

Sigma Tau Delta Eastern Region

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SIGMA TAU DELTA
INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH HONOR SOCIETY

Meet the New 09-10 SR **christopher Wike, Eastern SR**



Hello Eastern Region from the beautiful state of Pennsylvania! Spring is now in full swing here in the East, and university classes are quickly drawing to a close. As we approach the time of finals and commencement ceremonies, I would like to wish everyone the very best of luck!

I am writing this article to you from Clarion University, one of Pennsylvania's fourteen state universities, located in the little western Pennsylvania town of Clarion, known only for its annual Autumn Leaf Festival and its exit on Interstate 80. I will be graduating and leaving my beloved Clarion at the end of this semester, though, with a BA in English (general literature concentration). In the fall, I

have the wonderful opportunity to begin my master's degree at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, and I am very excited to embark on a new chapter in my English education: graduate school!

As your new Student Representative, I am honored to have the opportunity to represent the 200+ chapters of the Eastern Region for the next year. I want the East to know that I am here to be your voice and advocate both within our region and on the national level to the Sigma Tau Delta Board of Directors. As the year progresses, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or ideas that you have in regards to our region and what you would like to see happening in this amazing organization. My contact information can be found on the final page of this newsletter. I look forward to hearing from you, my fellow lovers of English language and literature, and the great ideas you have for Sigma Tau Delta!

I hope that you enjoy the articles that we have chosen for our spring 2009 newsletter. In this edition, we have our annual note

from our Eastern Region Regent, Dr. Dangelantonio, and a farewell letter from our former ASR, Brittany Blake. Several chapters have submitted chapter spotlight articles to share with us what they have been up to in the last year, and we have a fun 2009 Minneapolis Convention reflection by Scott Rodgers. As you read, you will also see information about submitting to the East's literary journal, *Mind Murals*. Brittany and Katherine put a lot of work into the journal over the past year, and now their effort is coming to fruition with the first edition of *Mind Murals* due very soon. Take advantage of this chance to get your work published in the next edition! There are several other great articles for you to take a look at, and I hope you enjoy them.

I will leave you with the words of Elizabeth Drew: "The test of literature is, I suppose, whether we ourselves live more intensely for the reading of it."

Happy reading! --Chris



**Best of luck to
Katherine St. Martin,
08-09
Student
Representative**

Wanted: Literary Journal Submissions!

Submissions for *Mind Murals*, the Eastern Region's Literary Journal! We're looking for creative and scholarly pieces, poetry, memoirs...you name it! All submissions must be in by September 30, 2009 and need to have students' contact information (chapter and school info, as well as both snail mail and e-mail). Submissions should be no longer than 1000 words, double spaced, and sent to: easternlitjournal@gmail.com
We'll keep you updated on the details as they become available.

~Chris and Sarah, Eastern SR and ASR~

Saying Goodbye to the 2008-2009 ASR

Brittany A. Blake, 08-09 Eastern ASR

Goodbye to You

It doesn't seem that long ago that I stood in front of you all in Louisville, KY, going numbly and blindly through my first ever speech.

Since you all chose me as your 08-09 ASR I've gotten the opportunity to do so much.

Mind Murals, which has been a dream of mine for a long while, is a couple weeks away from being in hard copy form. To those of you who submitted, a huge thank you. It looks fantastic! Fourteen Eastern Region

chapters have work

represented in *Mind Murals*. I

feel like a proud mama.

Being ASR also taught me

other important things

like how to put together a

newsletter, how to talk to

strangers about wearing

name tags, how to give a

presentation at the leadership

portion of the Student

Leadership Workshop...just to

name a few things.

But most importantly, getting

elected as ASR gave me the

courage to run for president

of my local chapter at

Westfield State College.

Those two positions

combined, I don't think that I could have had a more rewarding senior year.

I just want to thank you all again for electing me last year. I had a wonderful time,

and you all helped Katie and me achieve some wonderful things. My best wishes go

out to Chris and Sarah. And my advice: Enjoy every

moment of it. A year is no time at all.

Thanks again folks and hopefully I'll see you in St. Louis!

