OAKLAND UNIVERSITY™

Wednesday, April 2, 2003

Alumnus named Engineer of the Year

Thomas Vos, a 1964 graduate of OU, recently was named the 2002 Engineer of the Year by "Design News." He was presented with the award at a banquet in Chicago March 4.

"I'm flattered, but I don't know if I deserve the honor," said Vos, who currently is the director of safety systems technology at TRW Automotive. " I've always thought of the engineering process as a team activity; individuals rarely conceive of a new idea and take it through development to a commercial product."

The modest response comes from a man who "Design News" calls "a leading force behind occupant safety systems for automobiles." The magazine also notes Vos' individual contributions, including his 12 patents in restraint design and manufacturing innovation.

Vos began his career in 1964 as a hardware design engineer for General Motors, where he soon moved into the newly formed air bag research and development section.

"As a young engineer, it was a unique opportunity because airbags really incorporate every engineering discipline," Vos said.

Vos' latest work at TRW, his employer since 1985, is in integrated safety systems that incorporate the air bag, belt, sensors and electronics.

As part of the award, "Design News" is donating a $25,000 grant to the engineering school of Vos' choice. For Vos, choosing Oakland for this gift was easy. For the past several years, he has been actively involved with the university as a member of the SECS advisory board.

SUMMARY
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