

May 21, 2015

ITEM #167-1505-R0515**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of General Engineering upon Herold John “Butch” Gerbrandt – Montana Tech of the University of Montana**

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Butch Gerbrandt from the faculty of Montana Tech, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to Montana Tech, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION

The General Engineering Department of Montana Tech is recommending Herold “Butch” Gerbrandt as Professor Emeritus. Butch is retiring in May of 2015 after 22 years of service to Montana Tech and its students.

Gerbrandt’s initial degree was a B.A. in English from Tabor College, in eastern Kansas. After teaching elementary school for two years in the jungles of Bolivia, he decided to pursue a more challenging career, and enrolled in the Civil Engineering program at the University of New Mexico. Snagging a second Bachelors in 1980, he spent four years with the Soil Conservation Service, providing water technology to New Mexican farmers. Jumping to the private sector, he enjoyed 10 years consulting with an Albuquerque Civil firm designing public utilities.

He completed a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering, once more from the University of New Mexico, in 1993 and began a job search. He accepted his only offer from a small school in the frozen north called Montana Tech.

The 1990’s were golden years for environmental engineers. Tech’s department boasted 300 students, and jobs abounded. Backed by strong Federal funding, New Mexico State University began the International Environmental Design Contest. Seeing a flier for the competition, Gerbrandt challenged his students to enter. To everyone’s surprise, the team took second place to Michigan State, beating out 24 other schools including MIT. Under Gerbrandt’s tutelage during the next 9 years, Tech’s team finished in the top four every year and won the competition three times. More than any other aspect of his performance, Gerbrandt’s advising of this team established his reputation at Tech and led to his selection by the Carnegie Foundation as Montana Professor of the Year in 1997.

In 2001, Tech’s Engineering Science department changed its name to General Engineering and began options in civil, mechanical and welding engineering. Gerbrandt took the reins of the department in 2003. During the next 10 years, the General Engineering department grew to 300 students and developed robust curricula in civil, mechanical and welding engineering.

In 2010, Gerbrandt and ten students began a Tech chapter of Engineers Without Borders. After successfully consulting on a southern Mexico water delivery effort, the chapter adopted a large culvert and energy dissipater project in western El Salvador. The project is ongoing, and Gerbrandt intends to see the job to completion as an emeritus faculty member.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Butch Gerbrandt the rank of Professor Emeritus of General Engineering at Montana Tech, together with all the rights, privileges, and honors thereto appertaining.

ATTACHMENTS

None.