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Evangelyn Alocilja shares MSU Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor of the Year Award

Evangelyn Alocilja, a professor of biosystems and agriculture engineering, and Howard Bossen, a professor of photography and visual communication, are this year's recipients of the MSU Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor of the Year Award.

Two awards are given each year – one to a faculty member representing science and engineering, which was given to Alocilja, and one to a faculty member representing the social sciences and humanities, which was given to Bossen.

Rebecca Jones, an undergraduate student studying biosystems engineering in the College of Engineering, and one of Alocilja's mentees, nominated her for the award.

"Dr. Alocilja is more than just a research mentor to me," Jones said. "As a biosystems engineer with aspirations to attend graduate school for biomedical engineering, she has been an outstanding role model for me. The research I am doing under her direction has confirmed my desire to become a biomedical engineer. Through her hard work in her field, a commitment to training undergrads as researchers and serving as a mentor to the students she teaches, Dr. Alocilja has created an atmosphere in her lab of acceptance, encouragement and helping others through scientific research. She is dedicated to growing her students every day with their work in the lab as well as their professional and personal goals."

Marisa Hamel, an undergraduate student studying journalism in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, and one of Bossen's mentees, nominated him for the award.

"Dr. Bossen makes the office a place of stimulating conversation," Hamel said. "He often asks for our input, forcing us to think independently and form educated opinions. He holds us to a high academic standard and realizes while our work with him is important, that school comes first. His passionate service to MSU's students deserves the utmost recognition."

This award recognizes MSU faculty members who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to mentoring
undergraduate researchers. The award is completely student-driven, as only undergraduate researchers can submit nominations and the university’s undergraduate research ambassadors review and select the finalists.

“For most of our students, their research mentors are the reason they became involved in undergraduate research or creative activity, and why our students continue to pursue it,” said Korine Wawrzynski, assistant dean of academic initiatives and director of undergraduate research. “Their interactions with their mentors have often influenced many areas of their lives, from choice of majors, to which classes to take, to future career plans. It is a great opportunity for our students to publicly thank their mentors for the guidance they have provided them.”

The awards were presented during the annual University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum on April 8 at the MSU Union.

Story and photo courtesy of MSUToday.

Related Website: MSU Nano-Biosensors Lab
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