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TEACHER, SCHOLAR AND SPEAKER: INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN PROFESSOR RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE, DELIVERS SEVERAL KEYNOTE SPEECHES

MANHATTAN -- A Kansas State University professor is receiving international recognition for his research on digital media, culture and education.

Michael Wesch, associate professor of cultural anthropology, recently received an honorary doctorate from the Universidad de San Martin de Porres, Peru's largest university.

Wesch said university leaders reached out to him last year because many of his ideas had been highly influential to them and the structure of their educational programs.

Wesch received the honorary doctorate at a recent ceremony in Peru. Hundreds of people, including the university chancellor and all of the university's deans, attended. Chancellor Raul Eduardo Bao Garcia presented Wesch with a diploma as well as a gold medallion, and Wesch gave a speech presenting his most recent ideas about education and technology.

"It was wonderful to be there and meet so many people who had been learning from me and building from my work simply by watching my talks and videos on YouTube, following my blog and reading my published works," Wesch said. "It is always inspiring to see how a few ideas hatched here in the Flint Hills of Kansas can find their way to other parts of the world where they mix with other ideas and blossom into something new, exciting and effective."

Wesch has 12 more keynote speeches scheduled for the summer. These keynotes will be given at the World Conference on Educational Media and Technology in Denver, the Society for College and University Planning international conference in Chicago, the InsideNGO annual conference in Washington, D.C., as well as events in Hawaii and Canada.

Wesch's speeches focus on inspiring wonder in students. While new technology provides numerous tools to create an "Age of Whatever" where anything seems possible, enthusiasm can be tempered by another "Age of Whatever" -- an age in which people feel disconnected and alienated. Wesch notes that it is not enough merely to deliver information in a traditional fashion or to give students the skills to become knowledgeable.

"What is needed more than ever is to inspire our students to wonder, to nurture their appetite for curiosity, exploration and contemplation, to help them attain an insatiable appetite to ask and pursue big, authentic and

relevant questions, so that they can harness and leverage the bounty of possibility all around us and rediscover the end or purpose of wonder, and stave off the historical end of wonder," Wesch said.

Wesch has also given several recent keynote speeches and presentations throughout the spring semester, some of which include:

- * A speech at USA Today's Great City Schools Education Forum. Wesch spoke to superintendents from the nation's largest school districts. These people oversee the education of more than seven million children.

- * A lecture as part of the University of California Santa Barbara's "Innovation Matters" lecture series, which feature bestselling authors and world-renowned thought leaders.

- * A presentation at The Creative University conference, where Wesch was a feature presenter along with Sir Ken Robinson.

- * Presentations at Barkley, Cerner Corp. and Cisco Systems Inc. All three companies are major employers of Kansas State University graduates and Wesch is working to build connections to create internships and other student opportunities.

- * Keynote speeches at Villanova University's Technology Expo and BCNet in Vancouver, British Columbia, among others.

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