Application for the 2016 Paul E. Torgersen Graduate Student Research Excellence Award

The College of Engineering Graduate Student Committee thanks you for your interest in the 2016 Paul E. Torgersen Award. Each year, the College of Engineering showcases top research performed by graduating Masters and Doctoral students. The College of Engineering Dean’s Graduate Team is proud to coordinate this annual event and anticipate your submission. More information is available at http://www.gsc.eng.vt.edu/. Direct any questions to the event coordinator, Barbara Crawford (bcrawfrd@vt.edu).

Awards:
The Paul E. Torgersen Graduate Student Research Excellence Award is a very prestigious honor at Virginia Tech. In addition to the esteem which this award affords winners, the following monetary prizes will also be bestowed:

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<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations, PhD</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations, MS</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Presentations, PhD</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Presentations, MS</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
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Eligibility:
1. Applicants must be in one of the departments in the College of Engineering.
2. Applicants must have an actual or anticipated graduation date in 2016/2017.
3. Applicants for the 2015 Torgersen Award may reapply this year; however, judges expect to see significant progress since the last year’s submission.

Deadlines:
Application must be submitted by **11:59pm March 18, 2016**.
Finalists will be notified by **April 1st, 2016**.
Presentations and Awards Ceremony will be held on the evening of **April 19, 2016**.
**Application Components/Requirements:**

1. An extended abstract detailing the research work of the applicant.
   - This is not to exceed two pages in length including figures and tables (an additional page may be used to include any references).
   - Margins must be one inch on all sides.
   - The font must be no less than 12 point.
   - The header of the abstract should only contain the student ID number and degree level (MS/PhD). An example is shown below.

   **ABSTRACT HEADER EXAMPLE:**
   ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
   │ 999999998                                                                                           |
   │ PhD                                                                                                 |
   └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

   - Must describe the applicant’s research in terms that can be reasonably understood by engineers of varying disciplines. It should not require special knowledge or research into the area of study to be understood.
   - Typical technical paper guidelines should be followed (background, methods, results, discussion etc.)
   - Particular care should be taken to highlight the motivation, uniqueness, and scientific contribution of the work.

2. Completed cover sheet (attached).
   - The applicant’s advisor must provide an estimate of the % of the work which was done by the student.
   - The advisor must sign the completed cover letter. This signature indicates approval of the material contained within the application.

**General Guidelines**

1. All submitted files must be PDF documents.
2. The abstract should contain student names. This is important because the judging is blind.
3. Cover sheet should not be included in the same document as the abstract. This will aid our blind selection of abstracts.
4. Cover sheet should be submitted as a scanned copy with signatures, whereas the abstract should remain electronic.

Applications which do not comply with ALL of the formatting requirements AND general guidelines will be automatically disqualified.
Judging Overview:

Round 1:
All abstracts will be evaluated by a multidisciplinary judging committee to select finalists. The top three Masters and three Doctoral submissions will be chosen to give a 15 minute oral presentation for the top prizes in each category. Each presentation will be judged as part of the Presentations and Awards Ceremony on April 19th. In addition, the judging committee will select an additional 5 Masters and 5 Doctoral submissions to give poster presentations as part of the Presentations and Awards Ceremony. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three poster presentations in each degree level.

Abstracts will be judged on:
- Conveyance of the overall research motivation
- Description of research background, methods, results and analysis
- Technical writing skills
- Ability to describe the research in terms that can be reasonably understood by engineers of varying disciplines
- Intellectual merit of the research
- Broader impact of the research

Round 2:
Finalists from round 1, in both the poster and oral presentations categories, will be judged as part of the Presentations and Awards Ceremony on April 19th.

Finalists will be judged on:
- Conveyance of the overall research motivation
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Professionalism and organization of presentation
- Adherence to technical presentation/poster requirements
- Originality, uniqueness, and scientific significance of the results