Brit A. Blake



**We wish a fond
farewell to
Brittany A. Blake,
08-09
Associate Student
Representative**

A Note from our Regent

Dr. Sarah Dangelantonio, Eastern Region Regent



“Spring has sprung” here in New Hampshire; the ice is off the lake and the phoebes have come back to nest under my back porch -- it’s a sure sign that the seasons have changed. The last time I wrote we were in the midst of winter’s gray skies and leafless trees, anticipating the Minneapolis convention, making plans, raising funds, finalizing details. Now that the spring term is coming to a close, I’m sure your chapter is inducting new members, installing new officers, and making plans for next year’s activities. I’d like to encourage you to think of as many ways as possible that you can encourage reading and writing on your campus in the upcoming year. Here are just a few of the possibilities to consider:

- The American Library Association sponsors Banned Books Week during the last week of September, September 26-October 3, 2009; for details check out <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.cfm>
- October 8, 2009, is Jumpstart’s Read for the Record event supporting early childhood literacy. Last year’s read was the beloved children’s classic *Corduroy*– sign up to find out what this year’s classic read will be at <http://www.readfortherecord.org/site/PageServer> and pledge to participate in the event!
- You can also check out the new National Gallery of Writing at <http://www.galleryofwriting.org/> and learn about the National Day on Writing scheduled for October 29, 2009, at <http://www.ncte.org/action/dayonwriting/actionresources>
- In 2010, your chapter can support the African-American Read In event, scheduled for the first Sunday and following Monday of February 7th and 8th.

With a little bit of pre-planning and the participation of your chapter members, you can encourage your campus to read more and be more! I encourage each chapter to sponsor one event that promotes reading or writing and then to let me know what you’re doing by sending me an email at dangelst@franklinpierce.edu. I’d like to write in the fall newsletter about the wonderful events that are planned for the upcoming year. Share your great ideas with the rest of the Eastern Region.

Don’t forget to begin putting together your applications for the various chapter and individual awards for next year -- we’ll be having a new award for Chapter and Individual Blogs and we’re making a special call for Chapter and Individual Websites (if you need a means for designing your site you have to check out www.weebly.com, a fabulous free website builder!)

**There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more.**

**-George Gordon, Lord Byron
From “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage”**



Reflections: Clarion University's Rho Iota Chapter

Mike Ishman, Rho Iota, Clarion University

In 2008 – 2009, the Rho Iota chapter of Sigma Tau Delta flourished due to the commitment of its members and sponsor to not only instill pride within the organization but to give back to the community in which many of us live and have grown up. The chapter boasts roughly 40 members.

Rho Iota has participated in a number of service projects in the past year, including our annual Read for the Cure event, a banned book drive, and a Mention the Unmentionables sock and underwear drive. These projects, most notably the Read for the Cure, were very successful in raising both funding and goods for organizations that benefit the less fortunate. Although the chapter could only collect money for two weeks due to school restrictions, the Read for the Cure raised over \$7,000 dollars for the Pittsburgh, PA local affiliate office of the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer research.

While remaining busy with service projects, the chapter also held a book and bake sale that raised over \$500 for Clarion's annual English Department banquet. This money helped offer the meal at half price for English majors who attended the banquet. At the sale, the chapter also offered a hot lunch (hot dog or sloppy joe, soda and baked good) for \$3.00, while charging very reasonable prices for hundreds of books that were donated by Sigma Tau Delta members and faculty.

Outside of the classroom and department, the chapter also attended a number of cultural events and readings this year, including ballets (Radio and Juliet, The Great Gatsby), operas (The Grapes of Wrath, La Boheme), and musicals (Rent, Without You). Among the writers that visited our campus this year were Lewis "Buddy" Nordan, Alison Bechdel, and Ruth Schwartz. Using the available student rates for tickets, anywhere from 3 – 15 members attended each

of these events along with our sponsor and STD alumni. These events helped the chapter grow together as friends and created a sense of unity that is rare in student organizations.

Rho Iota has maintained a high level of academic excellence and service recognition for a number of years. At the International Convention, six members presented seven papers, three members were on panels, and the chapter as a whole participated in a special service project panel. Several members also presented at other conferences throughout the school year, including the EAPSU (English Association of Pennsylvania State Universities) Undergraduate Research Conference.

After a very successful year in terms of growth and recognition, the Rho Iota chapter of Sigma Tau Delta is committed to continue the standard of excellence that they have set for themselves. Rho Iota is sure to set new benchmarks in what they achieve.



