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UM educator named professor of the year

One of The University of Montana's most popular educators has been named 2008 Montana Professor of the Year by two national organizations that promote teaching excellence — the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement of Education.

Chemistry Professor Garon Smith, better known to many on campus and throughout Montana as G. Wiz, will receive the award, along with professors from other states, at a formal luncheon and congressional ceremony in Washington, D.C., this month. The U.S. Professors of the Year program salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country — those who excel in teaching and positively influence the lives and careers of students.

"Students volunteer testimonials about the quality and contagion of his teachings," wrote UM President George Dennison in nominating Smith for the prestigious award. "His teaching abilities, in a word, strike me as magical. I mean this quite literally, as any one of the hundreds of undergraduate students from varied disciplines who take his introductory Chemistry 151 course each semester can and do attest."

Smith dons a purple wizard's cape and robe to capture students' attention, regaling and instructing them with fiery tricks and clever, humorous incantation. Of equal importance, his faculty colleagues confirm that students leave Smith's course with a very solid grounding in and understanding of chemistry, well prepared for advanced work, Dennison said.

When not teaching at UM, Smith tours elementary and high schools around the state, teaching short lessons to get kids interested in science. Most often, he does this on his own time and at his own expense, simply because he loves opening young minds to science. He also participates in organized outreach tours throughout Montana to help recruit students to UM.



UM chemistry Professor Garon Smith, shown here dressed as G. Wiz, is the 2008 Montana Professor of the Year.

On campus, Dennison said, peers recognize Smith's teaching excellence. Through the University Center for Teaching Excellence, Smith advises other faculty members on innovative ways to become more effective classroom instructors, a talent for which he has earned national acclaim from educators around the country. In 2004 he won the Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology Award, presented during the International Conference on College Teaching and Learning.

His popularity in the classroom has won him several other teaching awards on and off campus, including one the students themselves bestowed. In 2004 Smith won the coveted Most Inspirational Teacher of the Year Award from Silent Sentinel, a senior honor society that asks seniors to vote for the teacher who most inspired them at UM. 🍷

University rolls out redesigned home page

UM's new home page has something for everyone. The redesigned site, launched in October, makes navigation easier by filtering content for different users.

It features six audience-specific pages: Future Students, Current Students, International, Faculty and Staff, Alumni, and Friends and Family. Each audience page provides content and links that are important to those users. Web site visitors can set the default tab to bring them back to their chosen audience page each time they return.

A rotating series of photos and stories at the top of each audience page gives UM a chance to share some of the remarkable achievements of its employees and students, and alerts visitors to upcoming events on campus.

The redesign also enhances the University's seven topic pages: Academics, Administration, Athletics, Campus Life, Employment, Libraries and Research. Those pages were reorganized, and several now include messages from top UM administrators.

One of the goals of the redesign was to attract prospective students to UM. Currently, one-third of all applications submitted to UM are completed online. The new site allows those seeking admission to the University to apply in just two clicks from the home page.

"The new home page complex was a great collaborative effort," said Becky Maier, chair of the Home Page Subcommittee. "Stakeholders from all audiences provided great feedback for their specific pages. We added content that is a definite plus for each audience based on their feedback."

Visit the new UM home page at <http://umt.edu>. 🍷

UM Offers Hydrogen Safety Course—Anticipating an increase in the number of vehicles using hydrogen technology, UM has developed a new eight-hour awareness program titled Hydrogen Safety for Emergency Responders. The course is appropriate for firefighters, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement professionals, emergency administrators, and business and industry safety personnel. Topics covered include general hydrogen safety, personal protective equipment, hydrogen storage, emergency responses and more. The training and supportive materials have completed beta testing and are now available for presentation. The training can be conducted at the University's training site at MonTEC, 1121 E. Broadway in Missoula, or at any national or international user site. For more information, call Paul Williamson at 406-532-3227 or visit <http://www.h2education.com/index.php/sID/472aa1df/fuseaction/safety.main.htm>.



prepares social work faculty and students to meet the demographic realities of our aging society. UM's interdisciplinary gerontology minor was introduced last year. For more information, go online to <http://www.health.umt.edu/GSWI>.

