor around the truck to make it impenetrable, ensured safety by adding a steel mesh on the windshield, mounted a bulletproof fuel cell on the bed so there were negligible chances of fuel leaks, and finally, added safety harnesses and racing seats for the drivers and passengers. Cutting it very close to the 24 hour time limit, we were determined to finish our objectives - even with Mother Nature against us!

The following day we were eager to see Team Jonny's vehicle and the challenges! We were stunned to see that our opponent's truck of war was a modified ice cream truck! Strategically, they were well armored but low on power and maneuverability. In our minds power was the key to this competition, which they lacked. They of course argued that defense was more important than offense. One of us was right; we were ready to find out who that would be.



Above: Abhinav and Sujeesh's truck of war is prepared for battle!
Photographs by Michael Klein, © 2014 BBC America Ltd.

Right: Sujeesh Kurup and Abhinav Jain (TBP MI-Gamma), both recent UM alumni, were cast in an episode of a new BBC show: America's Mud, Sweat, and Gears this summer.



The challenges started with a long range weapon shoot out with our high-power gunpowder cannons. The second challenge tested our maneuverability skills, short range weapon accuracy, and vehicle durability. Finally, the third challenge was an iconic demolition derby. Our truck of war was heavily bruised from the previous challenges, but we had to perform. After the challenges there was a clear winner! The winning team celebrated in true Mud, Sweat and Gears fashion by annihilating the opponent's vehicle with grenades! To witness our incredible adventure and find out who won, you can watch the episode which aired on February 16 at 10PM EST on BBC America!

Abhinav Jain, MI-Gamma Alumnus

Book Swap

We kicked off this semester with the traditional Tau Beta Pi Book Swap. We received over 300 books and had hundreds of students participate in buying and selling their used textbooks. The Book Swap is much appreciated by students in the College of Engineering, as it provides an easy way for students to sell their used books and buy books they need for the upcoming semester, often at a lower price than the book store. This boosts the positive image of Tau Beta Pi across the community, and often introduces TBP to students who had never heard of the organization. Not only was the Book Swap beneficial for buyers and sellers, but it also provided an opportunity for Tau Beta Pi members, old and new, to get to know each other while providing a great service to our peers.

Sara Rusignuolo, Service Coordinator

The Engineering Games: Fighting Crime in Stamps

On a Tuesday.... (but actually Saturday)

"Who needs superpowers when you're an engineer?!"

ANN ARBOR, Jan 24 - TBP superheroes Leo Devota and Stephanie Miller fight crime in SWE's (Society of Women Engineers) latest installment of the Engineering Games.

In a survival of the fittest format, analogous to the popular book and movie series "The Hunger Games," the competition between North Campus student organizations was fierce. Many teams entered but only one could walk away victorious.

TBP competed valiantly, pulling out all the stops. Pairing Leo's impeccable drum skills with Stephanie's angelic voice, their rendition of "Por Ti Volare" from Step Brothers was truly moving. Crowd members went wild during the performance, with one screaming "You rock that drum set Leo!!!"

Advancing to the final rounds, the TBP team showcased their cleverness in a series of riddles. With Leo's superhuman whiteboard skills and Stephanie's seemingly endless supply of puns, the team was on a roll. However, the opponents were formidable, and victory was stolen right from under the Tau Bates. They finished strong in a respectable second place.

The Engineering Games was a fundraiser for the Detroit Area Pre College Engineering Program (DAPCEP) which is a nonprofit organization that provides historically underrepresented youth with innovative educational programs in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine. TBP was able to sell the most tickets out of any student team, raising \$300. The event raised over \$2,000 for DAPCEP.

Although the superheroes Leo and Stephanie did not take home the trophy, they raised a considerable amount of money for DAPCEP. When asked to comment on the event Stephanie said, "My only hope is that next year two more incredible Tau Bates will take the arena and claim victory for the esteemed organization."



Leo Devota and Stephanie Miller, pictured above, represented TBP in SWE's competition, The Engineering Games.

Stephanie Miller, Treasurer & Leo Devota, Secretary

TBPie Day

To most people, “Pi” sounds like a fantastic dessert. To us engineers, it is a magical number that can turn any solution into a horrible decimal nobody wants deal with. Why this number has a special holiday is beyond me. We in TBP celebrate this holiday because we are Tau Beta **Pi**. This year’s Pi-day was particularly special because Pi to nine decimal places is 3.141592653. On Saturday, March 14th, 2015 at 9:26:53 AM, the date and time could be written as 3/14/15 9:26:53, or slightly altered, 3.141592653. This is the most decimal places we will have until the year 2115. Hopefully you celebrated this “ultimate” Pi-Second by doing something special, because you might not get another chance to celebrate it in your lifetime!

TBP celebrated Pi-Day by running an event for the college. Unfortunately, Pi-Day was on a Saturday so we settled for the day before, Friday the 13th (foreboding). We ordered pies from *Achatz Handmade Pie Co.* and gave pieces to unsuspecting engineers on North Campus. Fun Fact: according to one of the workers at Achatz, the three biggest days of the year for them are Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Pi-Day. Since Pi-Day is not a major holiday to most people, it is not surprising that the majority of people didn’t know Pi-Day was the next day, so we had the privilege to enlighten them on the occurrence of Ultimate Pi-Day. Most of the people were engineers, so their inner math geeks were very excited; although many admitted that they would not be up at 9:26 in the morning to celebrate. With Pi-Day finished, my only regret is that I didn’t get to eat some Pumpkin Pie - my favorite kind.

Michael MacFarlane, Vice President

K-12 Outreach Expands

Michigan Gamma is proud to support STEM education endeavors in the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti areas. The largest K-12 outreach endeavor this semester is MindSET. On three Saturday mornings, fourth and fifth grade students from local public schools have the opportunity to attend math and science modules. We encourage teamwork and hands on learning by building popsicle stick bridges, water bottle rockets, and exploring water filtration. This semester over fifty students will be attending.

We are also partnering with other student organizations to contribute to a number of other outreach



K-12 Outreach Officers Rachel Neumann and Eric Colomb work with elementary school students to build a popsicle stick bridge at a MindSET event.

events. On March 22nd, over 100 first through sixth graders visited Michigan’s campus during Elementary Engineering Education Day. We conducted an experiment and shared our enthusiasm with the future generation of young engineers. I was excited to plan the event, because I became interested in engineering after attending an engineering outreach event at a different university during my junior year of high school, so it was great to have the possibility to be that influence on younger students. Additionally, MI-Gamma has been supporting science fair competitions. We sent volunteers to Estabrook Elementary School in Ypsilanti to help them prepare experiments for the competition with a focus on applying the scientific method. We also sent judges to the Southeast Michigan Science Fair on March 13th.

Rachel Neumann, K-12 Outreach Officer