



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 2, 2015

Alumnus pledges \$175,000 to Wichita State's engineering faculty for innovation

Wichita State University's quest to develop innovative, entrepreneurial students has gotten a boost with a generous gift commitment from Brenton Myers, a 1958 graduate of the University of Wichita (now Wichita State University).

Myers pledged \$175,000 to create the Brenton Myers Innovation in Engineering Education Award. The gift will further facilitate the members of the College of Engineering faculty in preparing students to enter the work force as innovative, flexible and real world-ready engineers and computer scientists.

"One of our priorities is to unleash the creativity of our students," said Royce Bowden, dean of the engineering college. "This gives us a meaningful vehicle to do that. It provides support to faculty to enhance classroom activities that cultivate and foster the talents of students."

As a resident of the San Francisco area, Myers is aware of the technological innovations emerging from Silicon Valley, just a few miles south of his home. That's one of the reasons he is excited to see the development of an Innovation Campus at Wichita State and the ways the College of Engineering will contribute to it. Myers earned his bachelor's degree in industrial engineering.

He worked with Bowden and the WSU Foundation to create the faculty award.

"Ultimately, what we want to do is show students how their technical training can be applied with an entrepreneurial mindset to develop new technology and designs," Myers said. "It's exciting. It's introducing more creative elements into the engineering curriculum."

Beginning this fall, faculty will submit proposals to use award funds to implement enhancements to their classes. That could include attending a conference on how to fully incorporate innovation and entrepreneurship into their courses, buying equipment or materials, hiring a student assistant — anything that accomplishes the inclusion of innovation in a course.

The award is the first of its kind in the College of Engineering and expands professional development support for faculty, Bowden said. Myers' gift also will help the WSU Foundation achieve a campaign goal of raising \$2 million in new money for curriculum, instruction and professional development.

--more--

Alumnus pledges \$175,000 to WSU’s engineering faculty for innovation
Page 2

In 2011, Myers established the Brenton D. Myers Endowed Scholarship in Engineering at Wichita State. He also has supported the Shocker Racing team, giving a substantial gift in 2011 to help finance the expansion of the team’s workshop on campus.

Myers spent the bulk of his career working in airport planning and development with the Kansas City Aviation Department. Now retired, he lives most of the year in Pleasanton, California, but visits Wichita frequently.

###

Contact: Kim Bair, WSU Foundation director of development for the College of Engineering, 316-978-3839, kim.bair@wichita.edu.

***Media note:* [Photo](#) of Brent Myers and College of Engineering Dean Royce Bowden**