SUNY Brockport Professor Named One of “Top 30 Most Successful Turks in the World”

Brockport, NY—Osman Yasar PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Computational Sciences at SUNY College at Brockport, has been recognized as one of the “Top 30 Most Successful Turks in the World” by the internationally recognized Turkish magazine (Hürriyet-www.hurriyet.com.tr) in its New Year’s Special Edition. Turkey’s Top 30 includes a moviemaker, an actor, two NBA players, a famous European soccer player, a Harvard scientist, and a Cleveland, OH, surgeon. It also includes Ahmet Ertegun, the owner of Atlantic Records and founder of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Cleveland, OH. Yasar is a former Turkey national soccer player who says “I always wanted to be a national hero…I guess science can get you there as well.”

Yasar established the first undergraduate program in computational sciences in the United States at SUNY Brockport, the only program of its kind in the SUNY system and one of fewer than 10 offered nationwide. Yasar is internationally recognized as a leader in the fields of supercomputing, computational fluid and particle dynamics, and high performance computing. He is the founder and chairman of the High Performance Computing Users Group, an international association of 3,000 members, including representatives from the major super computing manufacturers, such as Intel, IBM, SUN, Digital Equipment, and Hewlitt Packard. He is a former chair and member of the Board of Directors of the Intel Super Computer Users Group.

Yasar currently serves as the director for the Institute for Computational Math, Science, and Technology (CMST). The goal of this program is to improve math, science, and technology education at higher education and K-12 institutions in the Rochester, NY, area, focusing on Monroe County school systems, such as Rochester City School District, Brighton City School District, and SUNY Brockport. This program is supported by a National Science Foundation Math and Science Partnership grant.

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Yasar was invited to testify before US Congress on math and science education in 2003. He also served as the chair of a National Science Foundation (NSF) Review Panel for Math and Science Partnership program in 2004. Not only did he start the first undergraduate program in computational science, but he also brought the computational approach to K-12 level as a new pedagogy. The partnership he founded with Rochester City and Brighton Central School districts is considered as a national model by NSF.

Another aspect of Yasar’s accomplishments is his industrial research and supercomputing. He was one of the first users of supercomputers in the mid 1980s, assisting with the design of a national fusion device at Sandia National Laboratories. He later combined fields of ‘plasma physics’ and ‘engine combustion’ to develop an ignition and combustion computer code. His computer model was used by General Motors, Ford and Cummins Engine in understanding and development of new spark plugs. As a consultant and director of the Computational Center for Industrial Innovation at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Yasar led problem-solving and training sessions for Eastman Kodak Company, Samsung, Reynolds Metals, Lockheed Martin and the US Department of Transportation. Today, he is using computers to help a manufacturer build better compressors for home appliances.

He is a Co-Principal Investigator of a $22 million project in Turkey to build a supercomputer center for industrial use. His industrial clients include Arçelik, Ford Otosan, and Fiat Tofas. His project also includes funds for faculty/student exchange between SUNY and Istanbul Technical University (ITU). Yasar helped ITU establish the first standalone doctoral program in computational science and engineering in 2000. He is now pursuing a joint undergraduate program with ITU as part of a pending NSF grant on Cyber-infrastructure.

Yasar earned a bachelor’s and master’s in physics in his native Turkey, and earned two master’s in nuclear engineering and computer science, as well as a PhD in engineering physics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The magazine article about Yasar includes two pages dedicated to his many accomplishments. “The mayor of my hometown called to tell me that they are giving my name to a street,” said Yasar.