

CEED Award Winners for 2014-15

The Cooperative and Experiential Education Division of ASEE is pleased to recognize the contributions of these outstanding individuals!



Paul Plotkowski

Alvah K. Borman Award

Paul Plotkowski is the founding Dean of the Padnos College of Engineering and Computing at Grand Valley State University. The Padnos College enrolls over 2,000 students in a variety B.S. and M.S. degree programs in engineering, computer science, information systems, occupational safety and health management, and medical & bio-informatics. All of the undergraduate programs in the Padnos College require either internships (CS, IS and OSH programs) or co-operative education (Engineering programs). His duties include nearly daily interaction with a wide variety of industries.

Within ASEE, Dr. Plotkowski has served on the Engineering Dean's Council and co-founded the Undergraduate Experience Committee, held several positions on the CEED Board, and on the North Central Section Board. He has served as the national vice president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). His other activities include serving as an accreditation visitor for mechanical and manufacturing engineering degree programs for the Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology (ABET). He is very active in the FIRST Robotics competition and many other K-12 STEM education enrichment programs.

Dr. Plotkowski is a Fellow of ASME and has received numerous awards including the Dedicated Service Award from ASME, the Outstanding Young Manufacturing Engineer of the Year award from SME and the Outstanding Educator award from Pi Tau Sigma. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Mechanical Engineering, and a Ph.D. in Systems Engineering from Oakland University.



Joseph Gibson

Co-op of the Year

Joseph is a senior in the Computer Engineering program at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is an exceptional student, carrying a 3.97 (on a 4.00 scale) grade point average, ranking as the top student in his class. As part of the mandatory co-op program at GVSU, Joseph has completed three full-time work semesters of progressively impressive assignments. For his first co-op semester, he worked in software testing for L-3 Communications in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he designed software to configure, test, and qualify avionics instruments. From there, he joined NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland for his second co-op semester. At NASA, he worked closely with the team developing the Balloon Experimental Twin Telescope Infrared Interferometry (BETTII), focusing on developing the StarTracker software for Star Cameras onboard BETTII that capture stellar images. From there, Joseph applied for and obtained a co-op position on a highly selective team of four undergraduate and graduate students from across the country, chosen to conduct research at CERN's Large Hadron Collider in Geneva, Switzerland. At CERN, he researched quantum chromodynamics and proton-proton collisions, writing software to plot experimental data and conduct theory predictions. Joseph is fluent in Spanish, and while at CERN served as a Spanish Tour Guide. He has been president of the GVSU Spanish Club, Vice President of Hardware for the GVSU Computer Science Club, and is a member of Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society. In his spare time, he enjoys brewing beer, and is the President and Co-Founder of the GVSU Brewing Science and Technology Club, and was a member of the NASA Zymernauts Brewing Club



Gian-Gabriel Garcia

Intern of the Year

Gian-Gabriel Garcia moved to the United States from the Philippines when he was four years old. His parents told Gian and his three siblings that all were expected to study hard and earn a good education. From early on, Gian appreciated learning and a close family life. During high school, Gian participated in a project that was funded by NASA and that is where he developed an interest in engineering. At Pitt, Gian chose industrial engineering due to the breadth of interests the field held for him.

At the University of Pittsburgh, Gian participated in both the co-op and intern programs. Gian was our first co-op with Universal Electric and since that time the company has hired several other students due to his outstanding work contributions.

After completing the co-op, Gian was accepted as an intern with Eaton in Horseheads, NY. As an intern, Gian excelled beyond the expectations and goals that Eaton set for him. In fact, he was able to create a visual basic tool that streamlined the analysis process; his contributions left "a lasting impression on the company location" as his employer, Stephen Mayo, wrote in his nomination. Outside of class, Gian has been a consistent leader and contributor. He is involved in SHPE, NSBE and Excel, which is a program dedicated to the success of engineering students who face various challenges. Gian has served as a peer advisor and an undergrad teaching assistant.

Gian was the lone recipient of the UPS Minority Scholarship, awarded through the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE), and was also awarded the Eaton Multicultural Scholarship. Recently, Gian was awarded the Pitt Chapter IIE Outstanding Senior. Gian has been thoroughly involved in research while a student at Pitt. He is involved in a vaccine modeling initiative that aids in combatting the high wastage rates within vaccine supply chain in third world countries due to issues like chronic refrigeration difficulties

CEED Student of the Year Award

The Cooperative and Experiential Education Division of the American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE/CEED) annually recognizes co-op and intern students for their outstanding performance at work.

Lou Takacs Award

This award honors Lou Takacs, a long-time employee of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company who was a co-op student at Northwestern University. At Dupont, Lou recruited and supervised co-op students for many years, overseeing the successes of many young people from various schools across the country. Upon his retirement from Dupont Lou joined the staff of the co-op office at the University of Kentucky where he worked until his death in 2003. Lou was a strong supporter of CEED, having served in many capacities, including Chairman and was a recipient of the Alvah K. Borman and Clement J. Freund Awards. This award began as the Corporate Recognition Award in 2003 and officially was re-named the Lou Takacs Award by the CEED Board.

Alvah K. Borman Award

This award honors Alvah K. Borman, Dean of Graduate Placement Services at Northeastern University, for his numerous outstanding contributions to engineering cooperative education over many years, including the founding and editorship of the CED Newsbriefs from 1969 until his death ten years later. The Division allows for the presentation of up to two awards each year to Division members, past or present, who have made sustained, honorable, and meritorious contributions to the promotion of the philosophy and the practice of cooperative education in engineering and/or engineering technology. Nominations are made in the fall of each year, with the award being presented at the mid-winter meeting of the CIEC. The award consists of an honorarium, a plaque, and a certificate of achievement.

Clement J. Freund Award

ASEE presents the Clement J. Freund Award biennially at their summer meeting. It is conferred upon an individual for outstanding contributions to the aims and ideals of cooperative education. The award consists of a plaque, a framed certificate, an honorarium, and travel expenses to the ASEE conference. Clement J. Freund Award winners are also recognized at CIEC.

