

March 2017
New Series 9.2



Theta Alpha Kappa

The National Honor Society for Religious Studies and Theology

The President's Newsletter

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2017 Graduate Fellowship Awards Competition

Spring is here! And that means chapters are invited to nominate one graduating senior or recent alumnus/a to compete for a first prize of \$3000, a second prize of \$2000, and a third prize of \$1000 to be used for educational costs associated with matriculation in a graduate degree program in religion or theology for Fall 2017. Nominations should be sent via U.S. Mail or other carrier and must include the following:

- a formal letter of application from the nominee, detailing his/her long-term educational goals and intentions especially in light of the purview of Theta Alpha Kappa.
- two sealed letters of recommendation from his/her professors.
- confirmation of the student's membership in TAK from the chapter/faculty representative. If the student will be inducted subsequent to the deadline, please indicate planned date of induction.
- sealed official undergraduate transcript.
- proof of acceptance **and** intent to matriculate into a relevant graduate program.

Completed nomination packets are due to the President's office by April 30, 2017. Winners will be announced by June 1, 2017, and award funds will be transferred directly to the winners. For this reason, it is imperative that **mailing** addresses which are valid from May to July of 2017 (not simply e-mail addresses) be provided for students nominated so as to avoid misdirection of funds.

Nomination packets should be sent to: Dr. Kelley Coblentz Bautch, TAK President
CPO 774; 3001 South Congress Ave
St. Edward's University; Austin, TX 78404

Undergraduate Achievement Award

If your chapter code number ends in the **digits 5-9**, it is your academic year to name one student from your chapter for this \$100 Undergraduate Achievement Award. This award is available to each chapter every other year to promote excellence among undergraduate students. Designating the student you wish to recognize is very easy; simply send the name of the student (along with that individual's current mailing address) to the Theta Alpha Kappa Treasurer, Dr. McMahon (Christopher.McMahon@stvincent.edu).

Don't pass up this opportunity to honor one of your chapter's finest members.

WELCOME NEW CHAPTERS

Since the *President's Newsletter* of October 2017, we are delighted to welcome two newly chartered chapters to our society.

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
Athens State University	ANA
Georgia State University	ANB
McKendree University	ANT

These chapters join 290 active chapters of Theta Alpha Kappa, a thriving honor society which is also a member of the Association of College Honor Societies.

The 2017 Albert Clark Award Winners

One of the ways Theta Alpha Kappa recognizes the scholarship of its student members is through the Albert Clark Awards competition sponsored each year. The award is given to the best student essays in religious studies or theology submitted to our panel of judges. In the graduate student category, the 2017 winners are as follows. The first place award is given to Sara Ann Swenson of Syracuse University for the essay entitled "'Friending' Buddhists in the Field: Using Social Media as an Ethnographic Method." The second place award is given to Carolyn Wilson of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University for the essay entitled "Viewing 'The Other' as More than Scum: *Hesed* and the Catholic Social Teaching of Solidarity." In the undergraduate student category, the 2017 winners are: for first place, Zachary Lewis Ludwig of Loyola University Chicago for the essay entitled "Methods and Consequences: Gender Construction by Western Missionaries in China." The second place award is given to Melina Oliverio of Elon University for the essay entitled "Migration and Identity: Sikh Practices in North Carolina." These essays will appear in the Spring 2018 and Fall 2018 issues of *The Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*. Chapter representatives, help us to honor your students' outstanding essays; encourage your students to submit their work for the 2018 Albert Clark Award. Further information about the Albert Clark Award can be found on our [website](#).



Note of Appreciation for Dr. Leo Madden, Editor of the *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*

For over 10 years, Dr. Leo Madden of Ohio Dominican University has served as Editor of *The Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*, expertly and impeccably directing the complex operations of this premier student journal. Dr. Madden has announced that he will end his term as Editor this coming year. For this reason, the Board expresses its utmost appreciation for the professionalism, erudition, and diligence of Dr. Madden whose editorship launched the 2006 issue of *JTAK*. Member-at-Large Dr. David Nikkel observed, "Dr. Madden has carried out his duties with efficiency, grace, and good humor." Dr. Madden is also the faculty representative for Alpha Epsilon Zeta chapter of Theta Alpha Kappa, which he helped to charter in 2001. With regard to what he has most enjoyed about serving as editor, Dr. Madden reports: "By far the greatest pleasure I have gained as editor of the journal is the moment when I inform students that their essays will appear in print in the journal. This news is even more exciting for them than the news that the author has earned first or second prize (and the monetary reward). For the students, they are so very thrilled that their hard work will appear in print." Colleagues appreciate the enthusiasm of Dr. Madden as well and board member Ellen Umanisky added: "What has made Leo so outstanding as editor has been his long-time commitment to the *Journal* and *TAK*, (and) his superb editorial abilities."



Induction Information and Ordering Induction Certificates

As many chapters induct members in the Spring, it is an auspicious time for a reminder that registration of inductees and ordering induction certificates happen through the [KENNETH E. JERNIGAN](#) website. A video is available on the ΘAK website that will take you through the steps involved in placing the orders. A link to Kenneth E. Jernigan website as well as to the instruction video can be found on our Theta Alpha Kappa website, under the menu option "Member Information" > "New Member Induction Form." If you're reading this electronically, you can [click here](#) to go to that page. Before chapter representatives visit the Kenneth E. Jernigan website, they should collect information from their inductees that is needed for the certificate requests and for ΘAK records: the student's name; the student's permanent address; the student's phone number and e-mail address; the student's anticipated year of graduation; and the anticipated date of induction (semester and year). Only chapter representatives (designated as "moderators" on the Kenneth E. Jernigan website) can enter induction information. Students are permitted, however, to order regalia from the Kenneth E. Jernigan website. Questions?

Contact: christopher.mcmahon@stvincent.edu