



ASPIRATIONS

ALWAYS ASPIRE TOWARD SOMETHING BETTER

THE EXCELLENCE OF JOHN GARDNER

John W. Gardner is one of the country's most energetic and intelligent citizens. With distinction, he has served presidents, government agencies, volunteer organizations, and corporate and nonprofit institutions. His professional experience includes: Secretary of Health, Education and



Welfare; founder of Common Cause; co-founder of Independent Sector; chairman of National Urban Coalition;

chairman of National Civic League; and president of Carnegie Corporation. His undergraduate education was at Stanford University and his Ph.D. is from the University of California at Berkeley. His publications and awards are numerous and include the nation's highest civil honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Dr. Gardner was interviewed by Immediate Past President James H. Bearden on September 26, 2000. The interview and a brief account of Dr. Gardner's special relationship with Sigma Beta Delta are featured in this issue.

Q: You've conceptualized, written, and spoken about leadership for most of your life. What are two or three leadership "truths" which you cling to?

A: Well, I cling to the definition of leadership as "the facilitating of group purpose." I don't like the definition of a leader who "thinks up the answer in his or her own head and then tells people to do it." I like leaders, corporate, nonprofit or political, who are in touch with the people they're working with. That's important. Very important. Today, a leader simply must have a gift for collaboration—collaborative leadership. Our pluralism is so spectacularly successful. We've told everybody to go off in every direction and do what they want. We're now discovering they have all got to come back to the same table and arrive at some common goals. The leader has to help with that. Another necessity is conflict resolution. We have to face the awesome capacity of the human species to be at one another's throats. The leader has to help resolve conflicts, help collaborative problem solving. This is the task for the day.

Q: In leadership seminars, I often ask students to name persons they've been associated with who they consider to be first-rate leaders. Among the personal associations in your own life, whom do you regard as good leaders?

A: I have lived quite a public life, so I'm almost bound to select public leaders. I have to tell you that I knew Mr. Churchill and he was a leader—a great leader. So was Franklin Roosevelt. I have to say I have a great affection for Harry Truman—a feisty, decisive leader who had a lot of courage to do what he decided to do. He never lacked for courage.

Q: With advances surrounding the computer and related technologies, have leadership opportunities for people increased or decreased?

A: It will ultimately increase. Computers and the internet enormously increase the *impersonal* communication that takes place. The best leadership is highly personal and much of it face-to-face, always enhanced by the voice and presence and personal communication of the leader. I don't want that to get away from us. I don't want us to get so impersonal with everybody sitting in front of a screen reading words when they ought to be working together in teams with a leader in front of them.

Q: You have said that in our society "most significant changes that occur are preceded by a long train of premonitory events," and you lamented our failure to recognize some major ones, such as the urban riots of the 60s. Are there some events or some trends that are announcing themselves to society right now?

A: Yes. You can look around and see the seedlings of things that are going to happen. I think you can see a very difficult and a very complex thing, almost the task of our time—creating wholeness that incorporates diversity. In the past 50 years there have been real attempts to emphasize communities that are not separated out from everyone else, but that have within them the diversity and the different themes and the different kinds of people that we're going to have to bring together if we're going to make this world work. The world is just forcing diversity on us. Patterns of migration transportation, and communication mean that we all live with neighbors that we don't

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Cliff's Note

From the President

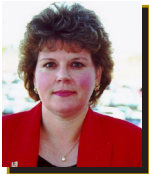


This is my first greeting, as President of Sigma Beta Delta, to our more than 17,000 members. It is the first time many “new members” have received our newsletter, *Aspirations*, a name whose significance is told in an accompanying story. Sigma Beta Delta is the newest among the three general business honor societies serving higher education, so we are all fairly new in our respective Sigma Beta Delta roles—students, faculty, and alumni.

Since being described at the initial chartering in 1994 at Belmont University as “an idea whose time has come,” Sigma Beta Delta has grown into a network of chapters at 140 colleges and universities in 38 states and 1 overseas.

The journey has been rapid and remarkable, but the true timeline of our society stretches much longer. Two persons who played major roles in the early history are Dr. Richard Scott (Baylor University), and Dr. Bob Owens (Louisiana Tech University). As presidents of Beta Gamma Sigma, they gave leadership through the exploration and developmental stages and in the founding of the society. They have completed their terms on the Executive Council and are due our admiration and appreciation for their great service.

