



ASPIRATIONS

ALWAYS ASPIRE TOWARD SOMETHING BETTER

The Leadership Academy: A Small Step for Humankind



Σ The wise person seeks to apply knowledge to *benefit humankind*.

Honorable persons respect others and are willing to provide leadership to the *benefit of humankind*.

B To aspire toward the fulfillment of one's goals to *serve humankind* and develop personally and professionally will lead to a life of meaning and satisfaction.



—from SBD Ritual



From

Don's
esk



The President Reflects on SBD's Progress

This will be my last letter as President of Sigma Beta Delta. It has been a significant honor that I have thoroughly enjoyed. It is appropriate to reflect upon some major activities that have occurred in the four years of my presidency.

It was my desire to sponsor some activity which could bring newly-elected members of Sigma Beta Delta together. This was to reinforce the significance of a Sigma Beta Delta invitation. I wanted our new initiates to realize the quality of men and women who have been selected for the society throughout the country. In large schools, small schools, urban schools, country schools, Sigma Beta Delta represents the best of the best.

A second objective was that Sigma Beta Delta might pay more attention to the commitment that each member makes to work for the benefit of humankind when they become a member and in each succeeding year of their lives. This is not a simple one-time commitment, but it is one that grows as they prosper in society as a whole.

Happily, last January, in the first Leadership Academy, we were able to accomplish both of these goals which will be featured elsewhere in this publication. It would appear that we have begun to lay the foundation for a lifelong contribution to humankind.

I should also mention that we have, in each year, established a firmer financial foundation which should insure a perpetual life to Sigma Beta Delta. This, in part, has been the case since 1990, through the support that has been granted the society by my employer, the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Please take the time to read and reread the interview that Dr. James Bearden had with Jim Viehland who was responsible for the development of our Ritual. Hopefully, each time you read it, you'll feel rededicated to and concern for the welfare of fellow human beings.

Sincerely,

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Genesis of the Ritual: Interview with James A. Viehland

Editorial Note: *We're at the point on our Sigma Beta Delta journey where we believe we are coming closer to acting on the words and phrases shown in the ritual excerpt in the center of page one. Evidence of progress to accomplish and fulfill the ritual's pledge is offered through pictures and reports in this issue. Also appearing are portions of an interview with one of our founding directors and initial Managing Director, James Viehland. Not only was Mr. Viehland one of the original founders but also authored the ritual that serves as the rationale and goal of the society's members. Mr. Viehland is Executive Director of Beta Gamma Sigma.*

Bearden: The journey we've been on since the early 90s has touched many individuals and institutions. You were there from the beginning and helped give life to our honor society. An early and important task was the development of a ritual and you crafted it. Given the central role of the ritual, we wanted your recollection on the emergence of this important document. I don't remember us having many substantive discussions about it.

Viehland: Well, we had the English letters SBD. Those derived from the initial letter of your last name and of Drs. Driemeier and Scott, and conformed to the naming pattern used by Beta Gamma Sigma. From that we went to the Greek Sigma Beta Delta. We had to find Greek words sort of mirroring the Beta Gamma Sigma ritual and were representative of our honor society. I found ΣΟΦΙΑ for wisdom. I copied Beta Gamma Sigma's ΒΕΒΑΙΟΣ for honor. I stumbled on ΔΙΩΚΩ for aspiration. That's sort of the genesis of our name. We were fortunate in finding words and the ideas they signify.

Bearden: Those Greek words and what they symbolize are certainly important, but it's what those words infer or mean for the reader or hearer that is pointedly significant. Tell me how we came to this direction.

Viehland: Well one of the things going on was that you had made several references to W.E.B. Dubois talking about the "talented tenth"—those people who would be able to accomplish something in a given population. We saw that as the Sigma Beta Delta group. And who better to be able to apply wisdom, to be honorable, and to have good aspirations than those people who are most talented. Once we had those three words in place and once we had the notion that Sigma Beta Delta members would be the ones who could go out and do important things, then the question was: How and what do you write to give them the dream to do that? Rituals help to describe a reality of an organization. But they also help to talk about a vision that people have, or that you want people to have. There is where we had the opportunity to put down words that began to talk about "humankind."

Bearden: So we were thinking in terms of what the individual members would do. Did we have much discussion about this or was it rather perfunctory?

Viehland: I don't think we had a lot of discussion about it. But there was a lot of background discussion as Sigma Beta Delta began. We knew we wanted a ritual. And we had a very good model in Beta Gamma Sigma. But we didn't want it to be quite as long as theirs since a number of schools thought that it was too long. And it couldn't be too duplicative of the BGS ritual because it was a new and different organization. We valued knowledge and learning and that people ought to be honorable, moral, upright and striving to do something, values common to both Beta Gamma Sigma and Sigma Beta Delta. So the question was how to express those values in a different way, and maybe in some ways better, because some language in the BGS ritual was awkward. An "evanescent dream" comes to mind.

