



Welcome from the Department Head

Mississippi State's Civil and Environmental Engineering Department proactively uses teaching, research, and service to educate baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral students. We feel the first, best calling of our students is to become Professional Engineers by becoming competent, dynamic, and ethical engineers of the future. This E-newsletter is our effort to share a snippet of a few of the achievements we have made during this higher education journey.

Congratulations to our recent Civil and Environmental Engineering Graduates!

Mississippi State University's Fall Commencement was held on December 9, 2016, and the Civil and Environmental Engineering department would like to congratulate our graduate students on their achievement.

Pictured here before the graduation ceremony are, from left to right, Dr. Veera Gnaneswar Gude (Assistant Professor), Dr. John Ramirez-Avila (Assistant Professor), Dr. Yi Jiang (Ph.D. graduate), Dr. Dennis D. Truax (Department Head and Professor), Dr. Mesha Williams-Jones (Ph.D. graduate), Dr. Farshid Vahedifard (Assistant Professor), Dr. Kimia Mortezaei (Ph.D. graduate), Dr. Isaac Howard (Associate Professor), and Dr. Mohammed Bazne (Ph.D. graduate). Dr. Timothy Rushing (Ph.D. graduate) was present but is not shown in this photo.



Dr. V. Gnaneswar Gude, Civil Engineering Professor, led the December graduation procession as Mace Bearer

Dr. V. Gnaneswar Gude was awarded the Alumni Association's Early Career Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award in recognition of his efforts in teaching and student engagement. Together with this award, the winner is also given the honor of being the Mace Bearer at the Fall Commencement ceremony.

Dr. Gude carried a wooden mace, which was carved by a late professor of Mississippi State University, and symbolic of the Torch of Knowledge, as well as the University's missions of learning, research, and service.

In addition to this most recent award, Dr. Gude has received multiple teaching awards in the past couple years, including the Alumni Association's Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor Award and the American Society for Engineering Education's Southeastern Section's Outstanding New Faculty Researcher Award in 2016, and the National James M. Robbins Excellence in Teaching Award and Excellence in Teaching Award for the Southwest District, both from Chi Epsilon, in 2015.





Congratulations to Emily Farrar for receiving the Harry Charles Simrall Award for Engineering Excellence



This December, Emily Farrar, a civil engineering student at Mississippi State University, was awarded the Harry Charles Simrall Award for Engineering Excellence. The award is given annually to a student within the Bagley School of Engineering who demonstrates academic excellence, as well as superior leadership and service. This marked the second year in a row that a civil engineering student won this award, having been given in 2015 to Laura Wilson. Since the creation of the award in 1999, it has only been given to students within the same department two years in a row twice before.

Both Emily Farrar and Laura Wilson were nominated, and ultimately awarded this honor due to their excellent academic record and their commitment to Mississippi State's chapter of Engineers Without Borders. In addition to being the project manager of Engineers Without Borders, Farrar is also the treasurer of MSU's chapter of ASCE, a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and involved with the department mentoring program. A member of Chi Epsilon honor society, she was inducted into Mississippi State's Society of Scholars last year, and also won first place in the Undergraduate Division of the 2016 EWRI Student Technical Paper Competition.

Dr. Harry Simrall was Dean of the College of Engineering and a charter member of the Association of Retired Faculty, which presents this award, among others.

MSU Civil Engineering Department receives \$220,000 equipment grant

Last year, the Mississippi Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors allocated half a million dollars to support various engineering and surveying programs throughout Mississippi. The Civil and Environmental Engineering department of Mississippi State University received a grant of \$220,643 from that allocation. A majority of that grant, about \$185,000 was used to purchase equipment for the department's engineering teaching and research laboratories. The labs supporting Environmental Engineering, Materials Engineering, Transportation Engineering, and Water Resources Engineering are direct beneficiaries of this award. The remainder of the funds awarded were used to purchase eight total stations for the surveying program and instructional tablets.

Among the new equipment are a bench scale clarification apparatus, an asphalt SuperPave gyratory compactor and asphalt ignition, and traffic signal controllers. Shown (top image) is a pipe network which allows students to examine pipe friction losses, flow measurement in pressurized conduits, and the hydraulics of series and parallel pipe networks.

The department also acquired a rainfall hydrograph through the equipment grant. (See bottom image.) This system has been used by graduate students Laura Wilson and James Gafe to collect data on their directed individual research investigating the effects of soils and rainfall attributes on hydrologic response in watersheds. The hydrograph, which can test the effects of different duration or intensity of precipitation on soils, will be used in this study to test how varying levels of soil water content can affect runoff after precipitation. These student projects are being performed under the supervision of Dr. John Ramirez Avila.



Top: Graduate Teaching Assistant Cayla Cook setting up the pipe network apparatus for class. Bottom: Laura Wilson physically modeling erosion due to intense precipitation event.



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