We welcome to the Executive Council two new members elected to four-year terms: Dr. GERALYN McClure Franklin, Dean of The School of Business at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin, and Dr. BARBARA H. NEMECEK, Dean of the College of Business at the Montana State University-Billings. We appreciate their willingness to add Sigma Beta Delta guidance and oversight to their academic service agenda.



Dean Franklin
Dean Nemecek



In accordance with the provisions of our founding as a subsidiary of Beta Gamma Sigma, we accepted responsibility effective July 1 for managing our organization as an independent entity.

A positive aspect of the transition has been the addition of Donna Thomas as our Office Manager. The council is impressed with Ms. Thomas’ administrative skills and her eagerness to learn and grow with the society. We look forward to working with such an enthusiastic and committed partner.

Another important development has been the move of our office to the campus of University of Missouri-St. Louis. A university alliance is used by many honor societies. It provides us an opportunity for collaboration with an outstanding university and still remain in the geographical area where we have business and organizational relationships.

This will be a challenging year and a very busy one as we continue to address issues arising from new management structure, new staff, and new office location. With your help, it will be productive and exciting, as it should be for the first year of a millennium.

Each of you, and certainly our faculty members, can assist the society in its goal of developing new chapters. Our foremost concern is to make sure that existing chapters operate efficiently in inducting and serving members. But closely following that priority is making Sigma Beta Delta available to other eligible college and university business programs. Providing names of faculty we can contact in business programs not having an honor society would assist in extending Sigma Beta Delta.

Finally, let me emphasize that the officers and Council members are conscious of the importance of the honor society in encouraging excellence in higher education for business. One evidence of that is our masthead which purposefully provides telephone and email contact information for each of us. We consider our Sigma Beta Delta service as an extension of the educational call our careers reflect and look forward to working with you in our common pursuit of excellence and service.

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“**Every city has enough leadership to run a small nation.**”

know very well. We’ve had to learn that you can build a community out of diverse people. You look out and you can see it happening. You can see people groping toward ways to do that. That’s crucial.

Another is that we’re going to recognize that early childhood leaves a long trail of consequences. Early childhood education, early childhood health—you neglect things there and you pay in the prison system and in the health system and everywhere else over years and years and years. We’re now groping toward the ways we can reach those youngsters early with the kind of education, with the kind of health care, and so forth, that they’ve got to have. This is a lesson that was very hard for us to learn, but we’re learning it.

Q: Following up with another question about trends, you stated in *No Easy Victories* that “the greatest educational invention of the nineteenth century was the land grant college. The greatest American educational invention of the twentieth century is the two-year community college.” What do you predict will be the greatest educational invention during this next century?

A: I think it’s going to be a linking of educational resources with what I call life option centers. There are going to be transitional counseling centers that will be as common as health spas today. Let me suggest the reason for that. Fifty years ago what you were doing in your mid-20s was highly predictive of what you’d be doing in your mid-60s. You’re a housewife. You’re a professor. You’re an employee of GM. And you still are, at the end of your career. Today—forget it. You have six changes of job in a career. Sometimes you can get two totally different careers or three different careers. This puts a terrible burden on the individual—a burden of self-assessment. What am I going to do? I know I’ve come to a choice point. What do I have in me that is marketable and requires growth and

how do I develop it? What’s out there in the way of jobs, opportunities? We can help those people. We can help them with those transitions. We can create transition centers and most ideally link educational opportunities to the transition. A lot of them will want to learn. Perhaps they can’t get into the next thing they want to do unless they have some training. So there’s a great opportunity to link those two. It’s in the interest of lifelong learning—never stopping growth and learning and renewal.

Q: As a long-time proponent of excellence, how do you view the collegiate honor society and its focus on scholastic excellence?

A: Honor society performance in a society



that is big, complicated, noisy, untidy, reminds people to think about standards and meeting standards. So, I strongly favor the societies.

Q: The usual honor society protocol is to present a key and a certificate to students who meet high scholastic standards and upon graduation, send them on their way with mailings from time to time. Should we attempt more substantive follow-up in order to exploit this very large societal resource of intellect and talent?

