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For immediate release:

MULTIPLE ALPENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS RECEIVE TRENDS OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARDS

ALPENA, MICH. – Multiple instructors from Alpena Community College have been selected to receive Outstanding Educator Awards at the 2016 TRENDS Conference. Tim Ratz, Welding Instructor, will receive one of the Individual Outstanding Instructor Awards. The group of Roy Smith, Todd Artley, Steve Lewis, and John Nowlin will receive the Outstanding Educator Award for Team/Collaboration for their work in Electrical Studies.

The faculty were first nominated by ACC Vice President of Instruction Kathy Marsh, who submitted nominations upon their behalf to the conference directors. Faculty were evaluated based upon their excellence within the classroom, professional achievements, and service to the college.

Ratz was previously a mathematics instructor primarily, but taught a few manufacturing courses and had an educational background in manufacturing. He stepped into the role of lead welding instructor in 2012 and transformed the program. Ratz rewrote the welding curriculum, which was previously only a certificate program to include a Welding Technology AAS program. Additionally, he wrote the curriculum for three new classes in the program and worked with Ferris State University on a transfer agreement for students wishing to pursue a Welding Engineering degree. Through his work, the college has procured robotic welding automation and digital ultrasonic phased array weld inspection equipment that has been incorporated into the welding curriculum. “This instructor needs to be recognized for stepping out of his comfort zone and tackling the workforce training needs of local manufacturers,” said Marsh.

The Electrical Studies Instructors comprised of Smith, Artley, Lewis, and Nowlin will receive the Outstanding Educator Award for Team/Collaboration. They have cumulatively accomplished the following in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 academic years:

- The lead instructor was nationally recognized by Klein Tools with the National Head of the Class Award;

- In recognition of the quality of students graduating from the Utility Technology program, Consumers Energy approached the college and the faculty with their desire to establish a partnership to recruit our students into their Electric Lineworkers apprentice program;
- The faculty nominated one of their outstanding female students for the State of Michigan's Breaking Tradition Award, which she won in Spring 2015;
- In January 2015 the new Electrical Power Technology Center building opened, featuring state-of-the-art classrooms, labs, and an indoor climbing lab;
- In October 2014 the Higher Learning Commission approved a new Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Systems Technology;
- In April 2015 the team of students and faculty from ACC became National Lineman Champions at the 2015 College Lineman Rodeo;
- In April 2016 ACC hosted the 2016 College Lineman Rodeo after months of preparation and planning;
- At the 2016 Governor's Education and Economic Summit a current non-traditional student from the Utility Tech program was recognized.

“The four instructors nominated for this award are a very tight-knit, collaborative, and innovative team that have accomplished a lot and are more than deserving of the recognition this award brings to them and their program,” Marsh said.

TRENDS is a conference designed by faculty for faculty and staff who are passionate about career and technical community college education. The conference is held each fall and provides technical and content assistance to CTE faculty through a variety of workshops, discussions, meetings, and networking opportunities. The 2016 Trends in Occupational Studies Conference will be held October 20–21, 2016 at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center in Detroit.

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