Feiszli named U.S. Professor of the Year for South Dakota

James Feiszli, Director of Music at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, has been named 2013 U.S. Professor of the Year for the state of South Dakota by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

The prestigious award recognizes undergraduate instructors throughout the country who excel in teaching and positively influencing the lives and careers of students.

Five of the 13 professors who have received the U.S. Professor of the Year honor for South Dakota have come from the School of Mines, more than from any other college or university within the state. Highly selective, the award was begun in 1981. This year a state Professor of the Year was recognized in 36 states. Feiszli was among a pool of more than 350 top professors in the United States considered.

He accepted his award at a luncheon in Washington, D.C. The public is invited to celebrate Feiszli's honor with the university during receptions following the annual holiday performances at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Those concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, and Sunday, Dec. 8.

"The panel was very impressed by Professor Feiszli's work building a music program at a school of engineering and technology. At a place where he knew he would not be teaching music majors, he has developed a model music program. Even more important, however, is the student's success," said Heather Wilson, president and scholar, and all of us at Mines are very happy for him,” said Heather Wilson, president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

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Senior selected as George J. Mitchell Scholar

Travis Davis, a senior mechanical engineering major at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, has been selected as a George J. Mitchell Scholar.

The US-Ireland Alliance selected 12 recipients from among 300 applicants nationwide. Recipients will spend one year of postgraduate study in any discipline offered by institutions of higher learning in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Applicants are judged on three criteria – scholarship, leadership and a sustained commitment to community and public service.

Davis, of Camp Crook, will study bioengineering at Trinity College Dublin.

“Travis Davis is an exceptional young leader and scholar, and all of us at Mines are very happy for him,” said Heather Wilson, president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

The School of Mines has not had any applicants for the Rhodes, Marshall, Gates or Mitchell scholarships in many years. Wilson, a Rhodes Scholar who has served on the Rhodes selection committee in the Rocky Mountain region in the past, said, “Our best students can compete for these prestigious scholarships with students from any university in the country. Some of them needed to be encouraged to apply. We had three applicants this year for the Rhodes and Mitchell. All of them were very competitive, and Travis was fortunate to have earned the Mitchell. He will be a great role model for others.”

Early in his college career, Davis worked at John Deere as an engineering intern; at Caterpillar, ensuring diesel engines met EPA standards; and at NASA with four different internships. His mother, born without a hip joint, had undergone multiple surgeries, and when Davis began college, a recurrence of his mother’s health crisis worsened to the point that an amputation, a hemipelvectomy, was the only procedure that would save her life.

While at NASA, Davis designed cryogenic valves that were printed out of metal using a cutting-edge manufacturing process known as Direct Metal Laser Sintering. The process is also used to develop custom prosthetics. While completing his projects at NASA, Davis always linked the technologies he was working with to his mother’s struggles.

Growing up on a cattle and sheep ranch in one of the most rural parts of the United States, Davis is a volunteer firefighter, a pilot and a junior high basketball referee. He has helped his close-knit community, which supported his family by establishing a fundraiser to make their house disabled accessible, assisted with farm and ranch chores and in checking on his mother.

Despite being courted by NASA, Davis believes he must help others avoid the hardships his mother endured. He has an “unfaltering passion … driven by an intimate understanding of what is at stake.”

At Mines, Davis is a Delta Sigma Phi member.

“I am ecstatic to be considered a George J. Mitchell Scholar. Receiving support from my family, my community and SDSM&T made this dream a reality. Hopefully my success will help students to realize that when opportunities are offered, you should at least give it a shot,” Davis said.

The Mitchell Scholarship Program provides tuition, accommodations, a living expenses stipend and an international travel stipend.

Welcome regents

The School of Mines hosts the South Dakota Board of Regents this week for its final meeting of 2013. The full board convenes in an open session at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 4, in the Surbeck Center Ballroom.

President Heather Wilson will welcome regents with a School of Mines presentation followed by board recognition of SDSM&T student organizations and other agenda items.

After Wednesday’s meeting, Mines faculty, staff and students are invited to join regents for a community forum from 5-5:30 p.m. in the ballroom.

A complete meeting agenda is available at http://www.sdbor.edu/theboard/agenda/2013/December.htm
The South Dakota School of Mines & Technology has been ranked ninth in the Military Times EDGE “Best for Vets: Colleges 2014” survey.

It is the fourth consecutive year the university has ranked in the top 10 in the magazine’s survey. The School of Mines was ranked second in 2013, eighth in 2012 and was tied for third in 2011. The distinction recognizes and rewards colleges and universities for their commitment to providing opportunities to America’s veterans.

Of 2,640 current students, there are 158 veterans enrolled in the School of Mines.

The organization comprising Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times placed a new emphasis this year on academic rigor when conducting and scoring the fourth annual survey, a 150-question analysis of schools’ complete offerings for veterans.

“A Gold Star for those who worked on the application and especially for those who work every day to make our vets feel welcomed and supported on this campus,” said School of Mines President Heather Wilson, who graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in the third class to include women.

Services offered at the School of Mines Veteran Resource Center include assistance with scholarship searches and applications, as well as resumes and cover letters; counseling and referral services for VA benefits, G.I. bills and community veterans organizations; academic and life-skills advising and instruction in areas such as learning styles, test preparation, note taking, time management, stress management and wellness; and tutoring.

“Best for Vets” provides service men and women a gauge by which to judge whether a school or degree program will benefit them. The extensive evaluation process considered service member enrollment, percentage of tuition covered by the GI Bill, and availability of specific programs to help service members. It also considered statistics commonly used to track student success and academic quality, including student loan default rates, retention rates, graduation rates and student-faculty ratio.

