Mines Named National Merit Scholar Program Sponsor

SD Mines has been selected as a sponsor of the National Merit Scholar Program in recognition of the university’s ability to attract high-achieving National Merit Finalists. Currently, three National Merit Finalists who are high school seniors have named South Dakota Mines as their first-choice university, joining the six freshmen National Merit Finalists already on campus. Since 2010, SD Mines has enrolled 19 National Merit Finalists.

“SD Mines attracts exceptional students who want to be challenged and given personal attention,” said Heather Wilson, president of SD Mines. “We are very pleased to be selected as a sponsor of the National Merit Scholar Program.”

As a National Merit Scholar, students receive $12,000 over four years through a combination of scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and SD Mines. Currently, 244 universities are sponsors of the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Each year, approximately 1.5 million high school students take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) to enter the annual National Merit Scholarship Program. From the large pool of participants, some 16,000 students are designated National Merit Program Semifinalists, representing the highest scorers in every state. Qualifying finalists who have a strong academic record and high school recommendation, have taken the SAT and submitted a scholarship application may receive a Merit Scholarship award, but available funding limits the number to only about 8,000 scholarship winners each year.

New PayScale Report Ranks Mines Among Nation’s Elite

PayScale’s newest annual College Return on Investment Report ranks the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology 24th nationally for return on investment (ROI) with a 20-year net ROI of $718,000 – in front of the likes of Purdue, Columbia, Dartmouth and major research, engineering and science universities like Michigan and Virginia Tech.

Additionally, PayScale ranked SD Mines in the top 15 for both public and engineering colleges in the nation for in-state and out-of-state tuition. SD Mines also ranked first in PayScale’s Best Value Colleges in South Dakota for in-state tuition and second for out-of-state tuition.

SD Mines also tied for seventh nationally in annual rate of return on the cost of a Mines education, with an annual return rate of 12 percent.

“SD Mines offers exceptional education at a price families can afford,” said SD Mines President Heather Wilson.

The average starting salary of 2015 graduates is $62,300, with 98 percent landing jobs in their career field or enrolling in graduate school.

The 2016 PayScale College ROI Report ranks universities nationwide based on total cost and alumni earnings. Annual tuition and fees at SD Mines are $10,370 for South Dakota residents and $14,140 for out-of-state residents. The university has the lowest four-year costs of any of the colleges in the top 15 or 25 rankings.

The new PayScale report underscores the demand for engineering and science students. Most of the top-ranking universities for return on investment are engineering or technology universities like the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. Specifically, six of the top 10 schools are engineering schools, including Caltech, MIT, Georgia Institute of Technology and Carnegie Mellon.

To see the full list: http://www.payscale.com/college-roi.

On the Cover: Mines Celebrates Holi

SD Mines celebrated Holi, India’s Festival of Colors, where participants drench the crowd in different colors in a celebration of spring.
**MilkyWave Concrete Canoe Takes 1st, Heads to Nationals**

The 2016 concrete canoe team from SD Mines will compete in the nationals for the first time in 10 years after recently taking first overall in the regional Rocky Mountain Conference.

The MilkyWave from SD Mines will compete at nationals to be held at the University of Texas in Tyler on June 9. The concrete canoe competition requires students to design and construct a concrete canoe, which is judged on speed in sprint and endurance races, as well as appearance, structural conformity of the finished product, a design paper and presentation.

The winning canoe was part of the South Dakota Mines American Society of Civil Engineers student chapter team, which placed second overall at the Rocky Mountain Conference hosted earlier this month and which also included the university’s steel bridge team.

The MilkyWave placed first overall in the final product, second in oral presentation and third in design paper. The canoe team also placed second in the men’s sprint, men’s endurance and coed sprint races, third in women’s sprint and fourth in women’s endurance.

**Elementary Students Get Hands-on Look at Geology**

SD Mines geology and geological engineering faculty and students visited four third-grade classes at Valley View Elementary school for an educational outreach event with rocks, minerals and fossils to explain how they form and ways to identify them.

**Geology Professor Selected as Award Recipient**

J. Foster Sawyer, Ph.D., South Dakota School of Mines & Technology professor, has been selected as the 2016 Honorary Award recipient by the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies.

The award includes two $4,000 scholarships for graduate students funded by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Scholarship Foundation. Mines students Kyle Hazelwood of Sutherlin, Va., pursuing his Ph.D. in geological engineering, and Stephanie Loose of Durango, Colo., pursuing her master’s in geology, will receive the scholarships.

