Great Minds in STEM Announces 2016 HENAAC Award Winners

Monterey Park, CA – Great Minds in STEM™ is proud to announce the 2016 Class of HENAAC Award Winners. These phenomenal role models in science, technology, engineering and math will be honored at the 28th Annual HENAAC Conference, “Excellence Through Diversity,” in Anaheim, CA, October 5-9, 2016.

This year, 27 outstanding scientists, engineers, and other STEM professionals have been selected for a prestigious HENAAC Award. Great Minds in STEM™ salutes its 28th class of honorees and thanks the men and women from industry, government, military and academic institutions who participated in the independent Selection Committees to review nominations. The peer review process was co-chaired by Dr. Emily L. Allen, Dean of California State University Los Angeles’ College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology, and Dr. John C. Larue, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Student Affairs at the Henry Samueli School of Engineering, University of California, Irvine. Both institutions, along with the California State University System, are the Academic Hosts of the 28th HENAAC Conference.

**ENGINEER OF THE YEAR**

Edelmiro (Ed) Muñiz
Executive Chairman
Board of Directors
MEI Technologies

**SPOKESPERSON FOR THE LIGO SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION (LSC)**

Gabriela Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Professor, Physics
Department of Physics & Astronomy
College of Science,
Louisiana State University &
Spokesperson for the
LIGO Scientific Collaboration (LSC)

**EXECUTIVE EXCELLENCE**

Rear Admiral
James E. Rendon
Superintendent
United States
Coast Guard Academy
U.S. Coast Guard

**EXECUTIVE EXCELLENCE**

Mona C. Simpson
Director
Supplier Management, Shared
Services Group, Site Services &
Manufacturing Support
The Boeing Company
EXECUTIVE EXCELLENCE

Renzo Zagni
Vice President
Development Operations and Quality Assurance
Oracle Applications Labs
Oracle

OUTSTANDING TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Gerardo Dominguez, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Physics, College of Science & Mathematics
California State University, San Marcos

OUTSTANDING TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Bernadette A. Hernandez-Sanchez
Principal Member of Technical Staff
Advanced Materials Lab
Sandia National Laboratories

CHAIRMAN’S AWARD

Jose M. Obregon
Global Business Director
Silicones, Feedstocks and Intermediates
Dow Corning
The Dow Chemical Company

SANTIAGO RODRIGUEZ DIVERSITY AWARD

Emanuel Brady, Jr.
Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
Raytheon

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Romelia Flores
IBM Distinguished Engineer and Master Inventor
Global Solutions Center
IBM

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Francisco A. Uzal, DVM, MSc, FRVC, PhD, Dipl ACVP
Professor of Diagnostic Pathology and Branch Chief
San Bernardino Branch
California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System
School of Veterinary Medicine
University of California, Davis

PIONEER

Alba Colon
Program Manager
NASCAR Sprint Cup Motorsports Competition
General Motors
Press Release
August 12, 2016

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
LEVEL II
Fernando A. Pellerano
Chief Engineer, Instrument Systems and Technology Division
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
LEVEL I
Arturo J. Hernandez–Maldonado Ph.D.
Professor, Chemical Engineering
Chemical Engineering Department
College of Engineering
University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
LEVEL I
Eduardo A. Lopez
Propulsion Systems Technical Lead Engineer
Exploration & Launch Systems
Boeing Defense, Space & Security
The Boeing Company

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
LEVEL I
Ricardo Rodriguez
Subsurface Manager
VITO/PowerNap Projects
Deep Water GoM, Shell Exploration & Production Company
Shell Oil Company

CIVIL/ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING
Debora F. Rodrigues, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
Cullen College of Engineering
University of Houston

Civil Engineering
Gerardo I. Velazquez
Research Civil Engineer, Structural Engineering Branch, Geosciences and Structural Division, Geotechnical Structures Laboratory, U.S. Army Engineer Research & Development Center, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army

VANGUARD
Gisele Ragusa, Ph.D.
Professor of Engineering Education Practice
Viterbi School of Engineering
University of Southern California

EDUCATION
Minerva Cordero, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Science for Academic Affairs
College of Science
University of Texas at Arlington
Press Release
August 12, 2016

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST — PH.D
Azlin M. Biaggi-Labiosa, Ph.D.
Manager, Nanotechnology Project
Space Technology Project Office
Space Flight Systems Directorate
NASA Glenn Research Center

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST — PH.D
Ruth Figueroa, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Research and Development
The Dow Chemical Company

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST, MASTER’S DEGREE
Manuel Trejo Jr.
Microelectronics Program Manager/ Engineering Leader
Trusted Access Program Office
U.S. Air Force

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST, UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE
Juan C. Guzman
Manufacturing Research & Development Engineer
Boeing Research & Technology
The Boeing Company

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST, UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE
Veronica Hernandez
Project Engineer, Sr.
Program Management and Integration, ADP
Aeronautics
Lockheed Martin Corporation

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER OR SCIENTIST, UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE
Balarama Varela
Senior Systems Engineer II
Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems
Raytheon

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Michael A. Ruiz
Aerospace Engineer
Aerospace and Flight Mechanics Division
NASA Johnson Space Center
About the Organization

Great Minds in STEM™ is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to keeping America technologically strong by promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers, especially in underserved communities. Established in 1989 and based in the Los Angeles area, the organization’s nation-wide programming focuses on STEM educational awareness from kindergarten through college, and on seeking-out and documenting the world-class contributions of Hispanic professionals in STEM to serve as role models for the next generation of American engineers and scientists.

Great Minds in STEM’s annual HENAAC Conference is the organization’s flagship event where all elements of outreach and programming come together to celebrate Hispanic excellence in STEM. The conference features executive forums, seminars, competitive programs, career opportunities and networking sessions and is attended by over 3,000 STEM students and professionals annually.

For 2016, Great Minds in STEM is partnering with MAES - Latinos in Science and Engineering, who will hold their annual Symposium at the HENAAC Conference, and CAHSI (the Computing Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institutions) who have chosen the Conference as the venue for their annual Summit as well.

For more information about Great Minds in STEM and the 2016 HENAAC Conference, please visit us online at:

www.greatmindsinstem.org