

2018 Champion of Engineering Education Award

Donald Hatch



Since 1994, Don Hatch has been volunteering his time to help the University of Manitoba Society of Automotive Engineers (UMSAE) Aero Design student engineering teams. Don is not only an expert radio controlled (RC) pilot, but is also a source of invaluable technical design and manufacturing expertise.

While Don's formal background is as a Medical Technologist, that did not stop him from developing an interest and (informal) engineering skills in RC aircraft. Don has built more of his own RC aircrafts than he can remember. His vast experience from design, construction, and piloting his own RC planes is what he freely shares with engineering students.

A large part of the UMSAE team's overall victory in the 2018 SAE Aero Design East Competition is directly due to Don's continued support, mentoring, overview of students' technical activities, assistance with testing, and last but certainly not least, his expert RC piloting skills at the SAE competitions. His suggestions and detailed technical advice has enabled the UMSAE team members to develop a legacy of successful, high performing aircrafts that have showed the world what engineering students from the University of Manitoba can do and, this year especially, showed the world that our aero engineering students are the best internationally.

It is not only UMSAE engineering students that Don supports. At the SAE Aero Design Competitions, Don routinely volunteers to fly aircraft for the smaller (and less experienced) teams (many from overseas) that aren't able to attend competitions with their own dedicated pilots. Many of these aircraft are flown for the first time ever with Don at the controls, and his expert piloting skills are routinely tested by some of those unpredictable, student-built flying machines. As a result, Don also offers his valuable feedback and technical advice to those teams, empowering them to come back stronger in future competitions.

Don's help in building relationships between our UMSAE Aero Design teams and local RC flying clubs have also made possible the critical UMSAE prototype aircraft testing at the local RC club flight fields, in addition to having club members also provide technical advice to students.

Over the last 24 years, Don and his wife Louise, who also travels to SAE Aero Design competitions with Don, have volunteered countless hours to support and enrich the education of engineering students. Even with many of those hours in less than ideal conditions, such as the local test flights held in January, Don never complains and is always full of enthusiasm.

In recognition of Don's continued support, mentoring, and commitment to engineering students, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, together with the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba, are pleased to present the 2018 Champion of Engineering Education Award to Mr. Donald Hatch.