Sawyer, associate professor in the Department of Geology & Geological Engineering, was selected among nominees from 12 states.

The Western Dakota Gem and Mineral Society, based in Rapid City, nominated Sawyer for the award, with input from SD Mines alumni Kelli Wold, a 1982 geological engineering alumna, and Steve O’Rourke, a 1983 geological engineering alumnus.

**Pritchard Shares How Gender Influences Communication**

Kayla Pritchard, Ph.D., delivered the lecture “Passive or Polite: Undoing Gendered Communication,” as part of the STEMinist Speaker Series. Pritchard has a Ph.D. in sociology with a specialization in women’s and gender studies from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. She is broadly interested in how the cultural and structural definitions of gender impact how individuals experience and understand their own capabilities and how they relate to others around them. Her research primarily focuses on understanding the role of family structure on members’ well-being, paying specific attention to the influence of gendered expectations on family roles.
Intern Spotlight

Rohit Dulal
Senior, mechanical engineering
Rohit Dulal interned as a Quality Assurance engineer at Littelfuse in Rapid City, along with three other Mines students, supporting economic development in the local community. Dulal was tasked with reducing soldering defects of circuit boards manufactured by the wave soldering machine. He’s pictured putting a u soldered circuit board into the machine, which will come out with soldered lead on the other end.

New $10,000 Scholarship Honors Professor, Black Hills Researcher

The $10,000 Alvis Lisenbee Scholarship at the Mines has been established by Peyton Yates, petroleum executive and president of the PY Foundation, in honor of his childhood friend, a longtime Mines geology professor and Black Hills researcher.

Hallie Bower, a geology student from Ainsworth, Neb., has been named as the first recipient of the Alvis Lisenbee Scholarship, which is now one of the most prestigious and highest value scholarships at South Dakota Mines. The endowed $10,000 scholarship will be awarded annually to a junior or senior geology student.

Yates and Lisenbee met as second graders in New Mexico and have remained friends since.

Lisenbee’s career has taken him throughout the world, including a number of years in Turkey where he was a Fulbright professor. He eventually landed at South Dakota Mines in 1972 and stayed for 34 years. Though he retired in 2006 he continues to be active on the Mines campus as professor emeritus, teaching field camps and conducting research in the Black Hills, which supports numerous students in the Department of Geology & Geological Engineering. He also continues to lead the School of Mines New Horizons Oil and Gas Conference.

“This generous scholarship from Peyton Yates is a testament to friendship between two boys who grew up together, were Eagle Scouts together, and remained friends for a lifetime. Alvis Lisenbee is a wonderful teacher and exceptional geologist. It’s such a pleasure to have a scholarship like this that will always be here to help students continue his life’s work,” said SD Mines President Heather Wilson.

Through his geological studies, Lisenbee has had the opportunity to travel millions of years back in time. His research in the northern Rocky Mountains focused on the evolution of the Black Hills uplift as well as the complex history recorded in igneous rocks and the role they played in their associated mineral deposits. Other studies during his career include structural investigations of the Rio Grande rift of New Mexico, the Basin and Range of eastern Nevada, the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, the Zagros Mountains of Iran and the Taurus and Pontid mountain ranges of Turkey.

Yates, currently president of Santos Petroleum and on the board of directors for Yates Petroleum, which was founded by his father, has spent his professional career in the oil and gas exploration and production industry.

Scholarship recipient Hallie Bower has earned a place on the dean’s list for the past three semesters at Mines and is an active member of the Paleo Club, Tech Geological Association and the Drama Club.

2016 Student Researchers Awarded

Student researchers at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology were honored at the 7th annual Student Research Symposium held on campus.

This year 100 undergraduate and graduate students presented 52 posters and 48 oral presentations.

Nearly 40 Mines professors from all disciplines served as judges.

The following students received awards:

Graduates
Graduate Best Overall Winner, $500: Rika Beck
Graduate Poster 1st place, $500: Nan Zheng
Graduate Poster 2nd place, $300: Tao Xu
Graduate Poster 3rd place, $200: Tie-Eric Schmid and Amy Hor
Graduate Oral 1st place, $500: Rika Beck
Graduate Oral 2nd place, $300: Jon Fisher
Graduate Oral 2nd place, $300: Matthew Wilcox
Undergraduates
Undergraduate Best Overall Winner, $500: Walker Hoolehan
Undergraduate Poster 1st place, $500: Conrad Farnsworth
Undergraduate Poster 2nd place, $300: Tait Earney
Undergraduate Poster 3rd place, $200 each: Laura Rochlitz
Undergraduate Oral 1st place, $500: Walker Hoolehan
Undergraduate Oral 2nd place, $300: Jason Phillips
Undergraduate Oral 3rd place, $200: James Mishoulam
SD Mines Start-up Wins Governor’s Giant Vision Student Competition

Student entrepreneurs from SD Mines took first place in the Governor’s Giant Vision competition for technology they are developing to extract commercially valuable essential oils through a super-critical carbon dioxide process. Two other student start-ups from South Dakota Mines took third place and fourth place in the prestigious statewide business plan competition held in Sioux Falls.

