

High School Students Earn asbe Awards

by Ross Raybin

Some of Michigan's brightest and best high school engineering students were on hand during the 59th annual asbe Foundation awards banquet held March 21 on the campus of Macomb Community College.

The event, which took place at the Macomb University Center in Clinton Township, featured students from across the southern portion of the state, many from the Metro Detroit area.

"We had 28 winners in this year's 'Design Challenge' from 19 schools," said Jerry Lovett, vice president of the asbe Foundation.

According to Lovett, the "Design Challenge" consists of two parts: an Engineering Drawing category and Design Concept category.

"For the Engineering Drawing part, students have to prepare a drawing using descriptive geometry principles" said Lovett. "The Design Concept category allows them to present their solution any way they can get the idea across (such as sketches, models, drawings)."

Each fall, high schools throughout Southeastern and Lower Michigan are sent packets outlining the design problem to be solved. This year's problem was to design an i-Pod holder and monitor for a recreational vehicle.

Design instructors then help their students develop the necessary skills to complete the problem and their entries were due by the end of February.



Rajan Panesar, left, took first place in Design Concepts

The submitted projects are then mulled over by six judges, all of whom have industry experience, and given scores.

The judges then name winners in each of three designated categories; Engineering, Design and Best of School.

The Engineering and Design categories each had eight winners with the awards ranging from \$400 for first place to \$100 for eighth place.

Each winner of the Best of School category received \$50.

This year's top winners were Denis Balan (Engineering) and Rajan Panesar (Design), both from Stevenson High School in Sterling Heights.

The annual banquet also recognized several other important figures in the engineering field, including Herman Thomas, Clifton

Tally and Tom Sawasky.

The memory of Herman Thomas was honored for his lifetime of service to cooperative education and design programs at MCC.

"He was well thought of," said Lovett. "He worked to get an articulation program between MCC and Kettering University."

According to Lovett, Thomas worked at General Motors as an engineer and, after retiring, took on a role at MCC involving co-op education for design.

Talley was recognized for his 29 years of service with the asbe Education Committee. This year, Talley decided to retire from the volunteer position.

Sawasky accepted a Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to the Design Challenge during his time as an in-



Denis Balan, right, accepting his Engineering Drawing award

structor in the Utica Community School District.

The banquet was hosted by the asbe Foundation, which was formed in 2003.

According to Lovett, it's a spin-off of the American Society of Body Engineers, which has since disappeared.

"We carry on a lot of work the society did," said Lovett. "We try to do things for designers out in the workforce and encourage kids to get into engineering."

For those who want more information about the organization, visit www.asbefound.org.

Harrison Home Is Major Site Of New Movie, 'Family Weekend'

The movie, "Family Weekend," filmed in Michigan, starring Kristin Chenoweth, Matthew Modine, Olesya Rulin, Joey King and Shirley Jones, opened for a limited engagement on the weekend of March 29 at the Birmingham 8 theater.

A good portion of the movie was filmed in a Harrison Township home on the shores of Lake St. Clair.

Directed by Benjamin Epps, "Family Weekend" follows 16-year-old Emily Smith-Dungy (Olesya Rulin), an incredibly motivated overachiever who has grown increasingly frustrated with her parents' lack of support and guidance.

Her mom, Samantha (Kristin Chenoweth), is a career-focused, no-nonsense, high-powered business executive. Her dad, Duncan (Matthew Modine), is a happy-go-lucky artist who can't be bothered to earn a paycheck.

When they miss their daughter's big jump-roping competition, Emily hits her breaking point and takes it upon herself to restore order in the home. She and her siblings unite and take their parents hostage in hopes of becoming a family again.

"We got such great treatment from everyone in Michigan and especially Macomb County," said producer Adam Saunders of Footprint Features. "Everyone we came in contact with went out of their way to make us feel safe and comfortable. They really set the tone for a great project and the film reflects that."

Epps attended the evening showing on Saturday, March 30, to talk about the film and answer questions from the audience.

Homeowner Christopher Press, a dentist with a Clinton Township practice, said, "It was a great experience for our whole family. Everyone associated with the movie was a pleasure to deal with."

"I have only seen bits of the movie so far, but from what I can tell, our community is realistically represented."

Other filming locations included Fraser High School and Lakeview High School.



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