



Faculty, Staff Honored at 17th Annual Engineering Awards Luncheon

The College of Engineering honored faculty and staff members for excellence in teaching and service at the 17th annual Engineering Awards Luncheon on March 29, 2007, at the University Club. The John D. and Dortha J. Withrow Endowed Teacher/Scholar/Service Award Program recognizes faculty and staff who have demonstrated excellence in instructional and scholarly activities and rendered distinguished service to the university and the student body. The Withrow Student Service Award, which recognizes academic staff members who serve students, was presented for the first time in 2005. The Gloria Stragier Award recognizes non-academic staff members for dedicated and creative service. ❁

Left to right: Carl J. Boehlert (asst prof, chem egr & materials sci), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award; Shanker Balasubramaniam (assoc prof, electr & comp egr), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award; Syed A. Hashsham (assoc prof, civil & environ egr), Withrow Distinguished Scholar Award; Vanessa L. Mitchner (editorial asst, electr & comp egr), Gloria Stragier Award; Ranjan Mukherjee (prof, mech egr), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award; Neeraj Buch (assoc prof, civil and environ egr), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award; Bradley P. Marks (prof, biosystems & ag egr), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award; Teresa Isela VanderSloot (acad specialist, comp sci & egr), Withrow Student Service Award; Edward J. Rothwell (prof, electr & comp egr), Withrow Distinguished Researcher Award; and Mark H. Mc Cullen (acad specialist, comp sci & egr), Withrow Teaching Excellence Award.

Dale Selected for Top USDA Honor

Bruce Dale, associate director of the MSU Office of Biobased Technologies and professor of chemical engineering and materials science, was selected as the 2007 Sterling B. Hendricks Memorial Lecturer.

This lectureship was established in 1981 by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), USDA's primary research agency, to honor Hendricks and to recognize scientists who have made outstanding contributions to the chemical science of agriculture. Hendricks is most frequently remembered for discovering phytochrome, the light-activated molecule that regulates many plant processes.

Dale presented his lecture, "Why Cellulosic Ethanol Is Nearer Than You Think: Creating the Biofuels Future," on August 20, 2007, during the American Chemical Society's fall national meeting in Boston.

An international expert in biofuels, Dale has worked in cellulosic ethanol technology for more than 30 years and invented a breakthrough pretreatment for biomass conversion called ammonia fiber expansion (AFEX). His work has also used life-cycle analysis tools, which include agricultural data and computer modeling, to

study the sustainability of producing biofuels. "I feel doubly honored to be recognized for this Lectureship in the agriculture field; as a chemical engineer, to be recognized outside of my field is a great honor," says Dale.

Growing demands for alternatives to petroleum and rapidly improving technologies will make large-scale cellulosic ethanol a reality much sooner than most people may realize. As a result, agriculture and society will be transformed. Dale's lecture explores some of the consequences of large-scale biofuel production on sustainability and the opportunity to revitalize rural areas across the United States and the world. (To access the PowerPoint presentation, go to www.everythingbiomass.org/Default.aspx?tabid=443.)

Dale received a BS from the University of Arizona, graduating with Highest Distinction; an MS from the University of Arizona; and a

PhD from Purdue University. He holds 14 U.S. and international patents. Dale has published numerous journal articles, books, and papers. In February 2007 he, along with other alternative energy scientists, met with President Bush to discuss biomass and alternative energy production.

To read more about Dale's work, see the article on pages 2–15 of this issue of *Currents*.

—Lynda White