“Increasing numbers of Mines students are developing technologies and the business plans to get them to the marketplace,” said Heather Wilson, President of SD Mines. “The Black Hills Angels and our successful entrepreneurs-in-residence program have been a real help getting our students interested and prepared for entrepreneurship.”

In all, SD Mines students had five start-ups out of 11 chosen to present as finalists in the student competition, bringing home a total of $10,000 to continue funding their entrepreneurial efforts.

Additionally, a recently launched Mines start-up Endlas, LLC, won second place, among nine finalists, in the business competition, and was awarded a $10,000 prize.

The awards were presented as part of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development banquet with Governor Daugaard presenting the top prizes.

Over the last four years, Mines’ start-ups have won a total of $75,000, first place in the business competition three times, and first place in the student competition twice.

The 2016 SD Mines teams awarded are:

**Student Competition**

1st place and $5,000 cash prize – Botanical Extraction Technology, Aaron Worlie, chemical engineering, Conde, S.D., and Erica Howie, industrial engineering and engineering management, Rapid City, S.D., undergraduate students (supercritical CO2 extraction systems)

3rd place and $3,000 cash prize – Borglum Natural Gas Storage Solutions, Scyller Borglum, geology, Rapid City, S.D., a Ph.D. candidate, (natural gas storage)

4th place and $2,000 cash prize – RackStar, Jace Doan, mechanical engineering, Renner, S.D., undergraduate student (protective transportation products for cycling)

**Business Competition**

2nd place and $10,000 cash prize – Endlas LLC, Joshua Hammell, mechanical engineering, Evansville, Wyo., James Tomich, materials engineering and science, Farson, Wyo., and Brett Trotter, mechanical engineering, Rapid City, S.D., all graduate students (laser cladding / strengthening). Hammell is working on his Ph.D. All work in the Arbegast and Materials Processing and Joining Laboratory on campus.

The Governor’s Giant Vision Business and Student Competition were established to help citizens realize that South Dakota is the best place to start a successful business.

The program was designed as an opportunity for entrepreneurs to compete for seed money and a chance to achieve their dream.
**Largest-ever Design Fair Showcases Virtual Reality, Robots, Flight Simulator**

A year’s worth of technical design research culminated April 19 for graduating Mines students, as they demonstrated their achievements at the 2016 Senior Design Fair. The largest ever, the interactive fair showcased more than 70 senior capstone projects. Projects included a virtual tour of the Dahl Arts Center, flight simulator, 3D printing project, wind turbine research, mobile apps and software, and the Moonrockers robots, which is designed to navigate a lunar landscape for the annual NASA competition.

**Students Fuel Up for Finals with Late-Night Study Breakfast**

The traditional finals-week late-night study breakfast was served to hundreds of students May 1. Mines faculty and staff members served 80 pounds of pancake mix, 5 gallons of syrup, 1,000 sausage links, 80 pounds of whole fruit and 300 juice cups.

**Director of Bureau of Indian Affairs to Speak at 173rd Commencement**

Michael Black, director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and SD Mines alumnus, will deliver the keynote address at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology’s 173rd commencement.

The ceremony will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 7, at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Ice Arena. Over 375 Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Science, Bachelor of Science and Associate of Arts degrees will be awarded.

Black was named director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 2010 and oversees BIA programs that encompass the Office of Trust Services, the Office of Indian Services and the Office of Justice Services. These offices provide support to tribes and tribal organizations nationwide through direct services, as well as contracts, grants or compacts that include social services, natural resources management, road construction and maintenance, wildland fire and forest management, oil and gas development, mining, law enforcement services and management of power and irrigation systems.

Black has had a lengthy and distinguished career in public service. After majoring in mechanical engineering and graduating from South Dakota Mines in 1986, he started his federal career with the BIA in January of 1987 as a general engineer in the Branch of Facilities Management in Aberdeen.

