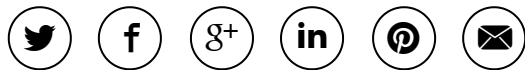


Sunday, May 8, 2022



# Jason Shepherd Honored by Buena Vista University for Excellence in Teaching

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Buena Vista University has awarded Dr. Jason Shepherd, associate professor of computer science at the university, its highest honor for excellence in teaching, the George Wythe Award, which includes a cash stipend and sabbatical for the recipient to pursue professional development and/or research

### STORM LAKE, IOWA (PRWEB) JUNE 04, 2015

Dr. Jason Shepherd, associate professor of computer science, was named the 29th recipient of the George Wythe Award, Buena Vista University's highest honor for excellence in teaching, at the annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Dinner on May 22.

Shepherd, a 1999 graduate of [Buena Vista University \(BVU\)](#), has been a member of the faculty since 2007. He earned his master's degree in computer science from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 2007 and received his Ph.D. in computational science and statistics from the University of South Dakota in 2012. Before joining the university, he held a variety of positions in software engineering and information technology at Northrop Grumman and as a consultant for Bass and Associates, Inc.

Shepherd said, "It is an honor to have been selected as the Wythe Award winner because I was a student of many Wythe laureates during my career as an undergraduate student at BVU, and I know what master teachers all of them are. It is very humbling to know that that my name will be listed alongside those role models in my life."

The Wythe Award includes a \$30,000 cash stipend and a sabbatical for the recipient to pursue professional development and/or research. Shepherd has some specific plans for the award and is currently investigating his options, which will add to the rigor he offers in his



Dr. Jason Shepherd, the 29th recipient of the BVU George Wythe Award for excellence in teaching

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courses. "I believe in setting the bar high, challenging students to reach the high standards I have set for them and motivating them to reach those standards, while giving help to those who ask for it," said Shepherd.

Shepherd says his teaching philosophy has been shaped in many ways by observations from his previous career in the software development industry. "Software developers often don't have the luxury of learning new things in a vacuum; rather, they must learn them while living in the maelstrom of project schedules and deadlines," says Shepherd. "It has long been my belief that one of the primary byproducts of a liberal arts education is that students should learn to become comfortable with being uncomfortable. The acquisition and synthesis of knowledge is something to be wrestled with, not waded through."

Shepherd was nominated for the Wythe Award by fellow professors, professional colleagues, alumni and current students, and he was a finalist for the award in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The other finalists for the 2015 Wythe Award were Beth Blankers, associate professor of accounting; Dr. Robert Blodgett, professor of psychology; and Dr. Andrea Frantz, associate professor of digital media.

In announcing the award recipient, Dr. Beth Lamoureux, professor of communication studies and member of the Wythe Committee, noted that, as "a master teacher and advisor, a pragmatic scholar and committed servant leader, Shepherd embodies the essential qualities of BVU's finest."

Lamoureux cited comments from several of Shepherd's colleagues and current and former students who nominated him for the award:

A colleague said: "In many ways, he is a model professor. Things that can be learned in our profession are things that he has mastered. More importantly, are the many other qualities that cannot be taught. The things one has to just instinctively 'get' are simply part of the fabric of Jason Shepherd."

Another colleague noted: "On top of the energy he expends here at BVU, Jason commits fully to his family and to his community. He has effectively mastered the work-life balance and is a role model for the rest of us who juggle daily but with far less grace. Whether driving students to a regional programming contest, or his kids to 4-H, he doesn't stop."

A current student commented: "Not only did he help create an engaging atmosphere for our class, he also exhibited seemingly limitless patience and enough motivation to almost 'will' students through the course."

A former student said: "Dr. Shepherd's teaching style is hands-on. He encourages his students to experience, learn and become engrossed in the concepts he teaches. Even more valuable is his ability to improve resiliency. Dr. Shepherd isn't one to 'spoon-feed' his students the information they need to be successful. Instead, he teaches the core foundational skills and allows the students to identify where, how and what else they would need to know to be successful. This is key to surviving in the real world."

The Wythe Award is endowed through a gift from the late BVU Life trustees Drs. Paul and Vivian McCorkle (Class of 1959). The award is named for George Wythe, the educator whose students included Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, James Monroe and Henry Clay.

About Buena Vista University

Founded in 1891, Buena Vista University offers 43 majors and 15 pre-professional programs that blend liberal arts with real-world applications, preparing students for lifelong success. Its quality academic

while giving help to those who ask for it.

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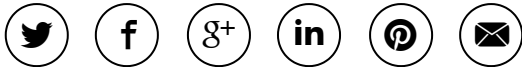
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programs, faculty, facilities, and technology result in 94 percent of BVU's recent graduates being employed or enrolled in graduate/professional schools within six months of graduation, based on a 97 percent survey response rate. Generous merit and need-based financial aid programs, and support for academic travel, research, and internships, make BVU an affordable option for all students and, combined with its academic programs, has led U.S. News & World Report to rank BVU as the third best value school among Midwest Regional Colleges and to an A stable rating from Standard & Poor's. Visit <http://www.bvu.edu>.

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