A: Do they ever meet, as alumni, so to speak? I believe it’s very important for them to meet periodically and be in the habit of it. Ours is a society where communities are collapsing and this may be one of the many new forms of community that develops. I certainly have a very strong feeling as to what their agenda should be as alumni. That is renewal

and growth and continued learning. In other words, you got into the honor society. That’s history. Now, we’re looking ahead and we’re going to figure out how you’re doing. Are you on any kind of learning curve at all? Or are you just sitting there twiddling your thumbs? This should haunt the minds of the alumni as they gather. We are here to keep the ball rolling, to keep the game going, to keep learning and trying and aspiring.

Q: Is it appropriate for “citizen involvement” to be a goal of honor society alumni development and activity?

A: I think it is. I think you’ve hit a point that is very dear to my heart. I have been interested in the cities for many years.

I was chairman of the National Urban Coalition at a time when the cities were burning in the late ’60s—riots in the major cities—and I’ve been interested ever since. The interesting thing is that every city has enough potential leadership talent to run a small nation and where is it? It’s buried away in the law firms, in the executive branches of corporations, the faculties of universities, and other comfortable professional spots. Who gave them permission to stand aside and not think about their communities?

Every one of them should feel that in addition to his or her professional commitment, there’s a commitment to the community—to my city, my town, my region, my state, my nation. And this we’re far from. The most highly educated people have found themselves very comfortable, protected spots where they don’t worry about the community. And it’s wrong. So, I’m very much for asking, through their honor society, to add that to their agenda.

Q: My own view is that students who have been identified and judged by faculty as honor society recipients have exhibited leader-like behavior. Is it reasonable to extend such view and suggest that honor society is a metaphor for leadership?

(Continued on page 4)

John Gardner's Unique Relationship to ΣΒΔ

A: I think you're expressing an ideal rather than a reality. It would be great if this intellectual performance led on to leadership; but unfortunately, as things stand now, too many of them regard it as a point of entry into a comfortable, well-upholstered life, drawing down a salary, and being bright. That's not enough.

Q: Since the honor society is primarily an American expression of academic excellence, would extending this phenomenon abroad be a useful way to open dialogue with universities outside the United States?

A: I see no reason why there shouldn't be a dialogue, and it could be a very interesting dialogue. But if having had the dialogue, they choose not to pursue our path, I would say, "Well, they have their cultural patterns. We have ours."

Q: I understand your latest book project, *Life on the Learning Curve*, is almost completed.

A: It's at the publisher's now.

Q: What's the story behind that title?

A: It's a story of a California boy stumbling through life, aspiring, falling on his face, trying again, wishing he'd done better, always trying, always wondering. My daughter produced the title.

Q: Dr. Gardner, your words and ideals have been influential in the foundation of Sigma Beta Delta, in the induction ritual we use, and in the name of our newsletter. What is your reaction to your imprint being so evident in our honor society?

A: Well, I'm immensely honored, you know that. I'm immensely honored that you folks would take with that level of seriousness things that I said forty years ago. It's just a very gratifying thing for me.

Q: Finally, what would you like to communicate to those first-time Sigma Beta Delta inductees who will be honored at ceremonies during 2001?

A: I would simply say to them that what they have accomplished in order to get as far as they have is just the beginning. That there are lots of mountains to climb. They're going to climb them; and they're going to have to keep learning, keep growing, keep aspiring.

Many of the themes throughout the works and writings of John Gardner appear to undergird and uphold higher education's honor community. Titles of his books—*No Easy Victories, Morale, On Leadership, Self-Renewal, Excellence*—literally describe the rationale of the collegiate honor society. His linkage with Sigma Beta Delta is unique and significant. From its beginning, Sigma Beta Delta has been influenced by Dr. Gardner.

For many years, Dr. Gardner has been a collector of proverbs and maxims, mostly four-worders ("easy come, easy go"), three-worders ("misery loves company"), and two-worders ("be yourself"). Along the way he asked himself, "*Why not a one-word maxim?*" Thus began his search for the ultimate in succinct instruction, a verb, in the imperative mood, and commanding us to do something, and whose worth "*will be entirely in the soundness of the instruction given.*"

His search came to my attention while reading a 1969 interview in IBM's journal, *Think*, about his speech, "The Fourth Maxim," given to the American Philosophical Society. In the speech he said that his search for the one-word maxim had yielded three words that were "*almost universally nominated for the top of the list*"—"live," "love," and "learn," with consensus breaking down completely on the fourth. With widespread acceptance for the first three maxims, Dr. Gardner said he encountered "*a fascinating and puzzling fact. Could we say that the first three maxims are more or less common knowledge and that wisdom begins with the right choice of the fourth?*" He answered no, but added: "*Even so, if I had only a moment with the wisest man alive, I'd be inclined to go directly to the point and ask him what his fourth maxim is.*"

