MSU GenCen names Tamara Reid Bush Inspirational Woman of the Year

Tamara Reid Bush has been honored as an Inspirational Woman of the Year by MSU’s Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen). GenCen is an interdisciplinary center in International Studies and Programs focused on gender, feminist, and women’s related research.

An associate professor of mechanical engineering, Bush was one of three individuals selected university wide. Selection was based on her contributions to MSU through research, leadership, integrity, and inclusive actions. Her award category is Professional Achievement.

She was nominated by Mechanical Engineering Department Chair James Klausner, with additional support of Rebecca Anthony and Sara Roccabianca, both assistant professors in mechanical engineering, and Laura Bix, professor and associate director of the School of Packaging.

Klausner said Bush stands tall as a role model for women in engineering locally and across the country.

“All of her work shows elements of detailed thought and analysis,” Klausner said. “It is executed with care and precision and it bears the hallmark of excellence. She excels in all areas of academic life, including teaching, research
and service,” he added.

Bix said it is not just her technical capabilities that set her apart.

“Her leadership and approach creates an inclusive culture and climate in a field where women are a distinct minority,” she explained. “Dr. Bush is exceptional because at the same time she was developing an impressive, national reputation in a novel line of inquiry (in-vivo mechanics associated with wheelchair users, hand function, and soft tissues), she was also striving to create a more inclusive culture where all researchers thrive.”

Anthony said mechanical engineering is not a field that is traditionally filled with women contributors, “but our department has an excellent climate for women. Dr. Bush's strong record -- and her visibility in the Department, College, and community on the whole -- are helping to change how engineering is perceived and to inspire women and men alike,” Anthony added.

Noted Roccabianca, “In large part, this is due to the presence of Professor Bush. She advocates for women faculty and women students alike, and is one of the two tenured female professors in the department.”

Bix also said Bush recognized that a barrier to recruiting girls into mechanical engineering was a lack of familiarity with shop tools, so she and a student leader initiated a program in 2015 to help students work with the equipment.

“The program affords women and girls the opportunity to work with mills, lathes, drill presses and band saws. In the time since the program’s creation, the event has had a wait list each and every time that it has been offered, Bix added.

Bush has developed a national research reputation in the field of biomechanics, which has earned her several accolades. She was elected to the executive board of the American Society of Biomechanics, was selected as the conference organizer for the World Congress on Biomechanics in the area of Rehabilitation and Injury, and most recently was elevated to the status of Fellow in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

To learn more about her research, visit her web page: https://www.egr.msu.edu/reidtama/projects

Related Website: MSU Center for Gender in Global Context
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