writing recommendations can be more meaningful and effective as a result of working closely with students in a research project. On the other hand, the additional work load for the staff can be immense...but also enjoyable. At any rate, a mandatory undergraduate research requirement is probably not feasible for every biology program.

If anyone would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive advanced information about the Saint Mary's College Symposium, please notify the Biology Dept., Saint Mary's College, Winona, MN 55987.

TRI-BETA IN THE MIDWEST

By
Ted C. Michaud, Carroll College, Waukesha, Wisconsin

Beta Beta Beta is a society for students, primarily undergraduates in the biological sciences, that was founded in Oklahoma City in 1922. Today there are more than 320 chapters in the United States and Puerto Rico, 63 of which are in the North Central Region. Although AMCBET includes several additional states, the North Central Region of Tri-Beta roughly approximates the scope of AMCBET.

Beta Beta Beta is dedicated to improving the understanding and appreciation of biological science and to the fostering of undergraduate biological research. The national organization publishes a journal, Bios, devoted to undergraduate research papers given at District and National Conventions, to articles of chapter activities, to book reviews of new biological publications and to articles of historical interest to biologists. Beta Beta Beta maintains a National Office at Unadilla, New York, that funds student travel to National Conventions, keeps chapters informed of operating procedures, coordinates the
Professional activity is the real value of membership in Beta Beta Beta and thus the real justification for the continued existence of both the individual chapters and the society as a whole.

Although chapters will vary from campus to campus, certain features are common to all. A chapter of Tri Beta is:

1. A group of biology majors and their associates.
2. Primarily undergraduates.
3. Working toward professional competence in ways that cannot or are not likely to occur in the classroom.

The major objectives of the society are:

1. To promote scholarship in the biological sciences.
2. To promote the dissemination of biological knowledge.
3. To encourage biological research.

The aim is to foster the development of professional biologists.

Tri Beta can serve an important function in yet another way. No matter how "open" an instructor may be, the classroom puts certain restraints on student-teacher relationships. Most instructors try to direct students toward predetermined experiences and understandings. A Tri Beta activity, on the other hand, is a place where the student and the instructor interact as equals; where both learn from each other and more about the other. It is an activity that enhances the educational experience.

Student research is presented at 13 district conventions every year and at the national convention every other year. National registration fees help support these conventions. The national convention was held in Tempe, Arizona in 1984 and will be held in New Orleans in 1986. The conventions offer undergraduates a chance to report their research, to hear outstanding graduate researchers and to interact with the faculty and students at other chapters. Tri Beta is unique in that the national registration fees help defray the travel costs of its members through grants to chapters that send delegates to the national meeting.

The Frank G. Brooks Award for excellence in undergraduate research is presented at both the district and national conventions. Certificates are awarded to Brooks Award Winners and a plaque is presented to the institution these winners represent. A cash award is made if these papers are accepted and published in Bios. An additional award, the McClung Award is given for the outstanding paper published in Bios each year. The Lloyd E. Bertholf Award is presented to the outstanding chapter nationally each year. Frank Brooks was founder of the society; McClung and Bertholf were early presidents of the society. The Chapter History Award has recently been added for the outstanding display of chapter activities in scrapbook format.

The North Central Region is composed of two districts. The Eastern District has 35 chapters (Illinois 16; Wisconsin 9; Iowa 6; Minnesota 4). The Western District has 28 chapters (South Dakota 2; Iowa 2; Kansas 4; Missouri 14; Nebraska 6). Colleges or universities considering initiating a chapter should contact Mrs. Anne B. Siegel, National Secretary-Treasurer, P.O. Box M, Unadilla, NY 13849. Further assistance may be obtained by contacting Dr. Ted C. Michaud, Eastern District Director and Regional Vice President, Carroll College, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186 or Dr. James D. Hoerter, Western District Director, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri 65215.

The National Secretary-Treasurer has available, on request,
information on all aspects of Tri Beta activities, copies of the national constitution, procedural information for local chapter officers, information on Beta Beta Beta lapel pins, keys and sports wear, and national or regional lists of chapters.

My experience has been that Beta Beta Beta can be the "glue" that cements a lasting relationship between Biology Department faculty and students. It gives a potential biologist an early start at the professional activities expected in his field. The society is strong in the midwest and continues to grow.

A NEW YEAR'S PRESENT!

NIH ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PRODUCTIVE UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTIONS: ADVANCE WORD

April 1, 1985, will be the first deadline for the National Institutes of Health's new program, which the Congress recently recommended, to support faculty research at "four year, public and private colleges and universities, which provide undergraduate training for a significant number of our nation's research scientists [but] have not shared adequately in the growth of the NIH extramural [research] program" (House Report 98-911).

In fiscal 1985, NIH expects to spend $5.0 million to support research by faculty at undergraduate colleges which have

+ received less than $200,00 in research grants from Public Health Service component agencies, and

+ have graduated since 1977 at least twenty-five students who have gone on to receive doctoral (M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M. and Ph.D.) degrees in a health science field.

Proposals will go through the regular NIH review procedure.

The Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA) does not share in this program.

Additional details will be available when guidelines for these new Academic Research Enhancement Awards are published in January 1985. In the meantime, we understand that the one-time grants may be for a maximum $50,000 over two years for feasibility studies and other small projects that will pave the way for applications for regular, full-scale NIH research grants -- "mainstreaming," in other words.