

SVSU supports professors' innovation with Dow Teaching Awards

Four SVSU educators will receive funding for their ideas to improve student learning after being selected to receive 2019-20 Dow Professor Teaching Awards from SVSU's Center for Academic Innovation.

The awards come paired with cash grants to help support the work of individual faculty and faculty teams.

Aneesha Gogineni, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, received \$5,500 for materials needed to redesign a course on active learning in thermodynamics.



Aneesha Gogineni



Brandon Haskett



Scott Kowalewski



Bill Williamson

Funds will be used to purchase and assemble hands-on materials, as well as for an app, which will be integrated into the class to increase student responses to questions,

analyze their understanding level, and engage them in the subject. Data collected from the redesigned course will be presented at a conference.

Brandon Haskett, assistant

professor of music, received \$5,500 for upgrades to SVSU's music technology lab.

"This project would result in our students' increased exposure to digital music creation and collaboration, allow them to use their previous knowledge of popular music genres to create something new and give students real-world experiences with hardware, software and their related processes, which will prepare them more fully for the professional world," Haskett wrote in his award proposal.

Scott Kowalewski, associate professor of rhetoric and professional writing, and Bill Williamson, professor of rhetoric and professional writing, jointly received \$4,223.88 for upgrades to their department's recording studio and usability lab, where students create and assess websites and other digital documents. The upgrades will focus on digital video production.

"This project extends our students' professional development and career preparedness, meeting the demands of contemporary communicators," the professors stated in their award proposal.

The awards are supported by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Academic Fund at SVSU.

Consumers Energy executive to deliver May Commencement address



Patti Poppe

SVSU winter graduates will hear from Patti Poppe, president & CEO of Consumers Energy, during Commencement exercises Friday, May 10 and Saturday, May 11.

Students graduating in the colleges of Business & Management and Health & Human Services will participate in the Friday ceremony at 7:30 p.m. Students graduating in the colleges of Arts & Behavioral Sciences, Education and Science, Engineering & Technology will take part in the Saturday ceremony at 11 a.m. Both ceremonies are held in O'Neill Arena of the Ryder Center.

Poppe is president and chief executive officer of CMS Energy and its principal subsidiary, Consumers Energy. She was elected to this position in July 2016. She held a variety of automotive management positions and served as power plant director at Detroit, Michigan based DTE Energy before returning to her hometown of Jackson to join Consumers Energy in 2011. Poppe earned a master's degree in management from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business and received a bachelor's degree and master's degree in industrial engineering from Purdue University.

The Consumers Energy Foundation supported the Consumers Energy Talent Program for SVSU engineering students, as well as high school students who enrolled in SVSU's Engineering Careers and Concepts course. Senior electrical or mechanical engineering students at SVSU applied for funding from Consumers Energy for senior design capstone projects focused on alternative energy. To qualify, students were required to propose a novel idea, plan the time line, budget for supplies and conduct research and development activities accordingly for a two-semester project.

George Eastland

Professor of Chemistry

In August 1969 — less than a month after Neil Armstrong landed on the moon — George Eastland first set foot on SVSU soil to begin his career as an educator. A half-century later, he remains a member of SVSU's faculty. He is only the second person in the institution's history to work at the university for 50 years, joining his former fellow chemistry colleague, the late Albert "Bert" Plaus.

"It doesn't feel like 50 years — the time flies," said Eastland, who was honored with the milestone Service Award during Friday's All-University Awards banquet.

Eastland has enjoyed watching the growth of the university, which was founded just six years before his arrival. In 1969, SVSU was still years away from being surrounded by the commercial district that touches today's campus. Back then, SVSU's facilities included a pair of one-story buildings — now part of the South Campus Complex — and a just-completed Wickes Hall jutting out from cornfields.

Much of the campus obviously has changed since then and Eastland's list of accomplishments have grown along with the university. His dedicated work has been felt in the institution's classrooms, laboratories and playing fields.

Eastland was presented SVSU's Landee Award for Teaching Excellence in 1980. He helped oversee a large study on cancer treatment in the 1970s and '80s. He has contributed 40 scholarly papers to academic publications over the decades.

Eastland served as faculty athletic representative from 1973-2015, traveling with SVSU teams to untold national competitions. He also was interim athletic director in 2006-07, and was inducted into the Cardinal Athletic Hall of Fame in 2017. The George Eastland Student Athlete GPA Awards are presented each year to the male and female student-athletes with the highest GPA in their final years of eligibility.

Four years ago, Eastland changed his full-time status to part time. Since then, his routine involves teaching courses in the fall semester and spending the winter months enjoying the warmer climate in Ruskin, Florida, with his wife Judy.

Eastland said the 2019-20 academic year may likely be his last in the classroom, although he is leaving open the possibility that he will teach courses again in special circumstances, such as when the College of Science, Engineering & Technology might need faculty to staff extra sections in chemistry.

If year No. 51 indeed becomes his swan song at SVSU, Eastland said he is happy with how his career unfolded after he took a chance on a young institution in August 1969.

"Looking back, I don't know that there's much I would have changed," Eastland said.

"I always say: Marrying my wife Judy was the No. 1 best decision I ever made — and coming to Saginaw Valley was No. 2."