“As with all of the ‘Best for Vets’ rankings, ‘Best for Vets: Colleges’ is an editorially independent news project that evaluates the many factors that make an institution a good fit for military veterans,” said Amanda Miller, editor of Military Times EDGE.

The rankings are published in full in the November issue of Military Times EDGE magazine, the premier publication for military transition, and online at MilitaryTimes.com, as well as ArmyTimes.com, NavyTimes.com, AirForceTimes.com and MarineCorpsTimes.com.

For the full listing, visit http://projects.militarytimes.com/jobs/best-for-vets/2014/colleges/4-year/

The School of Mines has consistently been recognized as one of the most military friendly schools, including previously by G.I. Jobs magazine. For more information about the School of Mines veterans’ program visit http://vrc.sdsmt.edu/
Diwali Night 2013

More than 500 people converged at the School of Mines for Diwali Night 2013 hosted by the India Club. Diwali is the largest festival in India, celebrating peace and harmony beyond the Hindu religion. The evening included traditional and modern dances, skits, henna hand-painting stations, Indian cuisine and an elaborate fireworks display.
From consoles to computers, the student group Gamers for Service at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology picked up the controls this November to save lives. Hosting its first-ever 25-hour gaming marathon, the student organization raised $1,400 for the Children's Miracle Network, which it will donate to Rapid City Regional Hospital.

“This was Gamers for Service's first time hosting it, and as far as we can tell, we are the first university in South Dakota to hold it," said Trent Slichter, president of the organization. Gamers for Service joins groups around the globe participating in Extra Life, a gaming marathon in which players recruit sponsors and raise donations for Children's Miracle Network hospitals. Since 2008, thousands of gamers have raised more than $4 million.

“Our goal for this year was to reach $1,000, and we topped out at $1,446 with another $100 or so in cash donations from players who showed up the day of the event," said Slichter, a senior chemistry major from Sioux Falls.

The second fundraiser of the semester, this event follows a campus-wide game of Humans vs. Zombies, which saw 175 participants and raised $900. “Between Humans vs. Zombies and Extra Life, a gaming marathon in which players recruit sponsors and raise donations for Children's Miracle Network hospitals. Since 2008, thousands of gamers have raised more than $4 million.

SDSM&T partners with community for coat drive

Student groups Circle K and the Rotaract Club at the School of Mines spread the warmth this season, partnering with the American Advertising Federation-Black Hills (AAF-Black Hills) and students at Black Hills State University and the University Center Rapid City to launch AAF-Black Hills’ first-ever “Warm Up” Coat Drive.

Running through most of November, the groups collected new and gently used adult- and child-sized coats from the community to deliver to those in need on the Pine Ridge reservation.
Johnson earns McKetta Scholarship

School of Mines senior Kati Johnson, a chemical engineering student from Buffalo, has received the John J. McKetta Undergraduate Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded to just one upcoming junior or senior nationwide who plans to pursue a career in the chemical engineering process industries. As this year’s recipient, Johnson receives a $5,000 scholarship.

She recently accepted her award at an American Institute of Chemical Engineers gala in New York City.

Machado earns top honors at AIChE Conference

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology senior Joe Bob Machado, a chemical engineering student from Willis, Texas, recently earned top honors at the national American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) conference in San Francisco.

Machado placed second in the Harry West Award competition in the Fuels and Petrochemical Division for his poster presentation and finished third in the Fuels, Petrochemicals and Energy II Division competition.

Machado’s poster presentation was about his research designing a mass algae production method that most efficiently uses land area while maximizing the production of biodiesel.

The Harry West Award is presented to undergraduate students who submit the best paper on subjects relevant to fuels, petrochemicals or safety. Three students are selected and given a plaque and a $500 scholarship. Awardees are recognized in AIChE’s newsletter and at the AIChE Annual Student Brunch. Their papers will also be published to the Fuel and Petrochemical Division’s website.
Students make their mark at AISES national conference

Among the more than 1,600 attendees at the 2013 American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) national conference, two South Dakota School of Mines & Technology students stood apart from the crowd.

Jacob Phipps, a senior chemistry major and Tiospaye scholar of the Muscogee Nation, won first place and the $1,000 prize for his poster presentation “Forestville Mystery Cave State Park Spring – Inventory/Chemistry & Flow Systems.”

Civil engineering major Leo Chasing, a Sicangu Lakota sophomore from the Rosebud Sioux tribe, was awarded the Sequoyah Lifetime AISES Fellow Membership. The fellowship program derives its name from Sequoyah, the American Indian who perfected the Cherokee alphabet in 1821, resulting in total tribal literacy in less than one year. Sequoyah fellows are recognized for their commitment to leadership, mentorship and acts of service that support students and professionals in the American Indian community.

Domingo Tamayo, a Sicangu Lakota junior and physics major from the Rosebud Sioux tribe; Kimberlyn Cameron, a geological engineering senior and Tiospaye scholar of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe; and Grace Sumption, a senior geology major, former Tiospaye scholar and member of the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe, also presented at the conference.

A premier event for American Indian professionals, the AISES National Conference convenes graduate, undergraduate and high school students, educators, workforce professionals and corporate and government partners in science, technology, engineering and math fields nationwide.

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About Legacy News

Legacy News is produced by the Office of University Relations the first Wednesday of each month. The newsletter is largely a compilation of news releases, photos and Web articles.

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Read full story at http://www.sdsmt.edu/News/Feiszli-named-U-S-Professor-of-the-Year/