Updates on friends and colleagues in the materials community

Judith A. Todd Honored for Excellence in Mentoring

In November, TMS Member Judith A. Todd was one of ten individuals selected for the 2006 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. Todd, a professor of engineering science and mechanics at Pennsylvania State University, was recognized for her track record in mentoring women engineers at all levels in their careers. (Todd's photo is courtesy of Rodney Choice and Choice photography.)

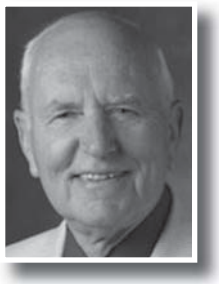
As P.B. Breneman Department Head Chair of Engineering Science and Mechanics, Todd is the first female engineering department chair at Penn State. Beyond her mentoring of individual students and faculty, she has been an administrator at another major technical institution and has developed and implemented several programs to institute gender equity and salary parity.

At Penn State, she has engaged the university's senior leadership in institutionalizing her "Strategic Pathways to Equity and Leadership (SPEL): Preparing for the Professoriate" program. The program requires mentoring for aspiring and current faculty members about leadership and advancement opportunities in their careers. Penn State now ranks second nationally in the numbers of women faculty in engineering.

The Presidential awards program, supported and administered by the U.S. National Science Foundation, recognizes the critical importance of mentors in the academic and personal development of students and colleagues who are underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Awards are made to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding and sustained mentoring and guidance to a significant number of underrepresented students at the K–12, undergraduate, or graduate education level.

Award winners are honored at a White House ceremony and receive a $10,000 grant to continue to advance their mentoring work.

William Nix Recognized for Outstanding Materials Research



TMS Senior Member William Nix has been awarded the highest honor presented by the Materials Research Society (MRS)—the Von Hippel Award—in recognition of outstanding contributions to interdisciplinary research on materials. Nix, who joined the Stanford University faculty in 1963, became professor emeritus at Stanford in 2003. He was named a fellow of TMS in 1988.

Nix was recognized by MRS for "his original contributions on the deformation and failure of materials, particularly in the area of thin films, small volumes, and high-temperature alloys; for pioneering mechanical test methods; and for educating and mentoring future generations of materials scientists."

Nix accepted the award at the 2007 MRS Fall Meeting in November, where he presented the award lecture, "Exploiting New Opportunities in Materials Research by Remembering and Applying Old Lessons."

The Von Hippel Award includes a $10,000 cash prize, honorary membership in MRS, and a trophy that symbolizes the many-faceted nature of materials research. The award recognizes those qualities most prized by materials scientists and engineers—brilliance and originality of intellect, combined with vision that transcends the boundaries of conventional scientific disciplines as exemplified by the life of Arthur von Hippel.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN WERT

Editor's Note: *This tribute was submitted by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.*

In July, John Wert, a materials scientist who worked for the National Laboratory in Denmark, died at the age of 56 while hiking in Norway. He was a member of TMS for nearly 20 years and the son of long-time TMS member and former professor at the University of Illinois, Charles Wert.

John Wert's research emphasized experimental investigation and modeling of thermomechanical processing treatments for aluminum alloys, superplasticity of aerospace alloys, intermetallic alloys for elevated temperature applications, and deformation and fracture behavior of crystalline and amorphous metals. His research in these areas focused on revealing the fundamental concepts of phase transformations and deformation in alloys that are of technological importance.

He was recognized by his students as an exceptional mentor and teacher. Beyond placing the interest of the student ahead of his own, he was quick to seek understanding and learn from the student's experience and abilities. In so doing, John Wert served well the materials science community with continuously evolving capability and curiosity. He will be missed dearly by those who had the pleasure of knowing him and by the community in general for his contributions and teachings.

John Wert received his B.Sc. degree in physics from Cornell University and his Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Berkeley. Following work at Rockwell International, he joined the faculty of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Virginia and then joined the National Laboratory in Denmark in 1999.

Memorials may be made to the Lucille and Charles Wert Undergraduate Awards Fund in Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Illinois, 1304 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801, or to the John Wert Fund of Friends of Chaco, Box 220, Nageezi, NM 87037.