His speech concluded with his own choice: "*At first I had a strong leaning toward the word 'select.' All style, all morality, all standards, all excellence in art, literature, and living begin with selection. But the one I have finally settled on is 'aspire.'*" He summarized his choice: "*We are not at our best when the battle is won; we are strivers, at our best when the goal seems unattainable. We are not at our best perched at the summit; we are climbers, at our best when the way is steep.*"

Dr. Gardner's words and ideals, and especially his admonition to "aspire," describe the process and the academicians that led Sigma Beta Delta through the idea, exploration, and creation stages. The influence is quite visible **in our name**—"Delta is the initial letter of the Greek word ΔΙΩΚΩ (Di-'o-ko), which signifies the pursuit of meaningful aspirations," **in our ritual** where members pledge to "aspire to worthy goals," and **in our newsletter**, *Aspirations*. The prominence given by Sigma Beta Delta to Dr. Gardner's fourth maxim attests to the society's belief that its members are on a continuing journey toward excellence, having reached one milestone by earning the Sigma Beta Delta key. We are indebted to Dr. Gardner for articulating so eloquently an element of excellence we embrace.

True to his fourth maxim, Dr. Gardner's search has not ended. I related earlier that during his 1969 speech he expressed his wish for advice from the "*wisest man alive*" to solve his puzzle. Recognizing the intellectual distinction of the assembled scholars, he asked them to assume the role of "*wisest man alive*" and assist in the "*Great Search for the Fourth Maxim.*" Each was given a notecard and asked to write down his or her choice.

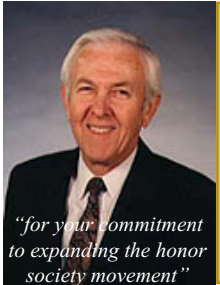
He stimulated their imagination by posing the following question: "*Suppose you are on your death bed and could utter only one word of advice to a son or daughter. One word! What would it be?*" To lift the problem out of the context of family emotions, he rephrased it to: "*Suppose that you were allowed to communicate one word of advice to a young person living in the year 2000. What would it be?*" Now we are in the year 2000, more than thirty years since his challenge to find the *one* word of advice for the 21st century young person. The rephrasing made all of us a part of his search, specifically young people as objects of the advice.

Then and now, Dr. Gardner has been constant in his preference for "aspire" as the fourth maxim. In a book he is currently completing, titled *Life on the Learning Curve*, he has included a chapter titled "In Search of the Fourth Maxim." It will reveal the sentiments expressed in 1969 by the scholars challenged to play his fourth maxim game.

When I was with Dr. Gardner recently, we speculated about the response if his question was asked to today's scholars. What would be the response from a sample of our chapter faculty advisors, broadened by a sample from a liberal arts society, such as Phi Beta Kappa, and a community college society, such as Phi Theta Kappa? Dr. Gardner agreed that we ought to find out by requesting their choice for the fourth maxim. While the responses might not be timely for assisting in his current book project, our input could aid Dr. Gardner in his continuing search for the fourth maxim. Whatever the final outcome of Dr. Gardner's longtime search, Sigma Beta Delta is indebted to him for inspiring us to adopt his fourth maxim, "Aspire," as a foundation and goal of Sigma Beta Delta.

From the 2000 Biennial Convention

VOICES & VIEWS



Richard C. Scott
Ambassador of
Excellence



Michael J. C. Roth
Keynote Speaker
President and CEO USAA
Investment Mgt. Co.

"for your commitment to expanding the honor society movement"

Keynote Address: "Personal Aspirations: Ethics and Integrity"

It is very important to have an organization like Sigma Beta Delta which straightforwardly espouses high ideals. It's good to hear people talk straightforward and openly about these ideals.

We will be successful at the USAA Investment Management Company if we are good students, if we study well, if we produce good investment products, and just as important, if we every day treat our customers with the utmost integrity and we are loyal to them, and we will bend over backwards for them, and we are always honest with them. The honor society is a quick microcosm of that.

"The meeting re-energizes me to the commitment of making Sigma Beta Delta successful."

—Robert C. Preziosi, Nova Southeastern University

"Conversation with other advisors and presidents really was very helpful because a lot of them basically shared their views on how they encourage students."

