

Fiszdon, Laverny-Rafter get Fulbright awards

Minnesota State Mankato professors Jerzy K. Fiszdon and David Laverny-Rafter have received 2005-2006 Fulbright awards.

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Two Minnesota State University professors — Jerzy K. Fiszdon and David Laverny-Rafter — have received 2005-2006 Fulbright awards.

Fiszdon, a mechanical engineering professor, will teach and do research through June at the University of Botswana in Gaborone. Laverny-Rafter, an urban and regional studies professor, has been on sabbatical since August and will serve as a consulting scholar with the University of Southampton Transportation Research Group for three weeks in May.

Fiszdon's Fulbright scholar grant was announced last March by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars and the Institute of International Education.

"This research will benefit both the local university and the regional industry," Fiszdon said. "Minnesota State Mankato will also benefit, by gaining knowledge and understanding of cultural factors that will enhance the teaching and mentoring of students from diverse backgrounds."

Laverny-Rafter was named a Fulbright senior specialist later in 2005. It is his third Fulbright appointment; in 1986 he was a Fulbright visiting professor at University College Cork, Ireland, and in 1995 he was a Fulbright visiting professor at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. His 2006 Fulbright position is designed to allow experienced professors to consult with overseas institutions on academic issues.

Fiszdon and Laverny-Rafter are two of about 850 U.S. faculty members and professionals who received 2005-2006 Fulbright grants. Their Fulbright awards are the 18th and 19th for MSU.

A number of Minnesota State University students also have been awarded Fulbright student scholarships. Last year MSU was cited as one of the nation's top producers of student Fulbright Awards.

Fiszdon joined the mechanical engineering faculty in 1987. Laverny-Rafter came to MSU in 1982 and has taught urban planning and policy analysis courses in the Urban & Regional Studies Institute graduate and undergraduate programs.