



**Dr. Ming Xiao wins
2009 Claude C. Laval Jr. Award**

FRESNO, Calif. (June 10, 2009) -- Dr. Ming Xiao, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil and Geomatics Engineering has been selected as this year's recipient of the [Claude Laval, Jr. Award](#)

for Innovative Technology and Research for his proposal, "Effects of Seismicity on Erosion and Strength of Levees."

The Laval Award is administered through the University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Established in 1984 in honor of Claude C. Laval Jr., a long-time resident of Fresno and a productive inventor, the award has supported the development of innovative technology and related research at Fresno State. Funding is provided by a gift to the university from Mr. and Mrs. Claude C. Laval III.

Dr. Xiao's area of expertise is in geotechnical engineering, and he has conducted research for numerous private and public agencies, including the National Science Foundation. He also participated in a multi-million research project sponsored by NASA dealing with the effects of absence of gravity and micro-gravity on the structure of soils.

His Laval Award research aims to address the imminent levee issues in California. Due to prolonged erosion and earthquake damage, the state's levee stability and serviceability is a critical issue. "Frequent floods, land subsidence, and earthquakes have made these levees vulnerable to erosions and potential seismic activity," said Xiao.

Dr. Xiao plans to report the project outcomes to engineers and policy makers so that remediation measures can be designed to prevent a catastrophe. The results obtained will be used to quantify the stability of levees that have been subjected to long-term erosion. As part of the research, the soundness of the levees will be evaluated under an earthquake event so that preventative measures can be taken.

For more information, contact Maral Kismetian in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 278-0856.