Sarah Byam

Coordinator of Legal & Compliance Programs • April Staff Member of the Month

Sarah Byam appreciates attention to detail. Her own mindfulness regarding specifics is critical to her many responsibilities as SVSU's coordinator of legal and compliance programs.

But there's at least one detail related to work that continues to elude her: "I probably need to get a Fitbit, just to see how much I walk at work," she says. "I definitely get my steps in each day, though."

Byam splits her time between three offices, all at relatively distant points on campus. There's her third floor Wickes Hall space, located near the Office of General Counsel she regularly assists. There's the room in Ryder Center where she performs Athletics-related compliance work. And there's the space in the University Police office, where her work largely centers on ensuring the university's compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy — although she soon will hand over her responsibilities there to another staff member.

"There's never a dull moment at work, and I enjoy that," she says. "My position is unique in that I do lots of different things for different offices and I am constantly working with different people in different parts of campus."

Byam says it's difficult to describe her average day at work because no two days are the same.

"It's fast-paced, and I'm helping everybody that I can," she says.

She began in the role more than two years ago, but the Grand Ledge native's beginnings at SVSU date back to the late 1990s, when she worked as a graduate assistant in what is now the Scott L. Carmona College of Business & Management. Byam received a master's degree in business administration from SVSU in 2000. Shortly thereafter, she was hired as a staff member with Housing, where she helped SVSU during a period of massive growth in its residential housing and accompanying population.

Byam, though, left SVSU for about a decade to focus on raising her three children, the oldest of which now is nearly ready to graduate high school. Her husband is Brooks Byam, professor of mechanical engineering.

Sarah Byam returned to the university in 2013 to serve as an administrative assistant for Administration and Business Affairs, where she worked prior to accepting her current role.

When she isn't working or spending time with family, Byam enjoys traveling, spending time at the family cottages and yard work. She is excited that soon the warming weather will allow her to tend to the yard at her Saginaw Township home. Her relatively extensive hikes at work don't deter her one of her favorite aspects of yard work.

"I find that it's very therapeutic to mow the lawn," she says.



Dow chief sustainability officer addresses science and engineering students



Mary Draves, vice president & chief sustainability officer for Dow, speaks to students and faculty.

SVSU science and engineering students heard from an SVSU graduate who has risen to a leadership position at one of the nation's leading companies. Mary Draves, vice president and chief sustainability officer for Dow, was the guest speaker during SVSU's Science & Engineering Symposium April 26 in Pioneer Hall. Draves, who was presented the 2018 Distinguished Alumni Award by the College of Science, Engineering & Technology, completed a bachelor's degree in biology in 1994 and a master's in technological processes in 2001. She has worked at Dow for 25 years, with most of that time spent at the Midland headquarters in a variety of leadership roles, including the Toxicology and Environmental Health Research Lab and the Environmental, Health and Safety group. The Science & Engineering Symposium recognizes student achievement, inspires innovation and promotes collaboration between SVSU students and faculty.

Professional Profile

- **Julie Foss**, associate professor of modern foreign languages, presented the keynote address titled "Do Researchers Care About Teachers?" at the Michigan State University English Learning Center's Learning Symposium April 13.

- **Sherrin Frances**, associate professor of English, and **Geoffrey V. Carter**, assistant professor of English, presented a panel titled "From Rhetorical Tactics to Tactical Rhetorics" at the Conference on College Composition and Communication March 14 in Pittsburgh.

- **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, contributed a chapter titled "Black Engagement with Print" to volume five of *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture* series, *US Popular Print Culture to 1860* (Oxford University Press, 2019: 503518). He also gave an invited talk on spirituals and Black print culture April 3 as part of the Lenten series sponsored by the United Church of Christ in Midland.

- **Aneesha Gogineni**, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, presented a paper titled "Engineering Approach to Determine Indoor Air Quality at Different Schools" at the ASEE NCS Conference, March 22-23 in Grand Rapids.

- **Susan L. Hillman**, professor of teacher education (with Signe Kastberg, Purdue University) presented "Exploring Dimensions of Teacher Educator Questioning" and (with Neha Chheda, Adhyayan, Mumbai, India) "Designing a Self-study Component for Teacher Performance Self-improvement" at the annual conference of Invisible College for Research on Teaching (Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices Special Interest Group to the American Educational Research Association), April 4 in Toronto, California.

- **Sandun Kuruppu**, assistant professor of electrical & computer engineering, **Yu Zou**, associate professor of electrical & computer

engineering, recently co-presented a paper titled "Reliability Improvement of Power Inverters for Low-speed, High-power Motor Drives" at the Applied Power Electronics Conference in Anaheim.

- **Peggy Mead-Finzio**, assistant professor of theatre, chaired a session titled "Getting Hired in the Lighting Industry: Beyond Lighting Design & Education" at the 59th annual United States Institute for Theatre Technology national conference, March 20-23 in Louisville. Mead-Finzio received an SVSU Foundation grant that covered the cost for seven theatre students to attend the conference with her.

- **Danilo Sirias**, professor of management, recently was notified by Health Administration Press that his 225-page textbook, *Smashing the Bottleneck: Improving Patient Flow through the Theory of Constraints*, is scheduled for publication in early 2020.

Condolences

- To **Dorothy Millar**, professor of teacher education, whose father, Albert Carmel Squatrito, passed away March 20.

The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU. University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

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