

History of Omicron Tau

The Beginning

Since ten of twelve faculty members had been previously inducted into Sigma Theta Tau, the development of an honor society in nursing at Minot State University had long been a concern of the faculty. The College of Nursing, established in 1969, had a small nucleus of graduates, when inquiries were made in 1981 and 1989. In December 1994, Dean Fabricius organized a Professional Activity Forum and surveyed the participants about an honor society. Eighty four percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "steps should be taken to implement a nursing honor society at MSU." With the gathering of a larger nucleus for scholarship, the establishment of an honor society has generated a lot of enthusiasm among the students, alumni, and community leaders in the Minot area and throughout the region where many of the graduates live and practice nursing.



Organization

The first meeting of the steering committee took place on March 23, 1995. Written approval for an honor society in nursing was obtained from Dr. Erik Shaar, President of MSU, and from Dr. Val Fabricius, Dean of the CON. The three students on the Steering Committee were Alisha Ashley, Susan Porterfield, Bradley Stork, Community leaders were Dr. Jill Fuller and Diane Frieberg, alumnus, and Shireen Hoff, Faculty volunteers were Judy Swanson, Linda Haider, and Dr. Marita Hoffart. Dr. Hoffart chaired the Steering Committee and served as the first president of the honor society. Diane Frieberg was elected chair of the Bylaws Committee. Linda Haider served as secretary and Brad Stork as treasurer.

Using the Sigma Theta Tau International guidelines, the Committee set goals and planned activities. Activities completed during the first months included the development of a calendar toward chartering, meeting with nursing leaders at local hospitals to publicize the intent to establish a chapter, establishing short and long term goals, holding a contest to name the honor society and determining the eligibility of alumni, senior students, and community leaders.

Concluding Remarks

In recognition of her foresight and professional work, the Honor Society was named in honor of the first director, Sister Mabel Meng who was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau while a student at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., where she received her master's degree in nursing. Also, many thanks to Dean Fabricius for her perseverance and for the nurses of the area who so generously have supported the formation of an honor society and look forward with eagerness to being members of Sigma Theta Tau.