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Outstanding Engineering Faculty Achievements Recognized

BLACKSBURG, Va., April 20, 2006 --The tenth annual engineering faculty reception was held yesterday at Virginia Tech at which time Dean Richard Benson presented awards to faculty members for many outstanding achievements.

President Emeritus Paul Torgersen was recognized first with a special award for his “sustained and exceptional service to engineering students through excellence in teaching and scholarship.” This semester marks Torgersen’s fiftieth year of teaching. “I doubt there are many engineering educators who have served as a department head, as a dean and as a president of a university who can say that they continued to teach each and every year despite all of the administrative demands. And in the 2004-05 academic year, Paul’s teaching effectiveness still listed him as the number one ranked professor in his curriculum,” said Benson.

The next awards presented were the Dean’s Awards for Excellence to engineering faculty in each of these categories: teaching innovation, research, service, and outstanding new assistant professor.

Robert Hendricks, of electrical and computer engineering, received the first of three Dean’s Award for Excellence in Teaching Innovation. His department credits him with the recent restructuring of its sophomore and junior electronics and circuit course offerings. Michael Madigan, of engineering science and mechanics, received this award for completely restructuring a senior/graduate level course in biomechanics, developing the entire course around three hands-on bio-mechanical laboratories. The third recipient is John Shewchuk, of industrial and systems engineering (ISE). He pioneered the introduction of the ISE course, Data Management for Industrial Engineers, and is introducing another pilot course, Lean Manufacturing, this semester.

The first recipient of the Dean’s Award for Excellence in Research is Kevin Granata, of engineering science and mechanics. He has established a major research program, developing

innovative methods to quantify low back stability that are considered cutting edge. The second recipient is Joseph Wang of aerospace and ocean engineering. Wang is recognized as one of the leading experts in space technology and spacecraft reliability/space mission assurance. The third recipient is Yue (Joe) Wang of electrical and computer engineering in northern Virginia. He works in the area of medical image processing, and his research covers many aspects of disease diagnosis and classification via imaging techniques.

The next category of awards is the Dean's Award for Excellence in Service. The first recipient is John Lesko of engineering science and mechanics (ESM). He has served on many department, college, and university level committees and formed and chaired the National Mechanics Initiative Committee. The second recipient is James Martin of civil and environmental engineering. He has worked closely with President Steger to develop the World Institute for Disaster Risk Management at Virginia Tech, a new Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science center. The third recipient is Hanif Sherali of industrial and systems engineering. He recently co-organized and chaired the First International Conference on Complementarity, Duality, and Global Optimization in Science and Engineering. Sherali is also prominently active on the editorial board of eight leading journals in the field and is a co-founder of the ISE Mentoring Committee for junior faculty.

Of the three faculty named as Outstanding New Assistant Professors, the first is Scott Huxtable of mechanical engineering. He is rapidly developing a highly visible program in micro/nano-scale thermal transport and was just awarded an NSF CAREER Award. Huxtable is also a recipient of a Certificate of Teaching Excellence this year. The second recipient is Allen Mackenzie of electrical and computer engineering. His research and interests center on the design and analysis of wireless networks, particularly those incorporating adaptive or cognitive radios. He is also an NSF CAREER Award winner. The third recipient is Linsey Marr of civil and environmental engineering. In the past two years, she has been the PI or co-PI on research contracts totaling over \$1.2 million, including an NSF CAREER award. She is helping to redevelop an air pollution and atmospheric processes component to CEE's nationally recognized environmental and water resources program.

The next award category was the College of Engineering Faculty Fellow program, which carries a \$5000 account for research support for three years. The first recipient is Luiz Da Silva of electrical and computer engineering. He specializes in networking, particularly resource

management in wireless networks. Currently, he is involved in five sponsored projects, valued at about \$1 million. The second recipient is Marte Gutierrez of civil and environmental engineering (CEE). He is a member of the geotechnical component of CEE and is the lead investigator for the NSF AMADEUS project. The third faculty fellow is Naira Hovakimyan of aerospace and ocean engineering. She has produced more than 100 refereed publications in journals and conferences. Her research area is adaptive control of unmanned aerial vehicles, and she is supported by the Air Force, the Office of Naval Research and Boeing.

Marty Johnson is the fourth Faculty Fellow. He has developed a highly successful research program in the area of acoustics, concentrating on noise and vibration control. He has obtained over \$2 million in external funding, including a \$500,000 award from NIOSH and an \$686,000 award from Boeing. The fifth Faculty Fellow is Janis Terpenney of engineering education, who serves as co-director of the multi-university NSF e-Design Center. Her work with this center has led to her being a PI or a Co-PI on NSF and industry grants totaling over \$5 million. Her research goal is to revolutionize how engineered products and systems are designed. The final faculty fellow is Peter Vikesland of civil and environmental engineering. He is in his fourth year at Virginia Tech after spending two years as a post-doc at Johns Hopkins. He has six papers published in *Environmental Science and Technology*, the most highly respected journal in this field.

The W.S. "Pete" White Award for Innovation in Teaching was presented to Ron Kriz of engineering science and mechanics. He is a pioneer in the use of computer graphics for education and scientific research. His innovative use of computing and information technology at Virginia Tech started in 1991 when he offered the ESM course *Scientific Visual Data Analysis and Multimedia*.

John Casali, of industrial and systems engineering, received the College Award for Outreach Excellence. In 2005, he was elected president of the National Hearing Conservation Association. This organization is known for its significant impact on acoustical standards-making, and also on OSHA and other regulations. He has also extensively served the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society and the Institute of Industrial Engineers, and has achieved the status of Fellow in both groups.

Of the four Certificates of Teaching Excellence awarded, the first was awarded to Greg Adel of mining and minerals engineering. Besides teaching mineral processing and particulate process modeling for his home department, he has taught the introduction to engineering classes to the freshmen for many years. He is an ardent supporter of the student organizations in the mining department. The second recipient is Gerald Luttrell, also of mining and minerals engineering, who has impressive teaching credentials. His cumulative student evaluations rating since 1986 is about a 3.7, and he has developed nine new courses. In addition, he has been instrumental in generating some \$12 and a half million of research funding and is recognized as the inventor on 14 patents. The third recipient is Pushkin Kachroo of electrical and computer engineering. Pushkin received the 2001 Outstanding New Assistant Professor Award when only one such award was presented. At that time, he was lauded for teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in five different areas of ECE. The fourth recipient is Scott Huxtable of mechanical engineering, mentioned above.