Young Engineer of the Year

Glenn Matthews
Bachelor of Engineering (1st Class Honours) 1998

UOW Engineering graduate Glenn Matthews is using his 2005 NSW Young Professional Engineer of the Year title to help promote engineering as a career choice for school leavers.

The 28-year-old structural engineer, who is co-manager of Northrop Engineers’ Wollongong office, is proud of his profession and feels it deserves better recognition.

His recognition in the 2005 Engineering Excellence Awards run by the Sydney Division of Engineers Australia gives him the ideal forum to help achieve that, and he has contributed a number of Opinion articles to newspapers, extolling the benefits of a career in engineering.

“Engineers make things happen. They lead, invent and, ultimately, change the world. They bring you bridges, robots, Formula One cars, rockets, iPods ... you name it,” Glenn said.

“And a degree in engineering is truly a passport to the world. There’s a shortage of engineers around the world, and Australian engineers are well regarded internationally.”

Glenn said engineers were traditionally poor at self-promotion, but he was committed to helping change perceptions of the profession.

Glenn has certainly had a positive experience since graduating from UOW’s Faculty of Engineering in 1998. Seven years later he is a senior structural engineer with Northrop, co-managing the firm’s Wollongong office and responsible for up to 20 projects at a time valued from $100,000 to $20 million.

Glenn said one of the satisfactions of his job is seeing completed buildings that he had worked on. He’ll soon have that opportunity every day as he travels from his Cronulla home to his Wollongong office. One of his current projects is the Wollongong Gateway, a stylish glass and steel tourism information centre, restaurant and Aboriginal arts complex under construction beside the F6 Freeway at the top of Bulli Pass.

Glenn, who grew up in Menai and attended Menai High School, said he chose to study at UOW because it had a reputation as offering the best Engineering course in NSW.

“It still has that reputation,” Glenn said. “They take a different approach at Wollongong, and the students get a very well-balanced education. You can always tell a UOW-trained engineer.

Glenn said he was surprised when he was named Young Professional Engineer of the Year at the 2005 Engineering Excellence Awards at Sydney’s Westin Hotel’s Grand Ballroom on 30 September.

“I’d been nominated by my manager in Sydney but people told me that if I was going to win, I’d be contacted beforehand to make sure I was in the audience and ready to give an acceptance speech,” he said. “I didn’t get the call, so I was very surprised when I won.

“But it’s nice to be recognised by your peers in the industry.”

Appointments

Dr Chris Doyle
Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours) 1995

PhD (Fluvial Geomorphology) 2003

UOW Alumnus, environmental scientist Dr Chris Doyle, has been appointed to a senior role in the Persian Gulf. Dr Doyle is the new Environment Manager for Bovis Lendlease for the Gulf Region, working on major dredging, reclamation and tourism development projects in Bahrain, Dubai and Oman.

Dr Doyle, who was previously Sustainability Coordinator for the Port Kembla Port Corporation, has maintained a close association with the University and was an Honorary Fellow at UOW’s Oceans and Coastal Research Centre, where he supervised post-graduate students.

Dr Doyle took up his appointment in November. His wife Ulla, and children Annalise, Elina and Eamon, will join him in Bahrain after Christmas.

Dr Saeid Soltalnian
PhD (Institute for Superconducting and Electronic Materials) 2004

Dr Saeid Soltalnian, who completed his PhD at UOW’s Institute of Superconducting and Electronics (ISEM) in 2004, has been promoted to Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Kurdistan in Iran.

ISEM Director Professor Shi Dou said Dr Soltalnian had been a star student during his post-graduate studies at UOW, winning post-graduate awards in 2002 and 2003. “He authored or co-authored more than 34 papers during his PhD and eight-month post-doctoral work at UOW,” said Professor Dou, adding that the papers had earned 417 citations.

“He worked tirelessly, spending many evenings in the lab,” Professor Dou said. “The samples and superconductor wires he made have been studied by a number of prestigious groups around the world. These materials set world records in both critical current density and upper critical field – records that still stand.”

Karen Bohm
Bachelor of Commerce/ Bachelor of Laws 2000

Diploma in Legal Practice 2001

Karen Bohm, who completed her Commerce/Laws double degree at the University of Wollongong in 2000, has joined Sydney specialist legal firm Truman Hoyle.

Ms Bohm, who had been working with a leading firm in London prior to her appointment, will be working in Truman Hoyle’s industrial and employment team.

Prior to her move to London, Ms Bohm worked for PriceWaterhouseCoopers Legal in their Employment and Industrial Relations Law Group. She was made an Associate in 2004, before moving to London.

She has extensive experience in health and safety law and an in-depth knowledge of the mining industry, having acted as part of the defence team in NSW’s largest occupational health and safety prosecution.

Michael Byrn
Bachelor of Information Technology 2001

Michael Byrn, who graduated from UOW with a Bachelor of Information Technology degree in 2001 has been appointed SCADA Application Administrator at Hobart Water.

Hobart Water supplies water for domestic and industrial use to the eight local government areas of southern Tasmania.

SCADA systems are used to monitor and control a plant or equipment in industries such as water storage and delivery, telecommunications, waste control, energy and gas refining and transportation. SCADA systems gather information, such as where a leak on a pipeline has occurred, transfer the information back to a central site, alert the home station that the leak has occurred, carry out necessary analysis and control, such as determining if the leak is critical, and display the information in a logical and organised fashion.

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