He served as the regional facility manager for the Rocky Mountain Region from 1992-2002 and was later named chief of the Division of Engineering for the Rocky Mountain Region. In 2004, Black was named the deputy regional director for Indian Services at the Rocky Mountain Region, a position he held until 2008 when he became the regional director at the Great Plains Region in Aberdeen. In these capacities, he provided leadership for administrative and financial management for tribal government, human services, Indian self-determination, land and water management, facility management, trust services and reservation roads.

As director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Black oversees programs and services for 567 federally-recognized tribes and 1.9 million American Indians and Alaska Natives throughout the United States from the Washington, D.C., headquarters.

In 2015, Black received a Meritorious Service Award from the Department of Interior for his continuous exceptional service, professionalism, technical expertise and outstanding performance throughout his tenure as the BIA director.
Vaughn Vargas, a senior industrial engineering major at Mines, has been named recipient of the prestigious Truman Scholarship.

Established in 1975, the scholarship is awarded in a national competition to those who demonstrate outstanding potential for public service. This year just 54 students nationwide were named as Truman scholars, each receiving a $30,000 scholarship to continue their graduate education. Truman scholars also participate in leadership development initiatives at South Dakota Mines.

“Vaughn is an exceptional young leader,” said Heather Wilson, president of the School of Mines. “The best students at Mines can compete for honors like this with the best students anywhere. We will continue to encourage students like Vaughn to reach beyond their grasp.”

While Vargas is the first South Dakota Mines student to receive the Truman Scholarship, he is among an expanding list of Mines students honored with the nation’s top awards for college students in the past few years, including the Udall, Goldwater, Fulbright and Mitchell scholarships.

“You climb to reach the top of the mountain only to find that it gets bigger. The top will always get higher for any motivated person. At times like this you celebrate how far you’ve come and salute the mountain,” Vargas said at a surprise award announcement on campus in his honor.

“The Truman Foundation takes promising, young leaders and helps them transcend into something greater than they can imagine. I am so honored by this award and can’t wait to see where it goes from here.”

Vargas intends to apply to Harvard University to pursue both a master’s degree in urban and regional planning and a juris doctorate. He intends to pursue a business law concentration to understand the workings of tax administration authority and federal tax procedures, ultimately providing legal assistance to community organizations and small businesses on issues including community economic development, real estate purchase, business formation, and contract negotiation through the Harvard Transactional Law Clinic.

The Udall, which Vargas was awarded in 2014, recognizes students committed to careers related to the environment, tribal public policy or Native American healthcare. In 2015 Vargas received the Hawkinson Foundation Scholarship for his efforts to reduce poverty in Native American communities and enhance relationships between Native and non-Native community members, and in December he was named among the “40 Under 40” by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development.

Last summer, Vargas was hired by Rapid City Police Chief Karl Jegeris as the Cultural Advisory Coordinator to help bridge the communication gap between the Native American community and the police department.

Vargas is a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and has shared his motivational story with many community groups, in addition to leading student initiatives at South Dakota Mines.

Candidates for the Truman Scholarship go through a rigorous, multi-stage selection process. In 2016, there were 775 candidates for the award nominated by 305 colleges and universities, a record number of applications and institutions.

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SD Mines alumnus David LaPorte has received a Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant to go to Guatemala from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. LaPorte will be researching at Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, with the cooperation of Coordinadora Nacional para le Reduccion de Desastres, as part of a project to develop cost-effective ways for residents of at-risk communities to monitor the movement of the large landslides on which they live.

“David was one of our top students to graduate last year and I am very pleased that he has applied for and earned a Fulbright Scholarship. He will make a tremendous difference in the world,” said SD Mines President Heather Wilson.

LaPorte will help to enhance mutual understanding between Americans and the people of Guatemala as part of the Fulbright Program, the flagship international educational exchange program of the United States, designed to build relations between the U.S. and other countries to solve global challenges. He will join the over 360,000 students, scholars, teachers, artists and scientists who have undertaken Fulbright grants in over 160 countries since the program began in 1946.

LaPorte graduated from SD Mines in 2015 with a bachelor’s in geological engineering and a minor in geospatial technology and a 4.0 GPA.

During his tenure at Mines, he worked for a geotechnical consulting company in Nebraska on a six-month co-op, studied for a semester in Paris, France, and spent a summer volunteering with Engineers Without Borders designing a water treatment system for a rural university and mapping local watersheds in Carmen Pampa, Bolivia.

With a lifelong passion for geology arising from a youth spent outdoors in the southern Appalachians, he was president of the geology club and vice president of the student government at SD Mines.

