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Rebecca Welzenbach  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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## Outstanding Chapter of English Society Heads to National Conference

March 14, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University's Alpha Eta Pi chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English honor society, will send two student representatives to the Sigma Tau Delta annual international convention, this year to be held March 28-31 in Pittsburgh, Penn.

Although IWU has previously sent student presenters to this conference, this year is especially important, because Alpha Eta Pi was recently named one of two outstanding Sigma Tau Delta chapters nationwide. The Outstanding Chapter award is presented annually to chapters that have demonstrated outstanding motivation, creativity and service.

Founded in 1924 at Dakota Wesleyan College in South Dakota by Judson Q. Owen, a 1913 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan, Sigma Tau Delta seeks to confer distinction upon outstanding students of the English language in undergraduate, graduate and professional studies. IWU's Alpha Eta Pi chapter, founded in 1998, is one of more than 600 chapters worldwide.

Rachel Shulman, the chapter's co-president, and Amanda ReCupido, an active member, will represent the chapter in Pittsburgh.

ReCupido, a senior English major from Hoffman Estates, Ill., will present a series of three poems titled, collectively, "Postcards." The first poem, "After AVA," was inspired by Carol Maso's novel of the same name. The second poem, "What Remained," uses a multiple choice test format to reflect on a relationship. "India," the final piece in the series, was featured in the fall issue of *Tributaries*, IWU's semiannual creative arts journal.

Shulman will read an academic paper, "Men's Aversion to Home in Joyce's *Dubliners*." Analyzing three of the works in James Joyce's short story collection, Shulman explores the way that Joyce's protagonists avoid their homes, which have become oppressive prisons rather than restful havens.

Chapter co-presidents Shulman and Anne Wilkinson, an English writing and French double major from Hopkins, Minn., applied for the award in October with the guidance of faculty sponsor Mike Theune, associate professor of English.

The application consisted of a summary of the chapter's accomplishments over the last school year, under former executive board president Megan Mondri, class of 2006. Last year the chapter successfully co-hosted its first regional undergraduate literature conference and also established an English Department journal. Other activities included coordinating book clubs, organizing student and faculty research colloquia and collecting books and money for various charitable causes.

As an Outstanding Chapter, Alpha Eta Pi will receive a \$350 award and plaque and the opportunity to share chapter activities and achievements with other chapters through an information table at the convention. The chapter will receive an additional award for sending at least one member to the Sigma Tau Delta annual business meeting, which will take place at the convention.

Contact: Rebecca Welzenbach, (309) 556-3181