

Foreword

The Student Leadership Council (SLC) is a formal incarnation of the students who are involved in performing MCEER research under a faculty advisor. Since its inception, MCEER has included and encouraged student efforts throughout its research program and in all of the disciplinary specialties concerned with earthquake engineering.

Throughout the years, students have been an integral component in advancing research in earthquake hazard mitigation. Many former students are now employed in academia, professional practice or government agencies applying knowledge gained during their exposure to MCEER research. While associated with MCEER, students participate in Center annual meetings, attend conferences, workshops and seminars, and have the opportunity to make presentations at these events. The SLC was formed in the year 2000 to formalize these programs and to afford students from many different institutions the opportunity to meet with each other and develop/improve interaction.

The idea for the *Student Research Accomplishments* was conceived by the SLC and features the work of some of MCEER's current students. Topics range from traditional civil and lifeline engineering to applications of advanced technologies to social impacts and economic modeling.

This issue was coordinated and edited by Ramiro Vargas and co-edited by Benedikt Halldorsson, both Ph.D. candidates in the Department of Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering at the University at Buffalo. Past editors were Diego Lopez Garcia, Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering, University at Buffalo, and Gauri Guha, Department of Energy, Environmental and Mineral Economics, the Pennsylvania State University.

This year marked the first *Best Student Article Competition*. Members of MCEER's Industry Advisory Board (IAB) judged the 16 submissions, and selected a winner and three honorable mentions. We congratulate Michael Pollino, University of Buffalo, who was awarded first prize, and Hiram Badillo-Alvarez, University of Buffalo, Zehra Cagnan, Cornell University and Yong Gao, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who received honorable mentions for their outstanding efforts. All four students were invited to present their research at the 2004 MCEER Annual Meeting. Our thanks go to Sreenivas Alampalli, New York State Department of Transportation, Paul Hough, Armstrong World Industries, Jeremy Isenberg, Weidlinger Associates, Amarnath Kasalanati, Dynamic Isolation Systems, Jon Mochizuki, City of Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, and Jean-Robert Pierre, Transenergie Hydro Quebec for their reviews and recommendations.

Finally, MCEER wishes to extend its thanks to the Student Leadership Council for its endeavors, and in particular to Jeffrey Berman, current president, and A. Natali Sigaher, past president, for their able guidance of the SLC.