LaPorte was awarded the $10,000 Tau Beta Pi fellowship in 2015, given to a select group nationwide to finance a year of graduate study. After graduating from SD Mines, LaPorte began pursuing graduate education at Colorado School of Mines.
Fourteen Students Initiated into Order of Omega

Fourteen South Dakota School of Mines & Technology juniors and seniors were recently inducted into the Order of Omega national Greek honor society. Order of Omega has over 500 chapters throughout North America and recognizes juniors and seniors who have exemplified high standards in the areas of scholarship, leadership, involvement within their respective Greek organizations, their university campuses, and their local community. The Xi Tau Chapter was established at SD Mines on March 1, 1995.

Students selected for initiation:

Logan Blackburn, Delta Sigma Phi
McKenzie Butcher, Alpha Delta Pi
Trent Capraro, Delta Sigma Phi
Jaylyn Derickson, Alpha Omega Epsilon
Jessica Dornbusch, Alpha Delta Pi
Taylor Evans, Alpha Omega Epsilon
Gannon Gilbraith, Triangle Fraternity
Kyle Huntley, Delta Sigma Phi
Jin Kim, Lambda Chi Alpha
Abby Labahn, Alpha Omega Epsilon
Alex Mischke, Triangle Fraternity
Tyler Ryther, Alpha Chi Sigma
Nicole Thompson, Alpha Omega Epsilon
Jessica Wolf, Alpha Omega Epsilon

Mines Hosts Severe Weather Preparedness Event

The SD Mines Student Chapter of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) hosted a “Severe Weather Awareness and Preparedness” event with the SD National Weather Service (NWS) and Pennington County Emergency Management during SD’s Severe Weather Awareness Week.

This event was part of a wider Weather-Ready Nation initiative aimed at increasing community education on how to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of extreme events like record-breaking snowfall and violent tornadoes. Student AMS members have been named Weather-Ready Nation ambassadors, working with the meteorological community to increase community resilience and mitigate adverse impacts of extreme weather events.

Learn about DUNE International Mega-Science Project at May 18 Talk

The public is invited to campus Wednesday, May 18, to learn more about the international mega-science neutrino project planned between the Sanford Underground Research Facility in Lead and Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory near Chicago.

The educational outreach event is designed to engage and educate members of the public about the Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment (DUNE), which will be the world’s flagship neutrino project involving scientists from 27 countries, including physicists from South Dakota Mines. A 40-kiloton cryogenic argon detector will be built underground at the Sanford laboratory to image the rare collisions of neutrinos beamed from Fermilab, 800 miles away.

The evening will begin with a 5:30 p.m. social hour featuring a hands-on activity and show-and-tell items from the Sanford Laboratory, followed by a 6:30 p.m. presentation and question-and-answer session lead by Kate Scholberg, Ph.D., a physicist from Duke University who is collaborating on the DUNE experiment.

Scholberg’s presentation, “Neutrinos Through the Earth and From the Sky,” will describe DUNE scientists’ quest to coax neutrinos, described as “ghostly” messengers of nature, into telling their story of the universe.

Though the universe teems with neutrinos, they slide invisibly and silently through matter, barely interacting at all. The 2015 Nobel prize was awarded for the discovery that neutrinos shift flavors as they travel, which can only happen if they have tiny masses. These flavor oscillations may be connected to some of the biggest questions about the universe, such as how everything around us came to be made of matter rather than antimatter.

Scholberg is a physics professor and Bass Fellow at Duke University. She previously researched and taught at Boston University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is a recipient of the Department of Energy Outstanding Junior Investigator and National Science Foundation CAREER awards, and was elected as a Fellow of the American Physical Society in 2013.

Scholberg is currently a member of the Super-Kamiokande, T2K and DUNE collaborations and is spokesperson of the neutrino physics COHERENT experiment at the Spallation Neutron Source at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Additionally, she coordinates the SuperNova Early Warning System, an international network of supernova neutrino detectors.

Design for Manufacturing Fair

Mechanical engineering students will showcase their projects at this week’s Design for Manufacturing Fair from 8-10 a.m. Friday, May 6, in the Christensen Hall of Fame room of the King Center.

Among designs to be featured are a 3D printed da Vinci catapult, CNC machined tops, a domino clock, and other creative projects in which students have applied their knowledge and skills.

