

March 2018  
New Series 10.1



# Theta Alpha Kappa

The National Honor Society for Religious Studies and Theology

## *The President's Newsletter*

### Board of Directors

#### President

Kelley Coblentz Bautch,  
St. Edward's University

#### Vice President

David Nikkel,  
University of North  
Carolina at Pembroke

#### Secretary

Eric F. Mason,  
Judson University

#### Treasurer

Christopher McMahon,  
Saint Vincent College

#### Members at Large

Ellen M. Umansky,  
Fairfield University

Oswald John Nira,  
Our Lady of the Lake  
University

Sharon Betsworth,  
Oklahoma City  
University

Michael Berger,  
Emory University

#### JTAK Editor

Bernadette McNary-Zak,  
Rhodes College

[www.thetaalphakappa.net](http://www.thetaalphakappa.net)

## 2018 Graduate Fellowship Awards Competition

If your TAK chapter has seniors or recent alumni continuing their studies of religion or theology at the graduate level next year, one may be nominated for the Graduate Fellowship Award. Nominees will compete for three prizes— 1st of \$3000, 2nd of \$2000, and 3rd of \$1000 — to be used for educational costs associated with matriculation in a religion or theology graduate degree program in Fall 2018.

This year, Theta Alpha Kappa is requesting electronic submission of applications and letters of recommendation. The application **from the nominee** must include the following:

- (1) a formal letter of application, detailing the nominee's long-term educational goals and intentions especially in light of the purpose of Theta Alpha Kappa;
- (2) a scan of an official undergraduate transcript with a visible imprint or watermark;
- (3) proof of acceptance **and** intent to matriculate into a relevant graduate program;
- (4) a list (on the same page) of a **physical** mailing address for the nominee that will be valid in June and July 2018; a statement from the student verifying that the transcript is an official transcript that accurately reflects the work of the student; the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of the two faculty members who are submitting letters of recommendation on behalf of the nominee; and the name, email address, and phone number of the TAK faculty representative at the chapter of the nominee, confirming the student's membership in TAK and that the individual is the chapter's nominee for the award.

The nominee's application materials should be sent as an attachment in **one PDF file** to [kelleyb@stedwards.edu](mailto:kelleyb@stedwards.edu).

The application also requires **two (2) letters of recommendation from faculty members** and **a separate letter from the TAK chapter representative** confirming the student's membership in TAK and that s/he is the chapter's nominee. Faculty should submit these letters to [kelleyb@stedwards.edu](mailto:kelleyb@stedwards.edu).

**All materials, from the nominee and those writing on behalf of the nominee, must be received by 11:00 pm CST, April 30, 2018.** Information about the Graduate Fellowship Award is also posted [here](#). Questions? Please contact [Dr. Coblentz Bautch](#).



## Undergraduate Achievement Award

If your chapter code number ends in the **digits 0—4**, 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. Christopher McMahon at: [Christopher.McMahon@stvincent.edu](mailto: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 five newly chartered chapters to our society.

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
Capital University	ANH
Averett University	ANΘ
Eastern University	ANI
UNC—Chapel Hill	ANK
Lindenwood University	ANA

These chapters join 297 active chapters of Theta Alpha Kappa, a thriving honor society which is also a member of the Association of

## Induction Information and Ordering Induction Certificates

**A**s 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 link to the 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 TAK 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 faculty 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. Honor cords for graduating seniors are quite popular and Jernigan is developing also class rings with the TAK insignia. Faculty representatives, please note: **no induction certificates or regalia will be shipped to chapters without advance payment.** Questions? Contact: [christopher.mcmahon@stvincent.edu](mailto:christopher.mcmahon@stvincent.edu).



## The 2018 Albert Clark Award Winners

**A**s you know, TAK student members are industrious and gifted, and Theta Alpha Kappa is delighted to have the opportunity to recognize their scholarship through the Albert Clark Awards competition each year. The awards are given to the best student essays in religious studies or theology submitted to our panel of judges. In the graduate student category, the 2018 winners are as follows. The first place award winner is David D. M. King of University of Denver-Iliff School of Theology for the essay entitled "Ektroma: A Reading of 1 Corinthians 15:8 by the Father of One Untimely Born." The second place award winner is Rebecca Serbu of Lee University for the essay entitled "Person and Potential: A Creative *Imago Dei* in Light of the Open Future." At the undergraduate level, the first place award winner is Evangeline Giaconia of Appalachian State University for the essay entitled "Beyond Gaia: Increasing Connectivity Between Humanity and the Other in the Worlds of Octavia Butler, Ursula K. LeGuin, and Diane Duane." The second place award winner is Jakob Breunig of UNC-Charlotte for the essay entitled "It Is that Kind of a Kiss: *Schindler's List* and the Erotic in American Holocaust Cinema."

Many thanks to the judges, who are also dedicated TAK faculty representatives, for their generous service and to Dr. Bernadette McNary-Zak for coordinating the Clark Awards. These four essays, along with six additional selected essays submitted for the Clark Awards, will appear in the 2019 issues of *The Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa*. Faculty representatives, help us to honor your students' outstanding essays; encourage your students to submit their work for the 2019 Albert Clark Award. Further information about the Albert Clark Award can be found on our [website](#).



## Note of Appreciation for Outgoing Board Member, Dr. John Nira

The National Board of Theta Alpha Kappa expresses gratitude to Dr. John Nira of Our Lady of the Lake University who will end his term on the Board of Directors in July 2018. Dr. Nira, who has served as Member-at-Large since 2011, has spearheaded committees tasked with significant work and, moreover, has brought to the Board unfailing good cheer and conscientiousness. Reflecting on Dr. Nira's contributions to TAK, Vice-President Dr. Nikkel observed, "I have much appreciated John's friendship, faithfulness, leadership, and insightful comments during his service on the Board." Dr. Nira, thank you for your service to TAK and for your collegiality!



## Survey and Assistance for New Faculty Representatives Forthcoming!

The National Board of Theta Alpha Kappa is reaching out to faculty representatives to see how the honor society can best serve you. Anticipate in the near future a survey seeking your perspectives and suggestions. The National Board is also aware that sometimes new faculty representatives need additional orientation about the responsibilities associated with their role, as well as about the opportunities available to TAK student and alumni members. We will be working to provide orientation materials for new faculty representatives. In the meantime, please contact the Board with any questions you may have.