

SWOSU's Dr. Tim Hubin Wins Prestigious Award from Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence

02.24.2015

Five outstanding Oklahoma educators—including Southwestern Oklahoma State University Professor Dr. Tim Hubin of Weatherford, will be honored along with 100 of the state's top public high school seniors at the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence 29th Academic Awards Banquet on May 16 at the Renaissance Tulsa Convention Center.

Hubin, Bernhardt Professor of Chemistry at SWOSU, is the recipient of the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Teaching at a Regional University/Community College.

David L. Boren, founder and chairman of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, will serve as emcee for the statewide tribute honoring "the best of the best" in Oklahoma's public schools. The gala event, which begins at 6 p.m., will also feature musical entertainment by the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute Orchestra.

Hubin, who has taught at SWOSU for 10 years, believes students learn best by doing. "If you immerse willing undergraduate students, with proper guidance, in cutting-edge, world-class research, they will respond with extraordinary personal growth," Hubin said.

Hubin's current research has applications in treating AIDS and cancer. Hubin said he breaks large-scale, long-term research into mini projects, allowing each student to have novel, achievable goals and opportunities to write and present results. His undergraduate students have had articles published in numerous scientific journals and presented at national conferences.

"Working on my own research project with Dr. Hubin really made me grow as a chemist," said James McClain II, now a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Oklahoma. "It taught me real-world lessons that research is not always perfect the first time, and sometimes you have to try alternatives to reach your goal. I came to graduate school with a skill set that allowed me to start complicated research right away."

Department Chair William Kelly said Hubin is also a pioneer in incorporating scientific research into his class work.

"His Inorganic Chemistry Lab has become a project-based course in which each student is given a molecule to synthesize, purify and characterize as part of a larger project," Kelly said.

To complete the course, students must prepare a research paper for a fictitious chemistry journal and present research talks to their peers.

"This course has become a student favorite," Kelly said. "It is challenging yet motivating, encouraging the majority of students to pursue further studies in graduate or professional schools."

Among his contributions to SWOSU's Chemistry Department, Hubin has overseen curriculum development, adding innovative courses and making a more rigorous required senior capstone project. He has also developed a Chemistry Help Room to provide tutoring. Hubin is a winner of SWOSU's highest teaching award, the Bernhardt Academic Excellence Award, and recipient of the national Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award, among other honors.

Each of the five winners will receive a \$5,000 cash prize and a glass "Roots and Wings" sculpture, designed by the late Oklahoma artist Ron Roberts and produced by Jim Triffo of Oklahoma City. Medals are awarded annually to outstanding Oklahoma teachers, one each at the elementary, secondary, community college/regional university and research university levels. In addition, the foundation presents a Medal for Excellence to an exceptional administrator from the elementary or secondary level.

Other Medal for Excellence winners this year are: Beth Howard, Mark Twain Elementary School, Tulsa, elementary teaching; Jason S. Proctor, Tahlequah High School, secondary teaching; and Dr. Steve Martin Blevins, associate professor of medicine, University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, Oklahoma City. The winner of the Medal for Excellence in elementary/secondary administration is Lloyd W. Snow, superintendent, Sand Springs Public Schools.