

May 22-23, 2019

ITEM 183-2002-R0519

Request for authorization to confer the title of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering upon Dr. Jerry Stephens, Montana State University

THAT

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Jerry Stephens from Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System, and the people of the State of Montana.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Jerry Stephens earned his BS degree from the University of New Hampshire, and his MS and PhD degrees from Purdue University, all in Civil Engineering. He joined the CE Department at MSU in 1989 as an assistant professor and was thereafter promoted to associate and full professor. He also served as Research Director of the Western Transportation Institute (WTI – six years), and as head of the CE Department (5 years). Dr. Stephens retired at the end of 2018, after 29 years on MSU's faculty.

Prior to coming to MSU, Dr. Stephens worked for the New Mexico Engineering Research Institute (NMERI) on projects for the U.S. Air Force. This work involved developing cutting-edge analysis methods and materials for systems subjected to damaging loads. After nearly a decade at NMERI, Dr. Stephens sought to transition his career to education, and shortly thereafter joined the CE Department at MSU. At MSU, Dr. Stephens transferred his research expertise into the civilian domain, investigating damaging loads on highway infrastructure, sustainable materials, and snow loads for structural design. Working with the Federal Highway Administration and the Montana Dept. of Transportation, Dr. Stephens studied the relationships between vehicle loads, infrastructure damage, and highway user fees. In the materials arena, he worked on recycling industrial/mine waste in building materials on projects funded by, among others, the National Science Foundation and the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality. Familiar with extreme loads on structures, he worked to develop a new method to find design snow loads for Montana.

As Research Director at the Western Transportation Institute, Dr. Stephens helped an outstanding group of MSU faculty and staff research challenging rural transportation issues, as WTI grew to one of the largest research institutes in the country focused on rural issues. He then served as CE Department Head for five years, during which time a new degree program in environmental engineering was instituted.

Throughout his tenure Dr. Stephens was fully committed to the students and programs at MSU. Teaching over a dozen different courses across the undergraduate and graduate programs in civil engineering, he was consistently praised by students for his knowledge of the material, the rigor of its presentation, and his dedication to their success.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents is pleased to confer upon Dr. Jerry Stephens the rank of Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering and wishes him well for many years in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

None