Why I Belong:
By Marita Hoffart, PhD, RN

When the opportunity was available to be involved in the development of a Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, I immediately offered to serve. I felt that I had the connections and the ability to engineer the process as presented by the Society. With local support the process was almost effortless. Membership with the Honor Society gave me a “home” within the nursing profession. I belonged to something larger than myself which would support me in my professional development.

Membership in the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing through the local chapter is important to me for many reasons. First, membership connects me with the global community of nurse scholars. Second, it gives me a platform for presenting scholarly work. Third, it provides an opportunity to support and encourage others through volunteer work. Fourth, it offers an opportunity to run for local, regional or international office. If I were a beginning nurse member, I would have an opportunity to plan my career through membership benefits. The online publication, Nursing Reflections and print publication, Journal of Nursing Scholarship are part of the membership benefits.

Examples of my volunteer involvement include reviewing abstracts for research conferences, serving as tellers for elections in the House of Delegates, staffing the information booth at the convention, and serving as moderator for the hundreds of breakout sessions at the convention. I have served as an officer and board member for the local chapter, presented research for conferences, assisted in planning conferences, and made many friends through the years of involvement. I didn’t fully appreciate membership in the Society until I got involvement in the chapter development here at Minot State University. Now, the society has a profile of my interests and calls on me when my skills are needed. For anyone who wants to learn chapter leadership skills, the Society offers a Leadership Academy every other year. Involvement in the local Chapter’s activities is the place to begin.

Keep us up to date on you!
To change and check your contact information (mailing address, e-mail address, etc.) go to www.nursingsociety.org, click on the membership link, click on my membership, and then contact information so you can receive valuable information from both STTI and Omicron Tau!

Omicron Tau web site address:
http://www.minotstateu.edu/omicrontau/
Newly Appointed Board Members

Resignations were received from Janet Maxson, Governance Committee and Teresa Seright, Treasurer. We want to thank these two individuals for their years of service on the board and participation in Omicron Tau Chapter events. At the board of directors meeting held on Sept. 5, 2007, Linda Pettersen was appointed Treasurer; Linda Schaefer was appointed Faculty Counselor to replace Linda Pettersen. We want to thank these two members for agreeing to serve in these board member positions.

Appointment of Delegates to National Convention

Teresa Seright and Deborah Johnson were appointed as delegates to attend the STTI Honor Society of Nursing biennial convention on November 3-7, 2007 in Baltimore, Md. Rhoda Owens has been appointed to replace Teresa Seright as a delegate to attend the convention. Several bylaw changes will be voted on at this convention.

Updated STTI Honor Society of Nursing Web Site

Take some time to check out the new updated STTI web site at http://www.nursingsociety.org. The web site is much more “user friendly” than before with a new look and a lot of valuable information!

Omicron Tau Web Site

Take some time to check out the updated web site: http://www.minotstateu.edu/omicrontau/

Future announcements, past board meeting minutes, committees, board member contact information, and other chapter information will be published on this web site. The goal is to use this web site to keep our members better informed of chapter events. So, add it to your “favorites”, check it out, and visit it regularly!

Committee Members Needed:

Do you want to become more active in Omicron Tau Chapter events while meeting other members? Why not become a member of one of our several committees? Contact Deborah Johnson, President at 852-3550 for more information and to become involved!

Member involvement on the Omicron Tau Chapter committees is very important to fulfill the vision of the organization.

The Community Outreach Committee is looking for members interested in participating in a community education project. The project would involve working in teams to present programs on medication awareness and responsibility to church and senior citizen groups, women’s groups, at community functions, etc. For more information or to sign up for this community project call Deb Wibe, the Chairperson at 857-2562 or 720-3084, or contact Deb by e-mail at debra.wibe@trinityhealth.org.

The Financial Committee is looking for two members interested in participating on this new committee. The purpose of this committee is to advise the Chapter’s Board of Directors on financial matters and has the responsibility for budgeting and monitoring financial affairs. This committee works with the Chapter’s treasurer. Interested members should contact Linda Pettersen, Treasurer, at 858-3252 or by e-mail at linda.pettersen@minotstateu.edu
Formation of Minot State University’s Omicron Tau Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing:

By Marita Hoffart, PhD, RN

The Minot State University Nursing Faculty have always valued and recognized scholarship; developing a chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing provided a way to support that value. An Honor Society Chapter provides the faculty an opportunity to model scholarship for students and to provide an opportunity to be involved. Nurses in practice have an opportunity to network around scholarship through an honor society chapter. Most of the faculty members in the Department of Nursing at Minot State University were inducted as graduate students into Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society of Nursing. Periodically, faculty discussion focused on the development of an honor society. A survey taken during a fall 1994 nursing research conference showed support for such a group.

A Steering Committee met in March 1995, composed of students Alisha Ashley, Susan Porterfield and Bradley Stork; community leaders Dr Jill Fuller and Diane Freiberg, alumnus, and Shireen Hoff; and faculty members Judy Swanson, Linda Haider and Dr Marita Hoffart. Dr. Hoffart chaired the group and served as the first president. A contest was held to name the Chapter. Unanimous support was given to the name of "The Mabel Meng" Honor Society. Within 19 months, 149 members were inducted. Meeting the other requirements enabled the group to have a consultation visit from Sigma Theta Tau International in spring of 1997. Many nurses from the community came in support of the chapter development. Dr. Val Fabricius and in-coming President Diane Freiberg presented the petition for chartering at the 1997 Biennial Convention House of Delegates meeting in Indianapolis. With their approval, plans were made for a chartering ceremony in April 1998. Dr. Mary Wakefield presided at the chartering, gave the chapter the name, Omicron Tau; and inducted the 149 members plus the new inductees for 1998. The chapter has a commitment to induct about 15 new members each year.

The year 2008 marks the 10 year anniversary of the formation of the Omicron Tau Chapter. Among the proposed plans for celebrating the 10th anniversary:

- The Chapter’s delegates will be recognized at the biennial convention in Baltimore, November 2007.
- The annual meeting in February 2008 will focus on making the most of membership.
- The new member induction ceremony will be on May 1, 2008 and Dr. Mary Wakefield will be the guest speaker.
- A reunion of the MSU Department of Nursing past graduates in early August, 2008. The Department of Nursing has 35 years of graduates with the May 2008 ceremonies. A celebration is in order. Celebration of nurses’ accomplishments is the hallmark of the STTI International Honor Society of Nursing. A conference on “recognizing and developing one’s gifts” will be held in conjunction with the reunion.

Members are invited to submit in writing from their vast array of inspirational, entertaining, or informational experiences which can be gathered into an anniversary book. Please send examples in writing to marita.hoffart@minotstateu.edu

Watch for further details on all these events in future newsletters, mailings, and the Omicron Tau Chapter website.
Congratulations to Teresa Seright who has published an article titled, “What feels good must be good? Implications of grade inflation in nursing education”, in the STTI Honor Society of Nursing September 2007 issue of Reflections on Nursing Leadership.

If you have any achievements to share with our chapter, please submit them to our chapter’s web site at http://www.minotstateu.edu/omicrontau/ so we may include them in future newsletters. Simply click on Board Members, Rhoda Owens, secretary and newsletter editor, to inform us of these events. You may directly e-mail them to owensfam@min.midco.net