

KEY VISIONS



NOVEMBER 2006

To a few close friends of Phi Theta Kappa

ROD A. RISLEY

Dear Friends,

We are ending what has been one of the most significant years in Phi Theta Kappa's history. In 2006 we reached out to embrace new cultures by chartering chapters in such faraway areas as the British Virgin Islands, the Pacific republics of Palau, the Marshall Islands, and Micronesia, and, most recently, the United Arab Emirates.



I have recently returned from the Emirate of Fujairah, where I chartered Phi Theta Kappa's first chapter in the Middle East, at Fujairah Men's and Women's Colleges. My kind hosts also arranged for me to meet with students and administrators at eight colleges located in the Emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, along with the Emirates' key governmental and education leaders. To say I entered a whole new world would be an understatement. But this visit showed me once again what a unifying force Phi Theta Kappa can be. Within the United States, we have seen Phi Theta Kappa bring together all students, despite disparities of age, ethnic background, economic standing and locales.

Even in the United States, our member demographics are changing. Within the next 10 years, we will see community college students become younger and even more ethnically diverse, with the number of Hispanic students especially increasing. Nursing and Education have become the leading fields of study for our members, replacing computer and technology fields.

Phi Theta Kappa remains committed to meeting the academic and career needs of students in associate-degree programs. We are moving ahead on our ambitious program that will allow all community college students immediate access to transfer information. We will eventually expand this initiative to include career resources. Now we are truly moving into the global realm of higher education, where we will face even greater challenges to provide benefits and programs that are valued by all students.

Join me in a look back at some of the things we accomplished, with your help, in 2006.

Faculty Development

Currently more than 2,000 community college faculty and staff, many of them Phi Theta Kappa chapter advisors, have been certified to teach the Society's Leadership Development Studies course. A number of those currently teaching the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Studies course gathered for the biennial Leading Edge Conference, which focused on "building social capital."



Very soon we will announce the selection of 24 Faculty Scholars, drawn from the ranks of Phi Theta Kappa chapter advisors, who will participate in a special conference on the Honors Study Topic, to prepare them to serve as Honors Institute Seminar Leaders, and to lead and initiate honors programming on their own campuses.

In 2006 we awarded Mosal Scholarships of \$5,000 each to three chapter advisors, to fund projects for personal professional development.

And, four chapter advisors received scholarships of \$250 each through our partnership with Who's Who Among America's Teachers.

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Scholarship Opportunities

Phi Theta Kappa continues to assist members to further their education, through the Guistwhite Scholars and Leaders of Promise programs. The Guistwhite Scholars Program awards 20 members stipends of \$5,000 each toward completion of baccalaureate studies. The Leaders of Promise Program selects 30 members to receive \$1,000 scholarships to help fund associate degree studies.



We encourage four-year colleges and universities to develop transfer scholarships. Currently more than 600 institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Great Britain offer more than \$36 million in transfer scholarships to Phi Theta Kappa members. In addition, each year Phi Theta Kappa administers and awards up to \$600,000 to students, through the All-USA Academic Team for Community College students and the New Century Scholars Program.

Our collaboration with the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation has been particularly successful - the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation has increased the number of scholarships they will offer in 2007 from 35 to 50. We are proud to note that 33 of the 35 recipients in 2006 - or 94 percent - were Phi Theta Kappa members. Well over half of the 2006 Coca-Cola Scholarship recipients were also Phi Theta Kappa members.

Additional stipends for members are available through the National Dean's List, which awards 50 scholarships of \$250 annually. USA TODAY funds the annual Honors Case Study Challenge, which includes prizes of \$500 each for two members and two chapters.

Other scholarships funded by Phi Theta Kappa include:

- Approximately \$90,000 for members and chapter advisors to attend the International Honors Institute.
- \$2,000 scholarships for each of the five International Officers.
- \$1,000 Citation Scholarship for the Best Overall *Nota Bene* submission. Four runners-up receive \$500 Reynolds Scholarships.
- Approximately \$70,000, disbursed to chapters and regions through the Pinnacle Scholarship Award Program.
- A \$500 scholarship, offered each month to a randomly selected member who has enrolled in the Get Connected network.

Student Development

Our focus on student development remains unchanged. Our army of scholars is meeting the environmental challenge as enthusiastically as we predicted. When challenged by the International Officers to plant 500 trees by the 2007 Convention, our chapters responded overwhelmingly by exceeding the goal in the first two months - now they are committed to meeting a new goal, 2007 trees by the 2007 Convention.

Through our many civic engagement endeavors, our members and chapters are tackling such weighty issues as voter education, hunger and illiteracy, and the fight against cancer. We are the only academic honorary association that recognizes the scholar's responsibility to serve the general good.

As 2006 comes to a close, I must say we have reached higher than I ever thought possible and embraced new cultures that I learned share Phi Theta Kappa's desire to provide scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship opportunities. This move toward a global community means we must continue to assist members to further their education and engage in civic responsibility; and support faculty to become great leaders who can impart their leadership skills to others.

I am pleased to invite you to extend your support and nurture one of these programs. A contribution will benefit not only the lives of Phi Theta Kappa members and advisors, but the lives they touch as well. Phi Theta Kappa members are destined to be better students with bright futures and promising careers. These programs deserve to continue and grow. I hope you will help maintain and expand these opportunities with a gift to Phi Theta Kappa.

Sincerely,



Rod Risley