**Members of the Rho Iota Chapter
(Clarion University,
PA)**

Chapter Spotlight: Alpha Gamma Kappa Chapter

Natalie Brandon, Alpha Gamma Kappa, Shepherd University

Hello all! The Alpha Gamma Kappa chapter has been very busy within the past year. We happily welcome our new faculty advisor, Dr. Heidi Hanrahan, and are very excited to have her included in our Sigma Tau Delta family.

With this fabulous addition, we are also saying goodbye to another beloved faculty advisor, Dr. Alan Tinkler, who will be moving with his family to Vermont in the fall. The Alpha Gamma Kappa chapter wishes to thank Dr.

Tinkler for all of his contributions and enthusiasm toward Sigma Tau Delta, and hopes he and his family have a safe journey toward a new beginning in their lives.

As of this spring semester, our growing chapter has completed our book drive and is looking forward to making our service project donation to Better World Books. We remain very involved in the community around Shepherd's campus, hosting monthly poetry

readings at a local restaurant, and we recently hosted the first of many future slam poetry competitions. We are also busy organizing a Literary Convention for other chapters in the Eastern Region that will be taking place the weekend of October 3 & 4, 2009—so watch out for more information that will be coming your way soon!



Members of the Alpha Gamma Kappa Chapter (Shepherd University, WV)

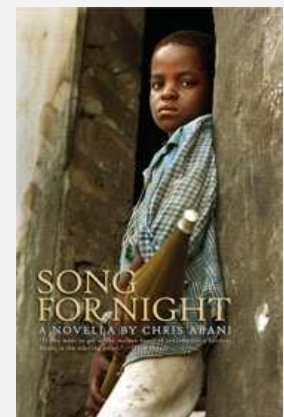
Summer Reading Suggestion: Chris Abani's *Song for Night*

Looking for a good read to start off your summer? Why not get a head start on next year by reading the 2010 ΣΤΔ Common Reader—Chris Abani's *Song for Night*. Here's what *Publisher's Weekly* had to say about the book: "In his latest novella, Abani renders the inner voice of mute 15-year-old My Luck, the boy leader of a platoon of mine sweepers in an unnamed war-torn African country. When he was 12, the then volunteer rebel had his vocal cords severed (the rest of his team received the same treatment), so that

they wouldn't scare each other with their death screams. At the opening of the novella, My Luck awakens after an explosion to find that he has been separated from his unit. During his journey to find his platoon, he reflects on the events of his violent life...Initially, the present-tense narration is at odds with My Luck's inclination toward memory and reflection, but the story becomes more immersive and dreamlike (and, strangely, lucid) over the course of My Luck's quest.

Abani finds in his narrator a seed of hope amid the bleak, nihilistic terrain." (*Sept.*)

Check it out! I know I will! And once you have started the book, keep a look out for emails from your Eastern Region representatives. We would like to start a blog to discuss the Common Reader as the date for next year's international conference in St. Louis draws closer. And remember: there are convention awards for papers written about the common reader. Write one and make the East proud!



The 2010 Common Reader— Chris Abani's *Song for Night* (www.chrisabani.com)

Four Nights in Minneapolis

To be perfectly honest, when I first heard of Sigma Tau Delta, I had no idea what to think. The first thing that sprung to my mind was a sorority, given that nearly every member I had encountered was a girl. Once I found out what it really was, though, I became intrigued. *Hey I like English, and I'm good at it, too! I can be a part of this!*

So it is no surprise that when the convention rolled around, I was raring to go. This was my first convention and my first time really hanging around a large group of students outside of the classroom. I will be honest: I had heard of Neil Gaiman, but I had never read anything by the guy. I wouldn't have even known anything beyond Alexandra Fuller and Michael Perry's names if it weren't for the descriptions in the program. Despite that, I still had promising feelings on the convention. I had transferred too late to throw my own work into

the fray of submissions, but I really was intrigued at the thought of hearing from students all across the country and their papers on everything from Kurt Vonnegut to original fiction. Plus, with the convention being in Minneapolis, I could always go to the Mall of America, right?