Bearden: In Dean Eubanks' printed program at Belmont for our first chartering ceremony there was something labeled "the challenge." Do you recall that?

Viehland: I do. That was the point where we were challenging members to do those things that were written and spoken about in our ritual.

Bearden: Initially we seemed to be talking about them doing and serving as individuals. How did we transition to the notion that we are also a collective and could be doing things with the power that we have as a collective?

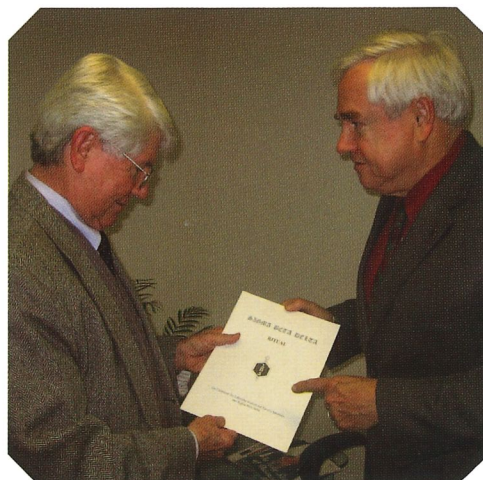
Viehland: We used the word "network" back in the late 90s in several different ways. There were literally dozens, if not hundreds of hours of discussion in the development of Sigma Beta Delta in terms of how it would work and how it would relate to other honor societies. Most importantly, how it would relate to Beta Gamma Sigma and Delta Mu Delta so that it was as complementary as it could possibly be without coming into conflict with them. The next level, of course, was the Association of College Honor Societies where you did not have just business students but students from all across the campus.

Bearden: I remember well the 1998 ACHS meeting when we went public with our position regarding networking and presented at their session, "A Debate About the Purpose of Honor Societies."

Viehland: I think that was an admirable notion. At that time about 287,000 were being inducted into honor societies. Perhaps some duplication, but still a quarter of a million people recognized annually was truly a powerful force if you could get it to do anything. Across the campus in all honor societies, you had a significant number who could put their effort toward something and create something much better in society than would otherwise exist.

Bearden: We've continued to bring this powerful network potential to the attention of our chapters and members but it has mainly been in remarks at chartering ceremonies and in our annual newsletter. But last January, we invited 25 members and 5 faculty advisors together in San Diego to a "Leadership Academy." Our objective was to consider creating a "collective service initiative that would allow members to address one or several of society's problems." Those young people had some great ideas and came up with over twenty initiatives from which one or two might be chosen as a collective service to humanity initiative. As a frame of reference, they were given in advance the book: *Connected: The Surprising Power of our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*. Dr. James Fowler, one of the authors, joined us and was terrific in bringing front and center the potential power of the SBD network.

Viehland: Considering how society has changed since 1993, I think we have become even less connected than we were then. There are so many social institutions that are either having trouble maintaining themselves or they're disintegrating. The Beta Gamma Sigma alumni chapter has maybe 5,000 alums in the St. Louis area. It's hard to get more than 20 out for an event, regardless of how good the speaker is or how convenient



Jim Bearden and Jim Viehland

the location is. I think there are a lot of pressures that are sort of causing society to unravel as we do our group things. So it's important to think about how we can support groups of people who come together and try to do things.

Bearden: I don't know whether we will come up with anything, but we have a powerful opportunity. And much of this path we're on stems from the articulation in our ritual, and now its implication has grown beyond what we likely thought it was at the time. The power that it has to transform lives is significant. I hope we can figure a way to exploit it. Clearly it has moved from where we thought it was when we started out. We didn't have a grand plan when we created this ritual—not a network—because we were talking mainly about individuals. But as we've traveled the journey, we've moved from that ritual you developed focusing on the individual to a bit further. And we have an opportunity to expand it even further. This notion of a network serving humanity, a coalescing of individuals in some way serving humanity is a tremendous potential for our honor society. We are on the verge of it.

Viehlend: I think you are right. Things are working well toward that. The cost of communication has never been as cheap as it is today. It's obvious that people communicate a great deal and young people communicate even more than older people do. Whether you can get them to communicate with you the way you want them to or listen to your messages is another question entirely.

Bearden: Is there any follow-up to the ritual? Because that's a very fast moment.

