2019
Wilson Awards Banquet

The College of Earth and Mineral Sciences’ annual celebration of accomplishments

The Nittany Lion Inn
Sunday, April 28, 2019

Reception: 5:00 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 p.m.
Through their bequests, Matthew and Anne Wilson are the major benefactors of the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences (EMS). In the 1950s, Matthew Wilson inherited a stock portfolio that provided the basis for the funds he generously gave to the then-named School of Mineral Industries. His giving started in 1957 with a modest scholarship endowment and was later increased with additional gifts. Over the years the endowments blossomed into a substantial fund that today provides the college with support for its well-known student loan program and a number of faculty and student awards and scholarships. The fund also supports the annual Wilson Awards Banquet.

Matthew Wilson was born in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Penn State in 1918 with a bachelor’s degree in mining engineering. He attended the University of Colorado, where he received master’s degrees in geology and chemistry and met his wife, Anne, a biochemist. After graduating, he started working as a chemist for the Atlantic Refining Company in Philadelphia and later moved to Holland, Michigan, where he developed a career in sales starting first with the U.S. Industrial Company, then the Karr Spring Company, and later with the Spring Air Company. He served as the Washington representative for Spring Air’s industrial and military sales for many years; he also served on the company’s board of directors. In retirement, the Wilsons lived in Michigan but moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, shortly before Matthew died in 1963.

Throughout the next twenty years Anne Wilson increased the family endowments and took an active interest in EMS students and faculty. When she died in 1983, it was said of her:

“Anne believed in giving. Her dream to become a doctor was never realized so she wanted the dreams of others to come true. She felt it was important that the University hold on to its best teachers. Awards were a wonderful way to do so.”
Rewarding Student Achievement

College Awards

Jay M. and Katherine DeFinis Award for Outstanding Student Leadership
Established in 2005, this award honors outstanding student leadership abilities within the student organizations of the college.

Grayson Doucette, Materials Science and Engineering
Virginia Marcon, Geosciences
Vivian Rennie, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science

Ellen Steidle Achievement Award
Established in 1953 by Dean Edward Steidle to honor the memory of his wife, this award recognizes students who have been active in advancing the welfare and improvement of the college.

Senior: Andrew Patterson, Geography
Junior: Liam Cummings, Energy Engineering and Energy Business and Finance

Dean Edward Steidle Memorial Scholar Award
Established in 1981 to honor Edward Steidle, dean of the college from 1929 to 1953, this award broadens the educational opportunities for EMS students.

Kittichote Veeranuntawet, Geosciences

The following awards and accomplishments will be acknowledged at the Spring 2019 Commencement Reception on Friday, May 3, 2019.

GEMS Diamond Award
Established in 2006, the GEMS Diamond Award grants a lifetime membership in the Penn State Alumni Association to a graduating student who is found to have the most well-rounded involvement and achievement in both the University and community environment during his/her student experience while in the college.

Katherine Campayo, Energy Business and Finance

Student Marshal

Shawn Stephen Murdzek, Dual B.S./M.S. Meteorology and Atmospheric Science, Minor in Mathematics
Shawn graduates Summa Cum Laude with a perfect 4.0 cumulative GPA.

Engineering Honor Marshal
Muhamad S. Hakimi Bin Daud, B.S. Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering, Minor in Energy Business and Finance
Muhamad graduates Summa Cum Laude with a perfect 4.0 cumulative GPA.
The Earth and Mineral Sciences Academy for Global Experience (EMSAGE) was formed in 2009 as a vehicle to foster our students’ global competence and to promote a spirit of integrity, service, and leadership. Our 2019 Laureates are listed below.

