



FOR RELEASE
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Tau Beta Pi Announces Lt. Col. Orval A. Powell, Ph.D., P.E., as 2015 McDonald Mentor

Tau Beta Pi, the engineering honor society, has named its tenth McDonald Mentor. The award celebrates excellence in mentoring and advising among Tau Beta Pi educators and engineers who consistently support the personal and professional development of their students and colleagues. While the primary goal of Tau Beta Pi is to recognize students of superior scholarship and exemplary character and to honor eminent practicing engineers, the Association also lauds excellence in engineering education and in the ethical practice of engineering.

Lt. Col. Orval (Rusty) A. Powell, Ph.D., P.E., *Colorado Delta '97*, is an associate professor of mechanical engineering and Deputy for Curriculum and Assessment at the United States Air Force Academy (USFA). He is the *2015 Tau Beta Pi-McDonald Mentor*, and will be honored on October 30, 2015, at the 110th annual Convention to be held in Providence, RI. Tau Beta Pi President J.P. Blackford will present \$1,000 and an engraved medallion to Dr. Powell. Another \$1,000 grant will be presented to the Colorado Zeta Chapter of Tau Beta Pi for nominating him.

Established in 2005 by Marion and Capers W. McDonald (*NC G '74*) and the Association, the McDonald Mentor Award recognizes engineering educators or professionals in industry, government, or service organizations who have shown true concern for the individual, supporting an environment for developing talents, and who have earned respect and recognition for their contributions to their field and to the greater community.

Lt. Col. Powell was endorsed for his outstanding support of the personal and professional development of his cadets and fellow faculty. He has demonstrated a commitment to advising young engineers, guiding future leaders, giving back to the local community, and developing engineering education.

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Lt. Col. Powell received his B.S. in mechanical engineering from the Colorado State University, his master's in aeronautical engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology (OH), and his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the Colorado School of Mines. He has been with USAFA since 2009 and joined the faculty in 2012.

He has been an advisor to the Colorado Zeta Chapter of Tau Beta Pi since 2013. Lt. Col. Powell is an associate fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) and a member of the Combustion Institute.

In the past academic year alone, Lt. Col. Powell mentored 14 cadets in two separate majors. In addition, he advises students through an independent study research project in preparation for his summer research project with industry. Outside the classroom, he mentors cadets as the officer in charge of the USAFA club soccer team and in the community as a Bible study leader at Village 7 Presbyterian Church.

Cadets are not the only ones to benefit from his mentoring. Lt. Col. Powell sits in on the classes of fellow faculty members to provide them with advice. However, he has the humility to recognize this as an opportunity to learn and also to be mentored, allowing him to improve his own teaching methods.

Because of his concerns with the future of his students, he participates in seminars to give cadets advice regarding engineering jobs within the Air Force. A further testament to his stature, Lt. Col. Powell has been by-name requested to commission two cadets during his time as an instructor, and one of these graduates has returned to USAFA as an instructor.

Lt. Col. Powell's achievements in mentoring can be summed up in this comment by one of his cadets: "If Patton, Eisenhower, and MacArthur were rolled into one and forced to become an (engineering mechanics) instructor, they would be Lt. Col. Powell."

In recognition of this dedication to education, mentoring, and teaching, Lt. Col. Powell has been recognized with many distinctions, including the Outstanding Academy Educator Award, the highest award given out by the engineering division of the USAFA. He has also received, not one but three, "Salt and Pepper" awards, given to the instructor with the most classroom visits.

Lt. Col. Powell's dedication to developing well-rounded, prepared students and creating an environment which stimulates learning has made him a role model for mentorship of all ages. For these contributions as an advisor and for inspiring students and colleagues academically and personally, Rusty Powell, Ph.D., P.E., is the 2015 Tau Beta Pi McDonald Mentor.

Tau Beta Pi is the Engineering Honor Society, founded at Lehigh University in 1885. It has collegiate chapters at 244 engineering colleges in the United States and active alumni chapters in 41 cities. It has initiated more than 564,000 members in its 130-year history and is the world's largest engineering society. (See www.tbp.org)