



The Tau Beta Pi Outstanding Advisor has been recognized every year since 1994. Selection is made by a national committee of deans of engineering colleges.

2012 OUTSTANDING ADVISOR

Dr. Abigail M. Richards

iN RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO her chapter and the Association, **Dr. Abigail (Abbie) M. Richards**, *Washington Beta '99*, is named the 2012 Tau Beta Pi Outstanding Advisor.

An assistant professor and biological engineering program coordinator at Montana State University, she is Chief Advisor to the Montana Alpha Chapter.

Dr. Richards was cited in her nomination for her dedication to improving her chapter, recruiting qualified students, encouraging involvement with the Association on a national level, and mentoring students interested in the pursuit of learning and service to the engineering profession.

Dr. Richards received her bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees from Washington State University (WSU).

She joined the engineering department at Montana State University (MSU) in 2007. Previously, she was part of the Idaho National Laboratory biotechnologies department, a graduate researcher at the Universidad de Sevilla (Seville, Spain), and an NSF-IGERT Fellow at WSU. Her research focuses on the isolation and characterization of iron-chelating molecules called siderophores.

Leadership Transition

She has been Chief Advisor since 2008. After facing uncertain times with the transition of new leadership, Dr. Richards has instilled stability, confidence, and excitement in the chapter officers. After her second year as Chief Advisor, the MT Alpha chapter received the 2009-10 R.H. Nagel Most Improved Chapter Award.

In the fall 2011 semester, nearly 70 new members were initiated and another forty joined in the spring 2012 semester. In addition to supporting the growth of membership, Dr. Richards helped identify and work with



the chapter to elect two additional faculty advisors for the chapter.

Dr. Richards strongly supports the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Futures program. Each semester, the chapter hosts two sessions, which Dr. Richards attends. Her encouragement of student members to apply for TBP fellowships and scholarships has resulted in four recent award recipients.

In the upcoming fall semester, the MT Alpha chapter plans to host its first ever social event, a barbecue and series of engineering challenges with the goal of raising awareness of the organization on campus in a fun and competitive setting.

"Above and Beyond"

Frequently demonstrating her excellent character and selflessness, she helped several Tau Beta Pi initiates with the fees needed to join the As-

sociation.

The chapter's nomination stated: "Dr. Richards deserves the outstanding advisor award because she goes above and beyond in every facet of her life. In addition to inspiring students to attain high academic standards, she has spent endless hours coordinating with the college of engineering to establish the importance of our engineering society.

"She has maintained this significant interface, and Tau Beta Pi has become an extension of the college itself. She has done an excellent job fostering leadership and filling an advisory team that is likewise supportive of the Association and its mission."

In recognition of her efforts to improve the image of the student chapter and the Association, numerous contributions as a mentor and leader, and talent for motivating students and promoting excellence in engineering, Tau Beta Pi hereby recognizes Abigail (Abbie) M. Richards as the 2012 Tau Beta Pi Outstanding Advisor.