Hybrid Truck Unveiled At COT—The UM College of Technology and Montana Peterbilt unveiled a new hybrid truck late last month. The new Peterbilt Model 335 Hybrid Electric medium truck is capable of reducing fuel consumption by 50 percent for certain applications, significantly reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. It also is eligible for up to \$12,000 in U.S. federal tax incentives. During the unveiling, Kevin Gustainis, owner of Montana Peterbilt, and Jim Ziti, director of vocational sales for Peterbilt Motors Co., gave presentations and discussed the company's overall efforts to reduce its carbon footprint.

Business Educator Receives Award—Scott Douglas, an associate professor at UM's School of Business Administration, has received a Citation of Excellence Award from Emerald Management Reviews for 2007. Emerald Management Reviews features articles from the world's top 400 management publications. Douglas' article was among more than 15,000 published in journals during 2007. The Citation of Excellence Award goes to the top 50 articles. Douglas is co-author of the award-winning article, "The Role, Function and Contribution of Attribution Theory to Leadership: A Review," which was published in Volume 18, Issue 6 of The Leadership Quarterly. He teaches in UM's Department of Management and Marketing.

Best Article Prize Goes To Professor—Dan Flores, A.B. Hammond Professor of Western History at UM, has won a Vivian Paladin Best Article Prize from Montana: The Magazine of Western History. His award-winning 2008 article, "Bringing Home All the Pretty Horses: The Horse Trade in the Early American West, 1785-1825," is an essay about the West of Thomas Jefferson's era. In the article, Flores argues that trade in wild and Indian horses was one of the earliest economies in the West, funneling horses to the advancing American frontier east of the Mississippi River. The award is given annually by the magazine's editorial board. 🐾

Montana PBS Wins National Award—Montana PBS recently received the Public Broadcasting Service's top award for Excellence in Development for its successful fundraising activity. Lisa Titus, Montana PBS development director, accepted the award at the PBS Development Conference held Oct. 2-4 in San Antonio. Montana PBS, a collaborative service of KUFM-TV at UM and KUSM-TV at Montana State University, has members in more than 220 communities. The service has seen double-digit increases in membership revenue in each of the past three years and has received significant major gifts to its Campaign for the Future. More information about Montana PBS is online at <http://www.montanapbs.org>.

Social Work School Earns Accolades—UM's School of Social Work has won a Best Practice Award for Gerontological Curricular Innovation. The award recognizes UM for integration of gerontological content in the University's bachelor's degree program in social work, for development of an interdisciplinary gerontology minor and for offering a Gerontology Fellows Program that provides social work majors opportunities to pursue advanced skills in their work with older adults. It is presented by the Council on Social Work Education's Gero-Ed Center, which

UM Events

University Choir—Nov. 24, 7:30 p.m. University Theatre. \$10 general public; \$5 students and senior citizens. Information: UM Department of Music, 406-243-6880, griz.music@umontana.edu.

Thanksgiving Break—Nov. 26-28. No classes held. UM offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27-28.

Handel's "Messiah"—Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m. University Theatre. A fundraiser for Missoula Habitat for Humanity. Free, but donations accepted at the door. Information: Adjunct Assistant Professor Nancy Cooper, UM Department of Music, 406-243-2080, nancy.cooper@umontana.edu.

Guitar Ensemble Concert—Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m. Music Building Room 218. Free and open to the public.

"The Russian Romantics"—Dec. 1,

8 p.m. Music Recital Hall. Presenter: Michael Coonrod, piano faculty member at Interlochen Center for the Arts. An event of the 2008-09 President's Lecture Series. Free and open to the public. Information: <http://www.umt.edu/president/pls>; UM history Professor Richard Drake, 406-243-2981, richard.drake@umontana.edu.

"The Merry Wives of Windsor"—Dec. 2-6, 7:30 p.m. Montana Theatre, Performing Arts and Radio Television Center. Matinee performance at 2 p.m. Dec. 6. UM Department of Drama/Dance production. Cost: \$18 general public; \$14 seniors/students; \$8 children 12 and under. Tickets and information: Drama/Dance Box Office, 406-243-4581, umtheatredance@umontana.edu, <http://www.sfa.umt.edu/drama>. 🎭



The University of
Montana

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