2011
School of Engineering and Applied Science Distinguished Alumni Award
(Presentation to William W. Brubaker)

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An award to graduates of the School of Engineering and Applied Science, who through his/her career and service to the University, state, and/or nation have brought recognition to the University of Virginia and to themselves as individuals.
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• Bru, as everyone calls him, has a distinction aside from this award that honors him equally tonight…..he is the first and therefore only SEAS Achievement Award recipient to be nominated by a wife…..and Sandra’s nomination letter is one of the best that I have read in the many years I have been associated with these awards.

• Bru received his Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from SEAS, but he also has a Masters in Civil Engineering from Georgia Tech and a degree in Business Administration from Boston University.

• When Sandra met Bru in 1981, he was the Corps of Engineers Area Engineer at Cape Canaveral leading all heavy construction at Cape Canaveral Air Force Base…..a base still in use today to launch highly classified reconnaissance spacecraft that gather critical information essential to national defense and foreign policy. For his work, the United States Air Force cited Bru for outstanding dedication and service.
• In the late 80s, he was Chief of Engineering and Construction in the Portland Oregon District where he was a key leader in the Mount St. Helens recovery effort and had ultimate responsibility for the construction of the Mount St. Helen’s dam built in the shadow of the volcano…..a project that garnered the American Civil Engineers Outstanding Achievement of the Year Award in 1991. Bru received the Army Commanders Medal for this work.

• In 1989, the Army pulled Bru into the Pentagon to lead planning, programming, and budgeting of the worldwide, US Army military construction program of about 150 projects valued at around 1+ Billion dollars…..his new procedures accelerated planning decisions and construction awards and earned him the Army Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

• In 1992, NASA Headquarters selected him into the Senior Executive Service where he remained for nine years, most of those years as Director of Facilities Engineering for the entire agency. He directed all facilities activities including planning and budgeting; engineering, construction and maintenance; and real estate acquisition and disposal…..this is a physical plant consisting of 5,500 buildings valued at $20+ Billion dollars! NASA selected him Engineer of the Year and the National Society of Professional Engineers honored him as Federal Engineer of the Year in 1997.

• For Bru’s exceptional leadership, NASA awarded him the NASA Exceptional Service Medal and from President Bush the Presidential Senior Executive Meritorious Rank Award in 2001.
• In 2001, the Smithsonian Institution enticed Bru to leave NASA and take the position of Director of Facilities Engineering and Operations. Here he supervised 2,000 employees in 19 museums, 6 research centers and the National Zoo, all of which are located in 7 states and Panama. Under his directorship, the Smithsonian won the highly coveted APPA Award for excellence in Facility Management and the Corenet Global Award of Excellence…..WOW!

• Bru retired in July 2010 with many more accomplishments than I have mentioned here…..but the greatest honor came when he was inducted into the National Academy of Construction in 2005, where he is the only federal civilian so honored. In 2010, Bru served as this organization’s president…..what a way to close out a career!

• All of us at the School of Engineering and Applied Science stand in awe of this man’s accomplishments and we are indeed honored to present this year’s School of Engineering and Applied Science Distinguished Alumni Award to William W. Brubaker.

• And…..thank you Sandra!