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Edwin Smith

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‘Dr. Vish’ Named Outstanding Engineering Faculty of the Year

Electrical engineering chair and professor admired by students and colleagues

MAY 30, 2017 BY EDWIN SMITH

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Ramanarayanan “Dr. Vish” Viswanathan (left), chair and professor of Electrical Engineering, received the 2017 Outstanding Engineering Faculty of the Year Award from Dean Alex Cheng. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Communications

Every year, the University of Mississippi School of Engineering and the UM Alumni Association select an “Outstanding Engineering Faculty” member, based on his or her teaching, research and service. The highest honor the engineering school presents to its faculty, the award includes a \$2,000 cash prize.

And the award this year goes to Ramanarayanan Viswanathan, otherwise known as “Dr. Vish.”

Viswanathan joined Ole Miss in 2012 as chair and professor of electrical engineering. Since

that time, he has accomplished much in teaching, research and service.

“It was a surprise, although the dean had mentioned earlier that he will include department chairs in the pool for considerations of this award,” Viswanathan said. “I had received a similar outstanding faculty award from my previous institution, which, however, was given to me after my many years of service. I have received this award from Ole Miss in a relatively short time period. This is special because whatever I could achieve would not have been possible without the strong support I have received from EE faculty.”

Since 2014, Viswanathan published two academic articles in prestigious research journals, including IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Transactions on Signal Processing. He also authored three book chapters, wrote five conference proceedings papers and has been the principal investigator or co-PI of five contracts and grants. Of these, the most important one is the Broadband Wireless Access and Applications Center, which is a National Science Foundation Industry/University Cooperative Research Center.

“He recognized and organized the strength of (the) department and gathered industry support to form this center that receives \$325,000 over five years from NSF plus \$160,000 per year from industry members,” said School of Engineering Dean Alex Cheng. The industry members include Intel, Raytheon and C Spire. “Dr. Vish’s service to the profession includes serving (on) the NSF reviewer panel, as technical program committee member for conferences and reviewer for several IEEE journals and conferences. He is an IEEE fellow, which is conferred by IEEE upon a person with an extraordinary record of accomplishments.”

Viswanathan suggested that the engineering school should start a biomedical engineering program. He led the initial organizational effort, which resulted in the B.S. in biomedical engineering degree program that starts this fall.

Considered an excellent professor, students commented about his performance on their teacher evaluations:

“Dr. Vish is very accommodating to students. He will make time to meet if you have questions, and he rewards your hard work.”

“His lectures were helpful and his office hours are even more helpful. He can answer your questions quickly and efficiently, and even on test day he will always be in his office available to answer questions, and even though he must be busy as head of the electrical engineering department he always makes time for us. You can tell he really cares about his students.”

Though Viswanathan said he hasn’t thought of a specific plan for his stipend, he will “use it for a good cause.”

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Students Learn ‘Real Politics’ in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates’

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve’s

A graduate of Southern Methodist University, Viswanathan was professor of electrical and computer engineering at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He also served as interim dean of SIU's College of Engineering.

A fellow in the IEEE, his research areas include signal detection, wireless sensor networks and wireless communication. Viswanathan received an Outstanding Teacher Award from the electrical and computer engineering department in 2007 and the College of Engineering Outstanding Faculty Award in 2008, both at SIU.

Viswanathan's wife, Rama, is a registered cardiac sonographer who enjoys working part time. The couple's older daughter, Priya, works for a bioengineering company in Chicago. Their younger daughter, Jaya, studied chemical engineering at the University of Illinois before completing her degree at Ole Miss. She now works for a medical devices company in Atlanta.

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