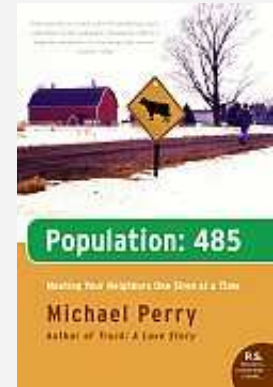
The first thing that hit me when we reached Minneapolis was just how cold it was. I had prepared myself for what to expect, but I didn't expect it to be worse than Pennsylvania. The thing is, it wasn't just colder than Pennsylvania; it was colder *all the time*. After my group's hour plus journey to figure out just how on earth we were to reach the Hyatt Regency, we finally did. We were among the first to arrive (that's what we get for leaving at 7:20 in the morning), and some of us decided to do our tourist duties and go to the Mall of America (I don't know if going to the mall has ever been that painful: my feet were shot).

As I said, I was a transfer and too late to submit my

**Scott Rodgers, Kappa Pi,
Alvernia University**

own work. I did not stay for the entirety of any one session, though, as I was too focused on seeing a variety of papers. Each piece of fiction I heard was great. Being in a fiction writing class, I can appreciate the work that people put into these stories. It was captivating to see how the readers brought not only their stories, but also their characters to life, especially those that used different tones of voice to show different speakers.

The biggest things for me, however, were the speakers. I went in expecting little and came out inspired to do more than I had ever dreamed. Alexandra Fuller was one of the most entertaining and charismatic people I have ever heard; my only regret is I did not go to the extended session. Neil Gaiman: I wish I could have hair tips from the guy. He was fantastic, and I don't know how he did it, but he signed books for every single person that wanted one. I am sure he was cramped by the end of the night.



**This past year's
common reader—
check out Michael
Perry's new release
*Coop: A Year of Poultry,
Pigs, and Parenting*
(www.sneezingcow.com)**



Chris Crutcher
(www.chriscrutcher.com)

Four Nights in Minneapolis (cont.)



Alexandra Fuller
(www.alexandrafuller.com)



Neil Gaiman
(www.neilgaiman.com)

Finally, Michael Perry. I don't know what else I can say about him except one word: wow. On stage and in the extended session, he was humble, down to earth, and seemed not as much an author, as much as he seemed like a friend. Out of all the speakers, I would say he had the biggest impact on me, as just through his stories, I realized I made the right decision in wanting to write. I had teetered at various points in my college career, wondering if this was really what I wanted to do. But after listening, speaking, and meeting him, there was no longer a doubt. On the way back to Philadelphia, I read some of his book, *Truck: A Love*

Story and I will tell you this: I will read any of his books I get my hands on. I also read some of *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman and a few snippets of *Scribbling the Cat* and *The Legend of Colton H. Bryant* by Alexandra Fuller, and both authors' works are added to my Amazon Wish List. All three writers were fantastic, and I have urged each person I have spoken to since being home to look into them. The Sigma Tau Delta Convention this year, despite all the essays and speakers, malls and pubs, had a bigger impact on me: I got to be around some of the best people in the world. I was skeptic when I first signed on to go to this

convention, but I am now hooked. It drew me closer to not only my professors, but also my peers. I met some people from back home in South Carolina, and even a guy from Iowa that nearly strangled me wanting to see my necklace. I saw a two story Target and the Metrodome. I saw my classmate unbutton his shirt on stage and announce his love for our professor. The only negative I can think of is manning the t-shirt table. The scattering when one person sits down to look at some information isn't going to work on me next year, guys. But thanks to all and I will see you in St. Louis.

Wanted: Artwork for *Mind Murals*: the Eastern Region Literary Journal!

Submit art work for the cover of the Eastie's new Literary Journal, *Mind Murals*! We're hoping for something tasteful, preferably done in black and white. Please send submissions to: easternlitjournal@gmail.com no later than August 31st, 2009. All submissions must include name and contact information of the student artist and be no larger than 7 by 5 inches. Photographs are acceptable if in black and white. We'll keep you updated on the details as they become available.

~Chris and Sarah, Eastern SR and ASR~

National Service Project: Better World Books

Stephanie Schiefelbein, National Student Advisor

The Sigma Tau Delta's Guide to Running a Better World Books Drive

Sigma Tau Delta has entered into a national partnership with Better World Books, an organization that sponsors collegiate book drives to fund global literacy and green initiatives.

Continue reading to find out how your chapter can participate in this worldwide effort.

From Book Drives to Better Lives in Six Steps!

