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NPS Professor of Systems Engineering Cliff Whitcomb receives prestigious ASNE Best Paper Award

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NPS Professor of Systems Engineering Cliff Whitcomb Receives Prestigious ASNE Best Paper Award

Monday, July 31, 2006

Story by Barbara Honegger, Senior Military Affairs Journalist, Naval Postgraduate School

Naval Postgraduate School Associate Professor of Systems Engineering Cliff Whitcomb has won the American Society of Naval Engineers (ASNE) "Jimmie" Hamilton Award for the best original technical paper published in the association's journal in 2005. The winning article, "A Military Effectiveness Analysis and Decision Making Framework for Naval Ship Design and Acquisition," was co-authored with Mr. John Hootman and appeared in the summer 2005 issue of *Naval Engineers Journal*.

Since 1967, the ASNE Journal Committee has chosen one paper each year based on professionalism, depth of treatment, importance and lasting value of the subject matter, clarity of composition and style, and individual effort.

The award, presented by Mr. John Leadmon, Director of Submarine and Submersible Design at the Naval Sea Systems Command, at a ceremony June 19 in Washington, D.C., reads: "The authors have developed a new framework for performing military effectiveness analysis and design tradeoff decisions... Their methodology represents a profound improvement over traditional, ad hoc tradeoff methodologies, providing a continuous, interactive design space examination tool that can be used by decision makers in real time to simultaneously explore the impact of requirements, product design variables, and emerging technologies during concept formulation and development. The authors are highly deserving of the Society's 2005 'Jimmie' Hamilton Award."



"I immediately saw the value (of the article)," Leadmon told the audience at ASNE's annual conference. "As recently as three weeks ago, I emphasized to our submarine design community the importance of adopting these methods to make the most of our limited time and money. I encourage the extended Navy ship design community to see and understand the necessity of heading in the direction described in this paper."

"This award brings great credit on both the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and Prof. Whitcomb and is an outstanding testimonial to the scholarly value of his work," said Prof. Dave Olwell, Chairman of the NPS Systems Engineering Department. "Since coming to NPS in the summer of 2005, Prof. Whitcomb has taken the lead on NPS' Systems Engineering Certificate program for active duty Navy engineering duty officers, developing and teaching three of its four courses, and advised the June 2006 Systems Engineering and Analysis (SEA) 9 interdisciplinary Ship Anti-Ballistic Response (SABR) student team."

"This is the first quantitative analysis decision aide for Naval combatant systems, being applied to the development of an actual major surface combatant ship," said Whitcomb. "The methods I've been recognized for are being applied to the actual alternatives assessment for the Maritime Air and Missile Defense of Joint Forces (MAMDJF) that will be used to select the future capabilities of the Navy's next surface combatant ship, after DDX. I'm a team member on that project. As the SABR team student

adviser, I was able to ensure our students implemented an analysis process that would be useful if applied to the actual MAMDJF project. In fact, I'll be showing the project's executive brief to the MAMDJF team run by the Naval Sea Systems Command and Center for Naval Analyses."

Whitcomb received his doctoral degree in mechanical engineering in 1988 from the University of Maryland, College Park, and both an SM degree in electrical engineering and computer science and a Naval Engineer degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1992. He earned a BSE degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Washington in 1984.

Whitcomb served for 23 years as a submarine warfare naval engineering duty officer in the U.S. Navy. He was communications officer and test operations officer aboard the *USS Scamp* (SSN-588) in 1985, and Shipwork Coordinator, Supervisor of Shipbuilding in Groton, Connecticut. Whitcomb was a ship design research engineer for the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division, and Program Officer at the Office of Naval Research, Ship Structures and Systems Science and Technology Division. In 1998, he became Associate Professor of Naval Construction and Engineering at MIT, and then Director of the MIT-UTC Systems Engineering Program. From 2003 to 2005, Whitcomb was Eminent Scientist at the Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Surface Warfare Center, as well as professor of naval architecture and marine engineering, professor of engineering management, and Northrop Grumman Ship Systems Endowed Chair in Shipbuilding and Engineering at the University of New Orleans, before coming to NPS. He is a Six Sigma Master Black Belt for Northrop Grumman Ship Systems and a certified systems engineering professional.

The ASNE annual best paper award is in honor of retired Navy Capt. James E. "Jimmy" Hamilton, secretary-treasurer of ASNE for 25 years. Hootman, with whom Whitcomb shares the honor, is Ship Concept Manager in the Future Ship and Force Architecture Concepts Division of the Naval Sea Systems Command.

The research outlined in Whitcomb and Hootman's article was funded by the Office of Naval Research.

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