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Cal Poly Engineering Announces Faculty and Staff Awards

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly's College of Engineering announced recipients of industry and donor-sponsored faculty awards, an endowed professorship and the 2014 Outstanding Staff Awards. The presentations were made at the College of Engineering's winter meeting held Dec. 11.

Electrical Engineering Associate Professor Dale Dolan received the two-year, \$40,000 Lockheed Martin Endowed Professorship; Mechanical Engineering Professor Russ Westphal was awarded the \$1,000 Raytheon Excellence in Teaching and Applied Research Award.

An endowment established by donors Don and Paula Heye made two new college awards possible this year: The Don & Paula Heye Award for Outstanding Club Advisor was presented to John Fabijanic, lecturer in the Mechanical Engineering Department; and the Don & Paula Heye Award for Outstanding Teaching was presented to Vladimir Prodanov, assistant professor in the Electrical Engineering Department.

Donna Aiken, administrative support coordinator in Computer Engineering, and Cody Thompson, technical support staff in Aerospace Engineering, received this year's Outstanding Staff Awards.

Lockheed Martin Professorship

The Lockheed Martin Professorship recognizes a faculty member who has contributed new knowledge in the field of engineering, partners with industry, involves students with advanced ideas, and enhances teaching by introducing state-of-the-art topics into the classroom.

Dolan works in the area of power and energy, focusing on energy efficiency, sustainable energy and power electronics, all which directly serve the aerospace industry. His partnerships with industry included work with Airbus Defense and Space, Inc., on the "MEA (More Electric Aircraft) Failure Simulation" project. He also received support from Lockheed Martin for his work with the Cal Poly Sustainable Power for Electrical Resources project and from Northrop Grumman for work on cold capable electronics. All of these projects have involved and supported student work in new areas in the field of engineering. Dolan has an extensive record of scholarly activities, having co-authored two journal papers and 30 conference papers during the last five years. Over the same period he served as principal investigator on 16 awarded grants with a total value of \$665,000.

Raytheon Excellence in Teaching & Applied Research

Westphal does research in the area of aerodynamics instrumentation. He received grants from the U.S. Air Force, Northrop Grumman and NASA for a wing boundary layer data measurement system, an innovative configuration for energy efficiency, which led to revolutionary instrumentation.

Known as a professor whose "number one motive is to make sure students learn,"

Westphal is said to work effortlessly with students to mold them into credible engineers. "His love for the subject is completely contagious," said a student, "but more than that, he sincerely wants us to do well."

With a career that includes more than 20 years of professional experience, Westphal provides information and an industry perspective that cannot always be found in a textbook or technical journal.

Don & Paula Heye Award for Outstanding Club Advisor

The Outstanding Club Advisor Award recognizes a club leader who inspires student participation, seeks outside resources for the club, provides mentoring, and makes connections between club activities, learning and the students' future.

As advisor to the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), Fabijanic promotes and supports a very active SAE student professional chapter. He serves as mentor, coach and technical advisor to three SAE student design competition teams, including Formula SAE, Formula Electric and SAE Mini Baja. In addition to spending weekends and evenings attending team design reviews, Fabijanic also helped acquire industry support for materials and funding.

In the last three years, Fabijanic championed team senior projects focused on SAE and other vehicles. Students who worked with him to design, fabricate, test and compete have secured positions at companies such as Honda, Apple, SpaceX, Tesla and Lockheed Martin. Notes one student, "As a member of the Formula SAE team, I have been challenged through Professor Fabijanic to develop my engineering abilities well beyond the reach of traditional classroom settings."

Don & Paula Heye Award for Outstanding Teaching

This award recognizes an exemplary teacher, who serves as a content expert while encouraging deep learning.

Prodanov's recognition is tied to his classroom teaching initiatives, such as video recordings, redesign of connected lab experiences and the senior project lab. Prodanov worked in the electronics industry and as an entrepreneur for 12 years before joining Cal Poly and holds 20 U.S. patents. He understands what is required to succeed in a highly technical area and ensures that his students are well prepared for professional practice.

A student notes that Prodanov's "assignments and labs are thoughtful and embody Learn by Doing." Says another: "He is the professor that has prepared me for the real world. From his classes, I have received the critical thinking, hands-on learning and decision-making skills that will enable me to thrive in the career of my choice."

Outstanding Staff Awards

Aiken

As the sole support staff for the Computer Engineering Program (CPE), Aiken has a wide range of responsibilities, such as developing logistics for the CPE mentor program, collecting permission numbers for senior projects, sending weekly emails to students in the major, editing the CPE alumni newsletters, tracking the program budget, supervising student assistants, overseeing a makeover of the program website and handling all other office management tasks. She also writes personalized thank you letters to CPE donors and has created an alumni database. Aiken is highly regarded for her competence, friendliness and dependability. "She makes the numerous challenging tasks and events she organizes seem like effortless endeavors," said a faculty member. "I feel extremely lucky to get to work with her."

Thompson

The only technician for the Aerospace Engineering Department, Thompson is recognized as a multi-tasking problem solver, with infinite patience for last-minute requests. "Cody Thompson's experience and willingness to help students and fellow faculty make him an invaluable asset, not only to the aerospace composites lab, but to the entire college of engineering," noted a student. His versatility and experience with anything technical, mechanical or operational, coupled with his enthusiastic willingness to help out, has made him the go-to guy for students working in the engineering laboratories. This year he took on the extra assignment of teaching a senior-level propulsion lab, including experiments running a hybrid and liquid rocket, a gas turbine, and a supersonic wind tunnel.

Photos:

— *Faculty, from left: Dolan, Prodanov, Westphal, Fabijanac*

— *Staff: Aiken and Thompson*

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