The fair is a culmination of the spring semester class, which emphasizes product design and design for manufacturability, and is made possible through industrial partnerships with Nucor Steel, Caterpillar and Cargill.
Faculty Researchers Recognized at South Dakota Mines

Six faculty researchers have been nominated for the 2016 SD Mines Research Award, which will recognize a demonstrated, sustained research record and significant accomplishments.

Lisa Kunza, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry & Applied Biological Sciences. She is an ecologist in her third year as a faculty researcher at SD Mines. Kunza has led or participated in nine funded grants totaling nearly $1 million, and has supported five graduate and 10 undergraduate students in research activities. She built and directs the Shimadzu Environmental Research Laboratory, which houses more than $1 million of state-of-the-art instrumentation enhancing research at SD Mines.

Venkata Gadhamshetty, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering. He joined SD Mines in 2014 and has demonstrated a sustained record and excellent research accomplishment during the past two years. In 2015, he received the prestigious National Science Foundation CAREER award. During a short time span, Gadhamshetty established his research laboratory and relevant infrastructure to conduct a vibrant research program.

Kyle Caudle, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics & Computer Science. He joined SD Mines in 2011. In the past two years, Caudle’s research has focused on two separate areas involving statistics and “big data.” Those areas are forecasting and time series analysis, and non-parametric density estimation of data streams. In addition to his major statistical research, he has been working in two STEM-related projects that have generated revenue streams.

Ali Heydari, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Heydari joined SD Mines in 2013 and has built a sustainable research program within the department. In 2015 he received the NSF grant “Contributing to the Mathematical Rigor of Approximate Dynamic Programming.” He has also received another collaborative grant funded by NASA EPSCoR.

Purushotham Tukkaraja, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Mining Engineering & Management. Tukkaraja joined SD Mines in 2009 and has received funding for a major research grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health for modeling gas emissions and ventilation in block caving mines. Tukkaraja also has received grant funding from the Mine Safety and Health Administration. At the state level, he has been successful in obtaining funding as co-principal investigator with the Shale Research Initiative and Research & Development Innovation Grant, as well as competitive research funded by the Board of Regents.

Phil Ahrenkiel, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Nanoscience & Nanoengineering Program. Ahrenkiel joined SD Mines in 2006 and is an expert in the field of the structural characterization of solar materials and the development of novel high-efficiency solar cells. Ahrenkiel’s research at SD Mines is well-funded by the Department of Energy. Several years ago, he served as the principal investigator on a National Science Foundation-MRI grant, which provided SD Mines with a state-of-the-art transition electron microscope valued at $700,000.

Clabo Delivers 2016 Wildfire Outlook

Darren Clabo, state fire meteorologist and South Dakota School of Mines & Technology faculty member, presented the “2016 South Dakota Wildfire Seasonal Outlook” on April 28.

“The past several months have been relatively warm and dry across western South Dakota. This has led to numerous wildland fires including the Cold Fire in the southern Black Hills and more recently the Storm Hill Fire near Hill City. This seminar included information on past weather, current trends, and predictions of what the summer wildfire season may bring,” Clabo said.

Hardrocker Golfers Earn RMAC All-Academic Honors

The Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) announced the All-Academic awards for men’s and women’s golf, with South Dakota School of Mines & Technology scholar-athletes earning five spots on the RMAC Golf Honor Roll.

Shelby Allen, Jessica Teeslink, Isaac Bliek, Walker Hoolehan and Drew Pitt were all named to the RMAC Golf Honor roll for the Hardrockers.

To qualify for RMAC All-Academic honors, scholar-athletes must have a grade point average of 3.30 or better, be a starter or reserve, and have completed two consecutive semesters or three quarters at their current institution. The student-athlete’s cumulative GPA is what they had earned prior to golf season beginning. RMAC sports information directors at schools which sponsor the sport of golf selected the first team.

Allen is a senior atmospheric science and geological engineering major from McCook, Neb., with a 3.89 GPA; Teeslink is a sophomore electrical engineering major from Seattle, Wash., with a 3.43 GPA; Pitt is a sophomore mechanical engineering major from Walker, Minn., with a 3.79 GPA; Bliek is a sophomore chemical engineering major from Chippewa Falls, Wis., with a 3.69 GPA; and Hoolehan is a junior chemistry and applied biological engineering major from Pendleton, Ore.

Hoolehan and Allen were both named to the RMAC Golf Honor Roll last year as well.

About Legacy News

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To submit news or story ideas or to subscribe to the email distribution list, please contact Dani Mason, public relations officer, at 605.394.2554 or at Danielle.Mason@sdsmt.edu. For more Mines news, visit news.sdsmt.edu

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