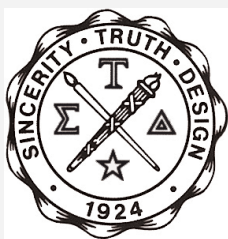
- 1) Get familiar with Better World Books, their nonprofit global literacy partners, and their mission by checking out www.betterworldbooks.com.
- 2) If you want to find out if there is another group running a book drive on your campus and/or you want to get your chapter started with this fundraiser/book drive, email ReUseFirst@BetterWorldBooks.com!
- 3) After emailing Better World Books, you will be contacted by an Account Representative who will act as your contact person throughout the entire book drive process and help you with all your questions!
- 4) Each chapter will have access to their own online portal to order supplies, ship books (at no cost to your chapter!), and view an environmental impact summary of your book drive on campus.
- 5) Choose one of the five global literacy partners to whom you want your book drive to impact and have a packing or planning party—up to \$50.00 for food and beverage reimbursed with receipts (per drive on your campus).
- 6) Run your book drive and have fun—advertise, place collection bins in high traffic areas around campus, collect books, prescreen books (if you elected the fundraising option), and pack and ship the books.

Helpful Hints and Reminders:

- Identify yourself as a chapter belonging to Sigma Tau Delta.
- Your chapter can decide to participate in the book drive as a fundraiser to collect money back per each acceptable book that you send in.
- If your chapter is small, don't worry because your Account Representative will know if there are other organizations available to help your chapter, such as a Sigma Tau Delta chapter from a neighboring college.
- The best time to collect acceptable books is during finals week/textbook buyback.
- Try to send acceptable books (college books less than 5 years old that have a valid ISBN #). The books that do not fit this category can be donated locally (ask your Account Rep for ideas, i.e. Goodwill, prisons, etc.).
- Try soliciting books from professors, especially English professors.



**Books Saved
From Landfills:
23,076,161**



Eastern Region Officers

Student Representative

Christopher Wike
Clarion University
Clarion, PA
s_clwike@clarion.edu

Associate Student Representative

Sarah Heckman
Alvernia University
Reading, PA
heckman324@yahoo.com

Eastern Regent

Sarah Dangelantonio
Franklin Pierce
University
Rindge, NH
dangelst@franklinpierce.edu

Website!

www.english.org

2009 Minneapolis Convention Eastern Award Winners

E. Nelson James Junior Scholarship

Jennifer Dorsey (\$3000)
Ohio University (Alpha Theta Phi)

Regent Scholarship- Eastern

Florencia Lauria (\$1000)
Marist College (Alpha Mu Kappa)

Edwin L. Stockton, Jr., Graduate Scholarship

Ania Saj (\$3000)
Westfield State College (Alpha Eta Sigma)

Ashley Sayola- Runner-up (\$1500)
Westfield State College (Alpha Eta Sigma)

P.C. Somerville Teaching Award

Alex Witkowski (\$2000)
The College of New Jersey (Alpha Epsilon Alpha)

Scholarship Application Essay Award

Krista Baddour (\$100)
Ohio University (Alpha Theta Phi)

Esther Prokopienko (\$100)
College of Saint Rose (Beta Phi)

Project Grants

Shippensburg University (\$300)
(Phi Psi)

Outstanding Chapter Award

Clarion University (\$600)
(Rho Iota)

Service Award

Clarion University (\$200/designated charity)
(Rho Iota)

Student Leadership Award

Amy Miller (\$250)
Clarion University (Rho Iota)

Ashley Teatum- honorable mention
University of Scranton (Mu Omicron)

Elaine W. Hughes Outstanding Sponsor Award

Kevin Stemmler, Chapter Sponsor (\$500)
Clarion University (Rho Iota)

Convention Awards for World, British Literature, or Critical Theory Essays

Kathleen Hayes- 1st Place (\$500)
College of New Jersey (Alpha Epsilon Alpha)

Convention Awards for Creative Nonfiction

Renee E. Wolfhope- honorable mention (\$75)
Franklin Pierce University (Iota Omega)

Convention Awards for Original Fiction

Ashley D. Saari (\$75)
Franklin Pierce University (Iota Omega)

Essays on Convention Theme

Krista Baddour (\$100)
Ohio University (Alpha Theta Phi)

Esther Prokopienko (\$100)
College of St. Rose (Beta Phi)

Frederic Fadner Critical Essay Award

Marion Quirici (\$300)
Marist College (Alpha Mu Kappa)

Individual Website Award

Tyechia Lynn Thompson (\$85)
Howard University (Theta Theta)