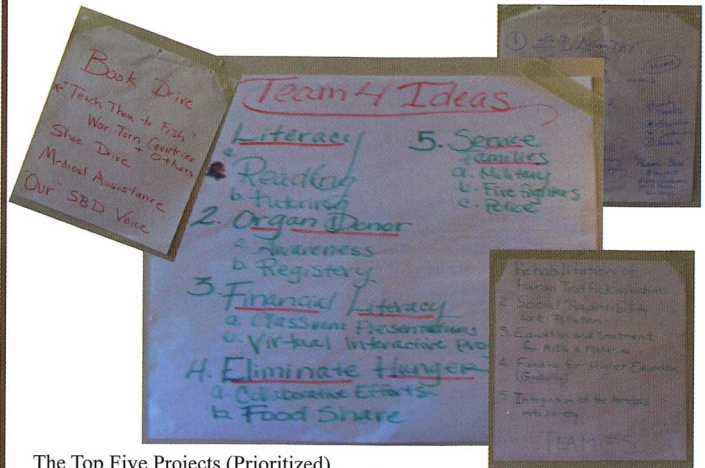
Viehlend: In the perfect world we would be communicating with our members telling them "A year ago you affirmed the ritual, let me remind you of that," or "You'll recall this is what was said at that time, that night, long ago..." Just remind them of it. It certainly will form, as Sigma Beta Delta goes through its history, a real link from the earliest members to the newest members.

Bearden: If we were looking to you, Jim, to rethink, revise or update our society's ritual, is there anything that you would say in retrospect that we would probably emphasize a bit more? Anything different?

Viehlend: I read through it several times last night and again a couple of times today and I don't know that I would make any changes. I felt pretty good about it then and continue to feel good about it now. That tens of thousands of people have affirmed a ritual certainly is a gratifying sense and I hope maybe it has pointed them off in some directions or reinforced some thinking that they might have had about how to live a good life.

The purpose of a three-day academy last January was to consider and propose "a collective service initiative that would allow members to address one or several of society's problems." As reflected in several of the posters depicted below, a host of ideas were generated as one or more potential projects that would serve humanity. The board has begun to consider the process for selecting and implementing the two initiatives to receive the highest priority.

small steps That Could Become BIG STEPS for Humanity



The Top Five Projects (Prioritized)

- Financial Literacy and Responsibility**
- 2 x 2 x 2: Our SBD Voice**
- SBD Green Day**
- Organ Donor Program**
- Teach Me to Fish**

Additional Projects for Consideration

- Integration of the Homeless into Society
- Rehab Human Trafficking Victims
- Feed the Need: Partner with Food Pantry
- Soles for Souls: Shoe Drive
- Sustainability Project
- Volunteer After-School Projects
- Education and Treatment: Medical/AIDS/Malaria
- Partner with Salvation Army, Boys and Girls Clubs, et al.

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Dr. Richard Scott
Fellowship



Andrea Luckie
Judson College
Dr. James Bearden
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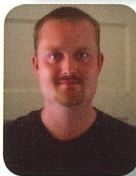
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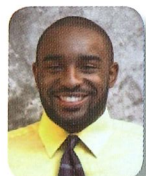


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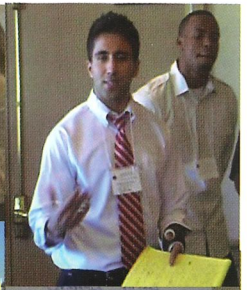
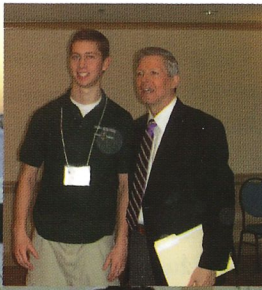
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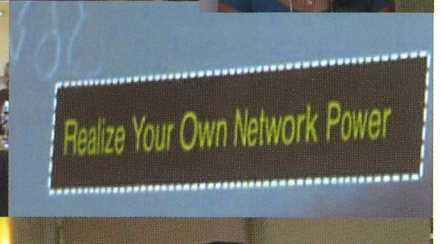
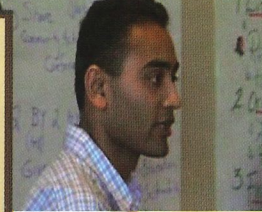
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November 3, 2010-December 11, 2011

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Sigma Beta Delta
"Scholar Strong"
San Diego, January 2011

When I dream . . . I see the commonness of our humanity
When I dream . . . I am a scholar strong
I will start sooner . . . carry on longer
Changing for the better
One dream at a time
One project at a time

—Theme for Leadership Academy by Dr. William Kehoe

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