

4/30/04 HSU Wins National Clean-Air Awards

Humboldt State University faculty and students have won national recognition for their innovative development and educational outreach on behalf of clean-air technologies.

Peter Lehman, professor at HSU's Environmental Resource Engineering Department and director of the world-famous Schatz Energy Research Center, received the 2004 Robert Zweig Public Education Award April 28 from the board of directors of the National Hydrogen Association at a conference in Los Angeles.

He was honored for his "untiring efforts" to realize commercially viable hydrogen energy. Lehman's efforts include conception of the NHA's first annual Student Hydrogen Design Contest, and his sustained support of the annual nationwide Lollapalooza music and fuel cell demonstration tour, which acquaints the public with a working fuel cell system.

A team of HSU students won honorable mention in the inaugural design contest for a hydrogen fueling station, sponsored by the U.S. Energy Department and ChevronTexaco, as well as the NHA. The competition is designed to spur development of a hydrogen economy and engage students directly in the development of fuel cell technologies.

The HSU team produced a design for a hydrogen fueling station that conceivably might be operational in March 2006.

Led by engineering senior Bryan Jungers, the team includes industrial technology junior Gabriel Adame, environmental systems master's candidate Juliette Bohn, 34-year-old mechanic David Carter, solar PV engineer and environmental systems graduate student Anand Gopal, new HSU student Colin McAndrews, engineering candidate Avram Pearlman, Team Faculty Adviser Perry Gray-Reneberg, engineering major Douglas Saucedo, senior Terrance Williams and environmental resources engineering candidate Erik Zielke.

Lehman's award is named after the late Dr. Robert M. Zweig, a physician alarmed by air pollution's damaging effects on his patients' lungs. He championed clean-air technologies and led a movement to convert Riverside's fleet of public transit buses to run on hydrogen.

"As a recipient of this award, Dr. Lehman has made hydrogen education and outreach a priority, and has worked hard to develop initiatives that have resulted in significant progress in hydrogen technologies," said Jeffrey Serfass, NHA president.

Lehman said, "When I was a fledgling hydrogen researcher, Dr. Bob Zweig was one of my mentors. He was an untiring advocate for clean hydrogen energy and a wonderful person. To receive an award named in his memory is a special honor. I'm especially pleased to be recognized for my efforts to get students involved in the development of a hydrogen energy economy. It's the creativity and enthusiasm of today's students that will launch us into a clean-energy future."

Regarding HSU's honorable mention in the premiere design contest, Lehman said, "The team did an incredible job against competition from some of the best universities in North America. They have my hearty congratulations. They've brought national recognition and honor to themselves, HSU and our community."

The competition required a document, with drawings, outlining the design of a hydrogen fueling station that could open in the near future.

Divided into five sections, the document comprises a technical design; safety, economic and environmental analyses; and a marketing/education strategy.

Judges evaluated each section on a point system, using a variety of criteria including technical accuracy, completeness, clarity of writing and presentation, professionalism, economic viability, environmental performance and realism of design.

Project teams were allowed up to 10 students from both undergraduate and graduate degree programs from colleges and universities anywhere in North America. The panel of judges was selected from among industry practitioners and one official each from the Energy Department and the NHA staff.

The awards were presented at the association's 15th annual conference and Hydrogen Expo USA in Los Angeles.

Jungers, the HSU team leader, will be attending University of California, Davis in the fall to study civil and environmental engineering, with an emphasis in transportation engineering. He is a native of the Mojave Desert in Southern California.

The NHA advocates hydrogen for its potential to reduce harmful emissions, and curb the United States' heavy dependence on overseas energy sources. Infrastructure for hydrogen technologies is developing in areas such as transportation, stationary generation and portable devices, according to the NHA.

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