

Dads Association
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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Dads Association Recognizes Certificate of Merit Recipients

URBANA –The Dads Association at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign presented their annual Certificate of Merit Award at their annual Dads Weekend Banquet on Friday, Oct. 31, 2008. The Certificate of Merit recognizes a student, a faculty member, a staff member and a registered student organization for their contributions to the improvement of the University and the community. Recipients receive a framed certificate, an engraved mantle clock and a cash award. There were no faculty recipients this year. The 2008 recipients were:

Outstanding Staff Member

Ms. Virginia Vermillion currently serves as the Assistant Dean for Academic Administration and Dean of Students within the College of Law. Known to students and staff alike as “Dean V,” Dean Vermillion’s duties include, but are not limited to, serving as an advocate for students and student organizations, administering the disciplinary processes, implementing the College’s academic policies, presiding over Orientation and Convocation, and, most importantly, individually counseling students within College of Law. After years of practicing law at a firm in Chicago, Dean Vermillion returned to her alma mater and, in the words of a co-worker, began to “truly revolutionize student life at the College of Law.” It is Dean Vermillion’s dedication to her students that is most remarkable. She personally knows each one of the 650 law students for which she is responsible, caring for each with a supportive approach and “student-first” attitude. In fact, it is interesting to note that Dean Vermillion’s original position was simply, “Assistant Dean for Academic Administration;” the title of Dean of Students was created for her to more accurately reflect the work she performs each day.

A Law professor who supplied a letter of support commends Dean Vermillion on her ability to mentor and counsel students. He says, “In every instance I thought her judgment, her

sensitivity, her empathy and concern, were just amazing. She could be firm when necessary, and she knew when not to be. She has counseled students wisely on literally hundreds and hundreds of occasions, often in the most emotional and uncertain circumstances imaginable.” It is because of this dedication to her students and their success that Dean Virginia Vermillion is the Outstanding Staff Member Certificate of Merit Award winner.

Outstanding Student Organization

The **Student Advancement Committee (SAC)**, an elite organization within the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, is a group of thirty undergraduate students selected to work with the Office of Advancement to serve as College ambassadors. In existence for over twenty years, each student selected as a member of the SAC has to formally apply and interview to be considered. These students work with alumni, dignitaries, and other student groups to fundraise for the College of ACES and further the success of the college and its students through professional networking and leadership opportunities.

Nominator Karlie Elliott describes the SAC best, saying “the leadership, networking, and real-life experiences SAC provides members are why this organization is truly deserving of the Dads Association [Certificate of Merit] Award. SAC are incredible leaders who work to advance the mission of the College of ACES to support their peers, alumni and perspective students.” With a history of successful large-scale networking and fundraising events, such as Feed Your fACES and the ACES Phone-A-Thon, it is clear that the Student Advancement Committee takes its charge seriously. It is because of this dedication and sheer pride that the College of ACES Student Advancement Committee is this year’s Outstanding Registered Student Organization Certificate of Merit Award Winner.

Outstanding Student

Mr. Brian Matesic, senior in the College of Engineering, possesses the kind of fierce dedication to both scholarly and co-curricular pursuits that makes one stand out from the pack. Brian consistently performs as one of the top students, pursuing a rigorous General Engineering curriculum, as well as two minors, one in Chemistry and one in Technology and Management. With such a demanding course load, one might think that Brian would have no time left for

extra-curricular activities. However, Brian has managed to succeed in this area, as well. Working with other students in the College of Engineering, Brian co-founded and served as President for the National Organization for Business and Engineering (NOBE), a networking group for students with interests in the fields of both business and engineering. Brian is also active in the Office for Technical Consulting Resources, a student-run consulting group that provides students with real-world consulting experience.

It seems that with each step of his career thus far at Illinois, Brian has applied himself to each opportunity or challenge that comes his way. His nominator, Heidi Craddock, states that, “Brian deserves to be recognized [because]... it takes an extraordinary amount of commitment and dedication to balance all that Brian has pursued and achieved.” It is because of this drive and desire for excellence that Brian Matesic is this year’s Outstanding Student Certificate of Merit winner.

The Dads Association at the University at Urbana-Champaign, established in 1923, is believed to be one of the nation’s longest-serving parent organizations. The Association supports programs, services and activities that promote the health, safety and well-being of the University community and serves as the parent liaison to the campus.

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