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Len Brown named this year's Outstanding AP

By *Jeff Samoray, OU Web Writer*

As lab manager for the School of Engineering and Computer Science, Len Brown is responsible for ensuring that 40 labs in four university buildings are ready for teaching and research. But he has done much more than that in his 34 years at Oakland University.

Because of his extraordinary effort in support of the institutional mission and strategic plan, his spirit of cooperation and community and university service, Brown has been named the recipient of the Outstanding Administrative/Professional Award for 2002. He will be honored in an AP Assembly award ceremony on Wednesday, Sept. 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Recreation and Athletics Center Pioneer Room.

"The university has expanded its services and increased its students the last several years, especially in the School of Engineering," said Donna Searight, administrative secretary in the School of Engineering and Computer Science and one of Brown's nominators for the award. "I know that Len's workload has increased substantially, but he has never complained. Len is dedicated to the proper functioning of lab equipment that benefits our students enrolled in those courses featuring a lab requirement."

Brown was selected from a list of seven nominees, said Vicky Larabell, associate director of the Information Technology Institute and chair of the AP Award Committee.

"We cast our votes after discussing the qualifications of each nominee extensively," Larabell said. "We have always selected an individual who goes above and beyond his or her job description. There are a real variety of comments on Len from many different individuals. Everyone from students to TA's to faculty members had nice things to say. This shows how many he's touched."

"I worked with Len a few years ago, and he goes out of his way to try and help everybody. He mentors and helps people with a lot of warmth and kindness. He's a great behind-the-scenes person who doesn't ask for a lot of recognition."

Brown describes his job, which he's held since 1968, as "'all encompassing.' I do everything from unlocking the doors to repairing the equipment."

"I was very surprised when I found out I had won the award," Brown said. "One of the TA's found me on a day when I was kind of grouchy and told me that I had to be back in my office for 'something important' at 10 a.m. And she kept bugging me about it and telling me that I had to be in my office. So she finally dragged me back and I was kind of embarrassed about the way I acted when I learned that I had received this award. I had no idea they were going to do this."

"I just try my best to help the students and faculty and provide them with the services they need."

It's evident that Brown has a great rapport with faculty and his student workers as many drop into his office at 145 Dodge Hall all day with questions or problems that need to be solved. Besides maintaining the labs, he has supervisory duties over two computer technologists, one project engineer and five student workers. But it's the students he enjoys working with the most.

"I love working with the students," Brown said. "They're my best friends."

At the AP Assembly award ceremony, Brown will be presented with a plaque and a \$1,000 stipend. The ceremony is open to all students, faculty and staff. For more information, contact Vicki Larabell at (248) 370-4662 or larabell@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

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