At its annual Awards Meeting held on March 22nd, the Quad City Section of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers recognized three of its members: Eric Viall (Young Member), Walt Roll (Member) and Jay Olson (Outstanding Engineering Achievement).

Eric Viall
2011 Young Member of the Year

Eric Viall is the recipient of the 2011 Young Member of the Year Award. Since he became a member of the Quad City Section in 2000, Eric has been very active first serving on the Nominating Committee. Since then, he has served on the Program Committee helping secure tech session and after-dinner speakers for meetings. Eric was active in the student branch at the University of Illinois where he received B.S. degrees in Agricultural Engineering and Agricultural Sciences in 1998 and his M.S. in Agricultural Engineering in 2000. Upon completing his master’s degree, Eric joined the John Deere Seeding Group.
Walt Roll
2011 Member of the Year

Walt Roll is the Quad City Section’s 2011 Member of the Year. After receiving his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Illinois, Walt joined the Deere & Company Product Development Department in 1959 where he was instrumental in developing Deere’s first hay cuber leading to six U. S. patents. In the Engineering Research Department, he was responsible for crop properties research. Later he managed Deere’s Corporate Engineering Standards Department and spent the last ten years of his Deere career in the manufacturing engineering area. Retiring from Deere in 1987, Walt worked the next ten years in the U. S. Army Industrial Engineering Activity at the Rock Island Arsenal in the areas of producibility, production planning and program management. A 52 year ASABE member, Walt has been active in ASABE throughout his career chairing the Quad City Section in 1967-68 and serving on several ASAE committees in the forage harvesting and standards areas. He has also been an active member of his church and served on the Board of Directors of the Deere & Company Credit Union and on the Moline School Board.

Jay Olson
2011 Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award

Jay Olson is the recipient of the 2011 Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award. Jay has been a pioneer in the engineering applications of polymers both within John Deere and the agricultural equipment industry. He led a design and engineering/manufacturing/sourcing team in the introduction and first use of composite styling panels in the combine industry. Another team effort implemented soy and corn based SMC composite materials into combines and tractors as the first biopolymers in the global durable goods industry. Jay received his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Illinois in 1980 and his M.B.A. from the University of Iowa in 1993. After leading the development of a vacuum seed metering planting system, he became a pioneer in the application of polymers to Deere products leading to 17 U.S. patents.