Katherine Campayo, Energy Business and Finance
Margot Dormer, Materials Science and Engineering
Beth Ann Eberle, Geosciences
Max Glines, Environmental Systems Engineering
Zachary Goulet, Energy Engineering
Joseph Grosso, Geography
Catherine Hanagan, Geosciences
Helen Kenion, Environmental Systems Engineering
Sangyeop Kim, Energy Business and Finance
Steven Langballe, Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
Shawn Murdzek, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Anthony Preucil, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Jake Rowe, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Kristina Salvatore, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Brandon Smith, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Savanna Smith, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Shaylee Traugh, Materials Science and Engineering
Christopher Watkins, Energy and Sustainability Policy
Mackenzie Williams, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
Promotion and Tenure

Seth Blumsack, Professor of Energy Policy and Economics
Chris Forest, Professor of Climate Dynamics
Michael Hickner, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering
Erica Smithwick, Professor of Geography
Mort Webster, Professor of Energy Engineering
Christopher Fowler, Associate Professor of Geography
Elizabeth Hajek, Associate Professor of Geosciences
Shimin Liu, Associate Professor of Energy and Mineral Engineering

25-Year Service Awards

Eugene Clothiaux, Professor of Meteorology
Raymond Najjar, Professor of Oceanography
Suzanne Mohney, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering
Andrew Nyblade, Professor of Geosciences
Ann Taylor, Assistant Dean for Distance Learning and Director of the John A. Dutton e-Education Institute
Johannes Verlinde, Professor of Meteorology

Retirements

Robert Brooks, Professor of Geography
Barry Evans, Assistant Research Professor, EESI
Frederick Gadomski, Assistant Teaching Professor, Meteorology and Atmospheric Science
James Runt, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering
Recognizing Commitment to Service

Wilson Award for Outstanding Service

Venkatraman Gopalan
Professor of Materials Science and Engineering

Faculty Advising Award

Jon Nese
Associate Head, Undergraduate Program in Meteorology and Atmospheric Science; Teaching Professor, Meteorology

Faculty Mentoring Award

Jeffery Kohler
George H. Jr. and Anne B. Deike Endowed Chair in Mining Engineering; Professor and Chair of the Mining Engineering Program
Honoring Excellence in Teaching

Wilson Award for Excellence in Teaching

Maureen Feineman
Associate Head for Undergraduate Programs; Associate Research Professor, Geosciences

G. Montgomery and Marion Mitchell Award for Innovative Teaching

Ismaila Dabo
Assistant Professor of Materials Science and Engineering

Eugene Morgan
Assistant Professor of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
Celebrating Excellence in Research

Wilson Award for Excellence in Research

George H. K. Schenck
Teaching Assistant Award

Michelle Ritchie
Ph.D. Candidate in Geography and Climate Science

Mort Webster
Professor of Energy Engineering

Erica Smithwick
Professor of Geography

John T. Ryan, Jr.
Faculty Fellow
George H. Deike, Jr. Research Grant

Randy Vander Wal
Professor of Energy and Mineral Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering
“Transitioning to the H2 Economy Using Shale Gas”

Wilson Research Initiation Grant

Hamid Emami-Meybodi
Assistant Professor of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
“A Diffusion Perspective on Solvent Injection in Ultratight Oil Reservoirs”

E. Willard and Ruby S. Miller Faculty Fellow

Alexander Klippel
Professor of Geography
“Transforming Education, Communication, and Decision-Making Paradigms for Earth and Geospatial Sciences”

Meng Wang
Assistant Professor of Environmental Systems Engineering
“Dynamics of Reactive Nitrogen Released into Environment in Biological Nutrient Removal Processes”
Celebrating Junior Faculty Accomplishments

Gladys Snyder Junior Faculty Grants

Jeremy Gernand
Assistant Professor of Industrial Health and Safety
“An Engineering Design Simulator for Risk-Related Decision Making”

Danielle Hickey
Assistant Research Professor
“Harnessing Machine Learning to Engineer Quantum Materials”

Joel Landry
Assistant Professor of Environmental and Energy Economics
Paul F. Robertson Award for the EMS Breakthrough of the Year

Klaus Keller
Professor of Geosciences

Charles L. Hosler Alumni Scholar Medal

Stanley Benjamin
NOAA Senior Scientist