



Photo courtesy Marshall University

Marshall continuing summer SURE program

Application deadline scheduled for Friday

Marshall University is accepting applications for the 2016 Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (or SURE) Fellowship in Huntington.

This program has been conducted at Marshall since 2005. It is funded through the West Virginia Research Challenge Fund, administered by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, Division of Science and Research.

The SURE program is enabled by West Virginia undergraduate students with a history of research to work at Marshall. Each selected student will receive a stipend of \$4,000, plus support for travel.

SURE supports undergraduate researchers over a 10-week period; this year's program runs from May 16 through July 29.

The SURE program is accepting applications through 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26. Application forms are available at the SURE website: www.marshall.edu/SURE.

"Anyone who is an undergraduate in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields at Marshall University or another institution in West Virginia is eligible to perform research at Marshall through the SURE program," said Dr. Michael Norton, professor of chemistry and director of the SURE program at MU.

Last summer, several Marshall University students received grants for research

in the STEM fields. The students were Ethan Adkins (Chemistry), Destiny Carte (Chemistry), Amanda Clark (Biology), Daniel Crow (Physics), Nicholas King (IST), Jordan Martinez (Chemistry), Shelley Naylor (Chemistry), Cynthia Peck (Biology), Tyler Skidmore (Biochemistry), Haley Stewart (Psychology) and Scott Taj (Computer Science).

For more information, contact Norton by phone 304-696-3489 or by e-mail at Norton@Marshall.edu. You can also contact Kara Mullins, the program's administrative assistant, via e-mail at Mullins265@marshall.edu.

More program details and summaries of past SURE students' projects are available on the SURE website.

(Source: www.Marshall.edu)

MU engineering professor named finalist for state academic honor

Dr. Andrew Nichols, a professor of civil engineering at Marshall University, has been named one of the five finalists for the West Virginia Professor of the Year award.

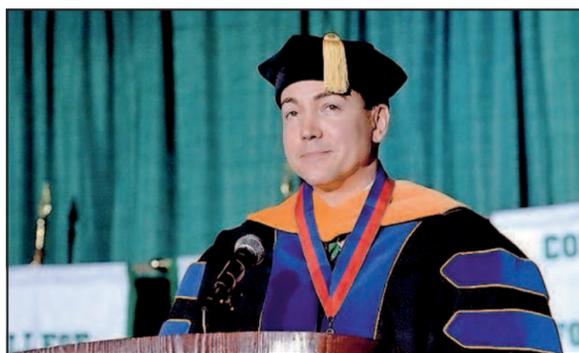
The Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia will announce the winner in early March, according to Marshall's provost, Dr. Gayle Ormiston.

"We only nominate one professor for this award and it is one of the highest honors a faculty member can achieve," Ormiston said. "Nichols was the recipient of last year's Dr. Charles E. Hedrick Outstanding Faculty Award for his impact on students and innovative teaching style. He is a perfect representative of what it means to be a lifetime educator."

Nichols, a native of Point Pleasant, came to Marshall in 2007 as an assistant professor to teach and conduct applied research in the area of transportation engineering. He has conducted traffic data collection, traffic signal design, traffic safety studies and traffic-related research for various projects funded by the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

"Being selected as Marshall's nominee is humbling and surreal, but equally surprising because there are so many other faculty whom I would consider better teachers than myself," Nichols said. "I have never received formal training to be a teacher, but I believe my passions for my discipline and helping students make up for that. It is my responsibility to help students become engineers, specifically transportation engineers, and I try to create a learning environment that is both interesting and informative. Since most students use the transportation system on a daily basis, it is often easier for them to understand the concepts."

One of these students, Jason Bryan, a 33 year-old civil engineering major from Wayne County, said his experiences inside of Nichols' classroom have allowed him to do exactly that. Bryan, a former high



Dr. Andrew Nichols was chosen to give the keynote address at Marshall University Winter Commencement this past December. Nichols, 37, of Point Pleasant, arrived at Marshall in 2007 to serve as a professor of civil engineering. Photo courtesy Marshall University

school teacher, said he admired Nichols' teaching style immediately.

"From my perspective as a real-world educator, Dr. Nichols is clear and concise in the classroom while providing unit plans and instruction that are not only technically proficient, but could be used as a model for other instructors," Bryan said. "He is a tenured professor and an engineer who doesn't let all the little letters after his name affect the way he treats his students. Many of our assignments required considerable work outside of class, and I can honestly say I wouldn't have enjoyed doing the work as much for another professor."

Nichols served as keynote speaker for Marshall's 2015 Winter Commencement held this past December. With opportunities such as these, he said he probably wouldn't have

found the same level of success at another university.

"I like the sense of community on campus at Marshall and I am extremely happy to be back in West Virginia to help advance the state and I know I couldn't have established the type of relationships within the university and with external funding agencies at another university," Nichols said. "I plan to retire from Marshall University - I couldn't imagine going anywhere else."

The winner of West Virginia Professor of the Year will receive a \$10,000 cash award and a handmade glass trophy, with \$2,500 to the runner-up and \$1,000 each to the next three finalists. To find out more about the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia, visit <http://wvhumanities.org/faculty-merit-foundation/> online.

(Source: www.Marshall.edu)

Engineering student proposal accepted for NASA program

A group of West Virginia University engineering students has been accepted to NASA's Micro-g Neutral Buoyancy Experiment Designs Team program, which challenges undergraduate students to design, build and test a tool or device that addresses a current space exploration problem.

The team's proposal, "Asteroid Drilling and Anchoring Mechanism: Anchoring Device for Regolith," is a tool that will help with NASA's Asteroid Redirect Mission - a first-ever robotic mission to visit a large near-Earth asteroid, collect a multi-ton boulder from its surface and redirect it into a stable orbit around the moon.

"Due to low gravity on an asteroid, our particular design addresses the need to anchor extravehicular tools to the surface during flight operations," said Matthew Morrow, a senior mechanical and aerospace engineering double major from Ellicott City, Maryland, who serves as team lead. "Our anchoring device would allow hardware to be placed out of service during an as-



tronaut's operation without the hassle of stowing the tool."

Morrow and fellow seniors Sean Lantto of Manassas, Virginia, and Justin Fitzwater of Moorefield were guided by Thomas Evans, research assistant professor of aerospace engineering. Evans is the research program manager at the West Virginia Robotic Technology Center in Fairmont, which is active in research that supports robotic space operations and supporting technology for NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

"This is a unique opportunity for our students to develop professional skills in a NASA program development structure and ultimately test their design,"

said Evans. "They will experience how NASA matures and evaluates new technology for future space missions and I'm proud of their accomplishments thus far."

The trio also leveraged the underground mining experience of WVU's Department of Mining Engineering to design the tool with characteristics similar to underground roof bolting techniques. The design uses a variety of ideas ranging from mechanical anchors used on roof bolts to helical piles used in construction.

The trio will test the tool at Johnson Space Center's Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory from May 23 to May 26. The NASA-made goal for the tool is to withstand 10 pounds of pull force for a duration of 15 seconds, but the team hopes to achieve 20 pounds of pull force for 15 seconds.

"In the coming months, we will be continuing the design process, purchasing materials and then building the device," said Morrow. "We are thrilled to have been selected for the program and look forward to testing in Houston."

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