Alumni Awards 2017

May 10, 2017

Eight alumni were honored May 6 for their significant accomplishments

Eight distinguished alumni of the Michigan State University College of Engineering were honored Saturday, May 6, during the 2017 Alumni Awards Banquet at MSU’s Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. MSU Engineering also honored a teacher from Rockford Public Schools during the annual ceremony that recognizes those whose significant accomplishments reflect positively on MSU and the College of Engineering.

The 2017 Claud R. Erickson Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to Steven H. Noll, JD. The award is the highest honor presented to an alumnus by the college. It recognizes professional accomplishment, volunteer service, and distinguished service to the college and the engineering profession. The honor included an invitation to present the keynote address during Spring Commencement, which Noll did on Sunday, May 7, in the Breslin Center for 663 engineering undergraduates.

Noll graduated from MSU with honors in 1974 with a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering. He is also a graduate of the Honors College. While at MSU, he was a member of the Spartan Marching Band.

After graduation, Noll worked as an engineer in the Government and Industrial Research Group at Magnavox Co., and then attended law school at Ohio State University, receiving his law degree in 1977. He has practiced law in the field of intellectual property, specializing in patent law, and is currently a partner in the firm of Schiff Hardin LLP in Chicago.
His patent prosecution practice has focused primarily on medical devices, particularly all types of medical imaging. He has obtained more than 4,000 patents for his clients during the course of his practice. He has also represented clients in litigation involving many different technologies, including cryptography, traveling wave tubes for radar, printers, optical fibers, pacemakers, amorphous metal, papermaking machines, anesthesia systems and semiconductor devices.

Noll has also represented clients in copyright litigation and trademark litigation. He is registered to practice before the Patent and Trademark Office, and is admitted to practice in the United States Supreme Court and the Courts of Appeal for the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Eleventh and Federal Circuits, and the United States Court of Federal Claims. He is a member of several bar associations, and served on the board of directors of the International Trade Commission Trial Lawyers Association.

He served two eight-year terms on the College of Engineering Alumni Board, including two years as the board chair. He also served on the most recent search committee for the dean of the College of Engineering. He is a guest lecturer each semester in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Capstone class, and also serves as a Design Day judge for that class each semester.

In his estate, he has bequeathed funds to the College of Engineering for an endowed chair. He is a member of the National Leadership Council of the College of Music, and served on the Advisory Committee for the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum.

Noll resides in Chicago with his wife, Sarah.

Seven other alumni received departmental honors and the Green Apple Teaching Award was presented to:

- **Renee Jennings Collins**, of Rochester Hills, vice president of Owner Sales for Johnson Controls, the Applied Engineering Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award.

- **Larry P. Walker**, of Ithaca, N.Y., a private consultant following a long career in biobased fuel research and development, the Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.

- **Joe S. Lin**, of Gardena, Calif., founder of Diotec Electronics Corp, the Red Cedar Circle Award in Chemical Engineering and Materials Science.

- **Thomas L. Maleck, PE**, of Charlevoix, who taught at MSU from 1982-2014 and spent his career developing systems for greater transportation safety, the Civil and Environmental Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.
• Yunhao Liu, of Beijing, China, the Cheung Kong Chair Professor and Dean of the School of Software at Tsinghua University, the Computer Science and Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.

• Raymond R. LaFrey, of New Braunfels, Texas, who spent much of his career at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was responsible for the Lincoln Laboratory Air Traffic Control Mission Area, the John D. Ryder Electrical and Computer Engineering Alumni Award.

• Scott C. Morris, of Granger, Ind., a professor in the Department of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering at the University of Notre Dame, the Mechanical Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.

Also, the Green Apple Teaching Award was presented to Fred Reusch of Rockford Public Schools, where he teaches AP Calculus A/B and B/C, and Calculus III. This award was established in 2006 to honor K-12 teachers who are inspiring students to study math, science, and engineering. MSU student Rebecca Carlson, a senior in chemical engineering, nominated him.

Read more on the award winners in the 2017 Alumni Awards Banquet Program.