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ESB President Reflects on Banner Year

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ESB President Reflects on Banner Year

Ben Lapane led student body to new heights

MARCH 24, 2015 BY RYAN UPSHAW, UM SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

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Ben Lapane

After Benjamin Lapane discussed the role of the Engineering Student Body president with members of the dean's office staff, he felt compelled to run for the position. He won that election last spring and quickly began seeking ways to improve the **School of Engineering** for current and future students.

"One of my major goals while serving as ESB president was to improve career services for engineering students," said Lapane, a senior mechanical engineering major from Mobile, Alabama. "We worked with our adviser to deliver survey results to the dean of engineering which focused on student feedback about career services. I was very pleased to hear that the dean's office is in the early stages of planning to hire a staff member dedicated to career development."

Although his major goal was realized, Lapane said that the position was not without its challenges.

"My major challenges were taking time to relax, balancing a major leadership role with classwork and preparing for life after graduation," Lapane said. "Nevertheless, I highly recommend future students seek leadership positions with the ESB. This can be one of the most fun and rewarding experiences within the School of Engineering."

Lapane thanked members of the dean's office staff and School of Engineering faculty for their support during his tenure as president. He acknowledged Ryan Upshaw, assistant dean for student services and ESB adviser, for his dedication and time working with the Leadership Council; Mami Kendricks, assistant dean for undergraduate academics, for her support as his academic adviser; and Elizabeth Ervin, associate professor of civil engineering, for her inspiration with his academic efforts.

"The people here are what make the University of Mississippi one of the best institutions in the country," Lapane said. "It has been wonderful to serve with the ESB Leadership Council who have been some of the most dedicated student leaders I've ever worked with."

Besides his role as ESB president, Lapane is a former javelin thrower on the Rebels track and field team. He served as president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee and was recognized with Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities honors.

Lapane has accepted a job offer with Dow Chemical Co. and will move to Houston, Texas, with his wife and fellow engineering senior, Mary Louise Lapane, to start his career.

"Ben has been an outstanding and enthusiastic leader for the ESB this year," Upshaw said. "He has really elevated the organization and set a high bar for future ESB leaders. I have truly enjoyed working with him and serving as the ESB adviser."

As the student governing organization for the school, the Engineering Student Body Leadership Council represents all disciplines. ESB provides student services and coordinates social and professional development events throughout the year. These include the School of Engineering Tailgate, National Engineering Week activities, Freshmen Convocation and the Engineering Formal. The group is also responsible for seeking feedback from engineering students and facilitating discussions with the administrators or faculty members.

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