Winners of 2007 Spring AutoCAD Contest honored in fall lecture class

An engineering student who is now studying for the ministry and two current mechanical engineering students grabbed the top prizes in the 2007 Spring AutoCAD Contest. They were honored in a ceremony before an audience of IME 1420 – Engineering Graphics students who were all eligible to compete in the 2007 fall competition.

First-place winner Neil Hubers was a freshman majoring in civil and construction engineering last spring when he enrolled in IME 1420. The Kalamazoo native was surprised at winning the AutoCAD competition because he had not taken drawing courses as a student at Parchment High School. He said the college graphics class was rather easy, and he especially liked the labs. His work last summer with inner city youth in Chicago motivated him to go into the ministry.

Second place went to Greg Huizenga, a junior in mechanical engineering from Middleville who is interning during the summer at Bradford White, a manufacturer of water heating, space heating, and heating and water storage products with a large manufacturing operation in Middleville.

Huizenga, who completed three drafting courses while attending Thornapple-Kellogg High School, is presently enrolled in the Lee Honors College. In addition to drafting, he enjoys skateboarding and working on cars. He aspires to have a career in designing.

Steven Watters, a self-described “freshmore” (he is shy just a few credit hours needed to be a sophomore), won third place. The Jackson native took one drafting course at East Jackson High School where he participated in a special technical program his senior year. Although he was surprised that he had done well in the AutoCAD contest, he enjoys drafting and is already planning to use his skills for a project he saw on the internet.

Slobodan Urdarevik is the lead faculty for IME 1420, a course that involves 12 to 15 sections and averages about 360 students each semester. This fall he was supported by 14 teaching assistants. He congratulated the Spring winners as he invited current students to compete. “This challenge is an encouragement for the students,” he said. “Because of the complexity of the drawing, they can prove their capabilities by applying what they have learned.”

For the competition, students create both a two-dimensional AutoCAD drawing and a 3D-solid model of a complicated part. They must show all dimensions and symbols needed for manufacturing.

All winners received engraved plaques donated by Dr. Hooks, Inc., a Kalamazoo-based business that specializes in awards, and a gift certificate from Best Buy. Hubers also received a copy of AutoCAD 2007, which was provided by Edutronics LLC based in Troy.

Urdarevik began offering the drawing competition when he came to WMU in Fall 2004 to motivate students. His engineering graphics’ teaching strategies have earned him a League of Innovation Award, and he has two patents pending on those teaching strategies.