



ETA KAPPA NU

Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society

Eta Kappa Nu (HKN) is pleased to share a brief summary of a successful 2009 student leadership conference.

More than 60 enthusiastic HKN student members from across the country gathered at the University of Michigan, Dearborn (UMD) November 6–8, 2009 for a weekend of leadership activities organized by Theta Tau chapter. This year's conference theme was "Driving Towards Tomorrow's Technology," a most appropriate focus for the Motor City.

The conference kicked off with a warm welcome from Provost Catherine Davy and a brief report from two members of the HKN Board of Governors, Eddie Pettis and Evelyn Hirt, who were thrilled to meet the members and represent the organization's administration.

The students enjoyed the lectures by Nick Thorne, Ford Motor Company, Haukur Asgeirsson, DTE Energy, Sherif Marakby, Ford Motor Company, and Brian Theriault, General Electric. The speakers provided technical information about advancements in vehicle applications such as the Ford's new Sync voice activated system, and the progress of environmentally friendly hybrid systems and battery powered vehicles.



Demonstrations of the Sync technology and the chance to see a Saturn Vue prototype which had been converted from a hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) to a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) were highlights of the conference.



One of the most important aspects of leadership development is communication and team building. Hank Lenox, a clinical professor at UMD, organized the students into small groups to design and evaluate the processes in the "Mouse Trap" game and the groups' competitive natures came out as they tried to capture more mice than their peers. Sunday morning's session, "Dominoes for Engineers," run by Natu Natarajan, gave a real world scenario for students to design a small part of a bigger project and piece together series of transmitters to light up LEDs in various designs.

As always, the chapter development discussion was a highlight of the conference and provided an opportunity for the students to share the activities and ideas of their home institutions with other chapters. Each student said they learned something that can be implemented in their own chapter in the area of recruiting, fundraising, volunteering or social activities. The brainstorming notes from this discussion are available online at www.hkn.org.

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Thanks to the University of Michigan, Dearborn, Dynetics, and IEEE for sponsoring the activities of the conference. Without their support, Theta Tau would not have been able to organize and conduct such a successful event.

