Cal Poly College of Engineering Recognizes Outstanding Faculty and Staff

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's College of Engineering recognized outstanding faculty and staff members at its recent annual awards banquet, held at the Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo.

Two outstanding staff awards and a faculty advisor award were presented, as well as five industry-sponsored faculty awards.

In addition, professors from the College of Science and Mathematics and from the College of Liberal Arts were honored.

Mechanical engineering Associate Professor William Murray of Grover Beach won the $2,000 Northrop Grumman Excellence in Teaching Award and was named the Lockheed Martin Endowed Professor, a $20,000, two-year appointment.

The appointment recognizes his work with the aerospace community to develop a research program in thrust-vectoring aerospike nozzles. His research presents a novel approach that might change the way rocket nozzles are built, and has established Cal Poly as a leader in the field. A graduate of the University of Texas, Austin, Murray earned his Ph.D. at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Civil and environmental engineering Associate Professor Damian Kachlakev of Arroyo Grande received the $3,000 Northrop Grumman Excellence in Research and Development Award.

Kachlakev created the nationally recognized Swimming Pool Research Center, the only one of its kind in the United States. Research results from the center have influenced industry development, and have established Cal Poly's reputation as a premier venue to tackle practical research and applications relevant to existing industry problems. Recognized by the National Science Foundation, the center receives ongoing funding of approximately $200,000 per year, making it the largest long-term funded project in the College of Engineering.

Mechanical engineering Associate Professor Andrew Davol of Atascadero received the $3,000 Raytheon Excellence in Teaching and Applied Research Award.

Davol's students laud his ability to bring real-world engineering experience into the classroom. His enthusiasm and non-traditional approach in using real design examples also garnered him high marks. Davol's ongoing research projects include a three-year National Science Foundation project to develop analytical models for the growth and remodeling of cartilage.

Mechanical engineering Associate Professor Chris Pascual of Templeton received the $3,000 Wingate Foundation Award for Excellence in Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning. The new award was established by 1950 Cal Poly alumnus John Wingate to recognize an outstanding faculty member or student in the HVAC program.

The first to receive the award, Pascual was recognized for his tireless contributions in expanding the HVAC program, developing new classes and laboratories to support the program, and undertaking outreach activities to broaden public awareness of the program.

Engineering students selected the recipients of the Outstanding Achievement in Teaching Awards and Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award. Winners included mathematics Professor Goro Kato of San Luis Obispo, and English lecturer Melody DeMeritt of Morro Bay. Students recognized Kato as "an amazing teacher who truly cares about the class, loves the subject, and inspires his students to achieve better for themselves in school and in life." Students also said that those who take DeMeritt's class "will come out a far better and well-rounded student."

John Seng, San Luis Obispo, won the 2006 Outstanding Club Advisor Award for mentoring the Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineers Computer Society. His dedication inspired students to build robots, pursue high-tech software, and enjoy leadership responsibilities.

The college's Outstanding Staff Awards were given to Ladd Caine, technical support for Industrial and Manufacturing
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Engineering, and Dan Powell of Aerospace Engineering.

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