—Cinzia B. Moussalli, Huntingdon College

"I thoroughly enjoyed the presentation by Dr. Kehoe—

"Professional Aspirations: Excellence and Integrity." His presentation was very inspiring, thoughtful, and re ective and it also kind of grounds us—at least from my perspective—to what we as the honor society strive for."

—Kate Candee, Marian College of Fond Du Lac

Howard Lacey of Concordia University at Austin pinning honorary member Roger R. Hemminghaus, Chairman Emeritus, Ultramar Diamond Shamrock Corp.

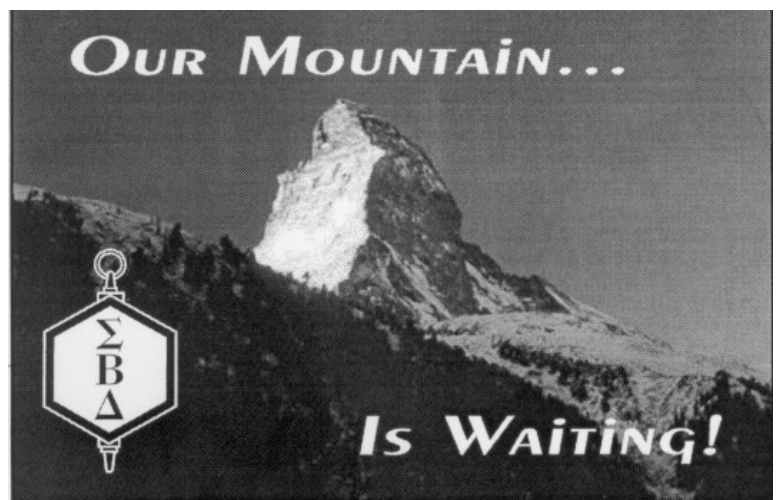


"Having the honoree inducted during the reception was a very unique experience."

—Barbara Grayson,
University of Arkansas at
Pine Bluff



Officers elected at the convention: Vice President, President-elect, Donald Driemeier; Secretary-Treasurer, Sandra Hart; President, Cliff Eubanks.



Margin for

Excellence

Members, their families and friends, and others who have contributed financially to Sigma Beta Delta, are much appreciated for helping us meet compelling needs and are recognized below. Many of these contributions are from members who have recently begun their careers. It is particularly heartening that they decided to contribute so soon. We invite and appeal to others to join us in rewarding and encouraging scholastic excellence among collegiate business students. We welcome cash gifts, securities, and in-kind contributions; and we encourage alumni to leverage their own contributions by inquiring about their employer's matching programs.

Three years ago, several giving opportunities were established by the society: **Founding Sponsor** for commitment of \$5,000 or more and **Sustaining Sponsor** for \$1,000 or more. The society's Executive Council personally contributed sponsoring contributions of \$37,000. Now, the **Sponsor** opportunity is being continued to enable others to participate. We hope that the business community, where many of our business graduates are employed, as well as friends in the nonprofit sector, will stand alongside us in the gap that exists between our initial organization as a subsidiary and our new status as of July 1, 2000—a totally stand-alone honor society.

A planned giving program will evolve as Sigma Beta Delta matures. In this early stage, when our need for organizational and operational support is great, we are receptive and appreciative of endowed gifts to perpetuate support of Sigma Beta Delta. Naming opportunities and suggestions will be considered for such major society activities as scholarships, lectureships, awards, and member seminars.

Recipients include:
Amit Bansal,
Ryan M. Czyzewski,
Andrew W. Dornan
(Richard C. Scott
Scholarship)
and
Leslie Harmonson

Among the most important financial needs of an honor society are funds for scholarships. From the outset, we budgeted for four, but have only scratched the surface in meeting our long-term objectives for scholarships. On this page, are pictured four students who this year hold Sigma Beta Delta scholarships available through the generosity of our contributors.

You are invited, in this critical period of Sigma Beta Delta's early development to join many others in making a financial gift, hopefully as a **Sponsor**, or at a level of giving appropriate for you. I am pleased to be chairman of the society's development effort and will respond to questions and comments about how we can build a financial base so that honor society opportunity can be made available to deserving students in all business and management schools and departments.



William Kehoe

Contributions December 1,

\$1,000+

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\$500-999

Texas Wesleyan University
Sandra H. Hart

\$100-499

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DeVry Institute of Technology-Phoenix
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