My Convention experience in New Orleans, Louisiana

 by Jessica Reyes

Going down to Louisiana for the 2012 Sigma Tau Delta International Convention, I anticipated heat, good food, and lots of intelligent conversation. What I didn’t anticipate was how much the experience of the convention would deepen my relationships with my fellow chapter members. From sharing a small hotel room to attending convention sessions and events to walking the streets of New Orleans, my chapter-mates and I returned from the convention with a stronger commitment to each other, our chapter, and the Society.

This year, six members from my chapter attended the convention, and four of us decided to share a room together. Sharing one small hotel room between four girls is never easy. It took a couple of days for us to figure out who liked to venture as a large group and who preferred more intimate outings, who wanted to attend every session and who wanted to see the sights of New Orleans. However, sharing our convention and travel experiences helped us learn more about each other and made us more invested in making each other’s trip successful. It was great to always have someone around to talk about the awesome ideas I generated from sessions or the inspiring people I met from other chapters. At night, upon returning from our adventures around the French Quarter, we’d lounge around our hotel room and share the highlights of our day.

Attending Convention as a group also increased our collective desire to be more active in Sigma Tau Delta. The energy and motivation we brought home was exponentially greater because so many of our members shared in the experience of convention. We tried to attend an array of sessions so that we had a bunch of ideas to bring home. We eagerly discussed how we could apply the things we learned to our own chapter. The Student Leadership workshops, in particular, always gave us lots to talk about. Following the Recruitment and Retention Workshop on Saturday, we considered the pros and cons of expanding our membership to non-English majors, and we were excited about a penny-war fundraising idea we’d hear about from another chapter. Returning home, my chapter-mates and I are more committed to planning and executing these projects because we shared in their inception at the convention.

Now that we’ve returned from New Orleans, those of us who attended the convention have shared our amazing experiences with as many people as we could, including current members, potential recruits, and professors in our department. We hope that the excitement and energy we’ve brought back will inspire others to join the Society and travel to Portland in 2013.