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Senior Design Team Wins Hydrofoil Competition

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Cedarville University's mechanical engineering 2019 senior design team recently won first place in the 2019 Mandles Prize for Hydrofoil Excellence.

The International Hydrofoil Society hosts an annual competition for engineering teams to submit educational papers with new research of hydrofoils. The research contest is an opportunity for the "next generation of hydrofoil developers to be acknowledged for their efforts to advance the state of the art in hydrofoil and hydrofoil-assisted craft engineering, design and construction."

Previous recipients of the prize are Australian Maritime College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Technical University of Delft, United States Naval Academy, University of Genoa, University of Southampton and Webb Institute.

Members of the graduated senior design team are Joshua Close, Bryan Perschbacher, Sean Reilly, Hunter Stevens, Jonathan Thong, Etienne Viaud-Murat and Stephen Wormald. Dr. Zhaohui (George) Qin, associate professor of mechanical engineering, was team advisor.

Every year, Cedarville University seniors are placed on senior design teams, requiring them to design and build a project from scratch.

The idea for the award-winning project originated from Qin's interest in hydrofoils. Hydrofoils are most commonly used to accompany boats to increase speed. This typically looks like metal plates or fins attached to the bottom that lift the front of the boat as speed increases.

The senior design team chose to produce a half-size boat prototype. The team's paper, "Design and Fabrication of a Remote-Controlled Hydrofoil Prototype," outlined the research and work that the students did on the project. "Our students can always find a solution to any problem, by themselves," Qin said.

"We really train our students to not only use their mind to really understand things, but also use their hands to really build things."

Qin said it was an inspiration to the entire team to see their team leader battle cancer throughout the project. He spent the first semester in and out of the hospital, but would come to meetings that he was able. "It was such an inspiration to the entire team to see a person that was so passionate about what he did," Qin said.

Qin hopes to use the award-winning research to create a full size hydrofoil boat in the future.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.