

College of Technology and Computer Science

Monthly Newsletter - 2009

What a GREAT semester!!

It's hard to believe another semester is in the books and plans are already well underway for the 2009-2010 academic year. I wanted to mention some of the fantastic accomplishments from the past several months that really put our College on the map. I want to start by saying thank you to all of you who participated, mentored, volunteered and served this College well. From the planning, logistics, and execution of activities, there was so many of you that committed extra time and effort to make these events a memorable. To you I say thanks.



Dr. David White
Interim Dean
College of TECS

I am proud to be the Interim Dean of the College of TECS and these events show us how much we can accomplish when are not bound by the walls of programs or departments and come together for a common goal. This type of scholarly engagement has made an impression on the university administration as well as all of us here in the College.

Here are some of the highlights:

- The Research and Creative Achievement Week was a resounding success. Only a year after having minimal amounts of poster and presentation submissions, we were represented by nearly 20 student group teams many of which won awards, from all four departments, and showcased our skills and abilities to the entire university population. I appreciate the faculty members who mentored students on their projects and encourage more of this participation in the years to come.
- The inaugural Robert and Betty Hill Recognition Breakfast of Excellence was incredible. Provost Marilyn Sheerer, Vice Chancellor Mickey Dowdy, Vice Provost Kemal Atkins as well as other distinguished university guests, advisory board members and more honored the scholarship and award winners from the four departments. I applaud our faculty participation for this event and truly hope next year's event will be bigger and better.
- We had two prestigious guest speakers visit ECU's campus to speak about leadership and success. First, Joe Robson, 2009 Chairman of the Board for the National Association of Home Builders, continued the Construction Management Leadership Lecture Series as he talked about the housing market, construction careers, green building and sustainability and leadership. Also, Angela Allen, Vice-President from IBM and alumna from this College's Department of Computer Science, spoke to a crowd at Hendrix Theatre about how success and leadership have impacted her career. She also shared some of her points of wisdom for others to follow.
- About 30 people from Construction Management participated in a special project during spring break called Extreme Makeover Home Edition. They worked more than 1,100 hours of service during a five day period to help a Jamesville family have a new home. The show aired May 3, 2009 on ABC-TV.
- Chancellor Steve Ballard and Provost Marilyn Sheerer made a special visit to the College of Technology and Computer Science on February 5, 2009. Dr. Ballard and Dr. Sheerer spent a couple hours with faculty, staff and students within the various programs and departments. They visited an Engineering robotics class, the Industrial Distribution and Logistics laboratory and the Computer Science Virtual Reality Lab as a part of their tour and interaction with students.
- Board of Trustee Mark Tipton hosted the third installment of the Construction Management Webcast in the Building Communities series which is sponsored by the National Housing Endowment. Two guests talked about residential housing and much more for about an hour. This webcast was viewed by more people across the country than the previous two webcasts combined.

Once again, I am very appreciative to everyone's efforts to make this semester a success. Enjoy your summer and let's get back to it in the fall.

What Does an ECU Engineer Learn?

By Steve Row - From the East Magazine

As with so many other academic endeavors at East Carolina University, the question about the engineering program is not so much “Why are you offering this?” as it is “Why didn’t you do this 25 years ago?” Engineering, which admitted its first students in 2004, is graduating only its second class in May. But for Department of Engineering Chair Paul Kauffmann, getting to this point has taken his whole life.

East Carolina’s engineering program, which had 22 graduates this year, is tiny compared to, say, N.C.

State University, which is the state’s largest and had 420. But ECU’s program is unique because its vision is different. Kauffmann, who came here in 2003 to help get the program started, and his colleagues did not set out to reinvent the wheel; they were interested in turning out engineers who could quickly make a positive impact because of the breadth of their expertise and skills in the modern workplace.

Instead of offering the traditional concentrations of civil, electrical, mechanical or chemical engineering, the ECU program, which is housed within the College of Technology and Computer Science, focuses on slightly more exotic fields such as biomedical and bioprocess engineering, systems engineering and engineering management. ECU considers its department a general engineering program, one of about three dozen in the U.S.

ECU’s engineering program offers concentrations in biomedical engineering and bioprocess engineering, specialties that fit in with a region still heavily dependent on agriculture but one that is also served by a top-level medical school and hospital. Engineering processes and systems can help develop better ways to process food and pharmaceutical products, as well as advance medical research and treatment with the latest technology and equipment.

ECU’s program also takes a different approach to academics. Rather than learn only the history of engineering or basic engineering theory in the first semester, for example, students take an engineering graphics course. During their second semester, freshman engineering students split into teams build auto-guided robotic vehicles that can negotiate a maze, sense a flame and extinguish it.

Dr. Jason Yao, an assistant professor, calls this course the “Pirate Challenge,” and said it represents “a unique introduction to engineering” taught by the ECU faculty members and not graduate students. Students design and build a three-wheeled vehicle with sensors, guided not by a remote-control device but programmed through circuitry.

To read the remainder of this article from the East Magazine, please [click here](#).



ECU engineering faculty and students test chemicals in a bioprocess lab.

ECU hosts chairman of the National Association of Home Builders



Joe Robson, chairman of the board for the National Association of Home Builders, was the keynote speaker at East Carolina University's Construction Management Leadership Lecture Series on March 26.

The event, which was part of a celebration week commemorating the Department of Construction Management's 25 years at East Carolina University, was held in Hendrix Theatre in the Mendenhall Student Center.

The ECU Department of Construction Management partners with the National Housing Endowment to host these lectures annually with the goal of teaching students the importance of leadership in business and industry. This is the second installment of the lecture series. ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard spoke at the inaugural event in March 2008.

"We have enjoyed the on-going working relationship between East Carolina University and the National Association of Home Builders," said Ron Sessoms, ECU Department of Construction Management faculty member. "To have someone the caliber of Joe Robson coming to campus to share his experiences with leadership to our faculty, staff and students is a real treat."

Robson spoke on Qualities in Leadership. Mark Tipton, a current member of the ECU Board of Trustees and former National Association of Home Builders president, moderated the March 26 event.



ECU alumna returns to talk about success

Gregory T. Hedgepeth II – The East Carolinian

Friday afternoon, more than 60 people were in attendance for the Leadership and Success lecture given by Angela A. Allen, an ECU alumna, now a vice president with IBM Global Business Services.



The ECU College of Technology plans for this to be the first in a series of lectures aimed at leading and succeeding in the careers of its students.

Allen, a former computer science major, led off the lecture by giving some of her educational background.

She graduated from ECU in 1981 and then went on to further her education at the University of Phoenix and Harvard Business School. She also participated in thousands of hours of IBM technical and leadership courses.

"Education is an essential beginning for a successful leader," said Allen. "Work experience integrated with education leads to early success."

She says the most important part of her learning process was the co-op at the ECU Department of Navy, because it allowed her to meet and network with people who were critical in boosting her career.

Allen's most intensive part of the lecture was what she referred to as "the five points of wisdom," including believing in yourself, believing in growth through challenge, believing in ongoing education and learning, believing in what you're doing and believing in change.

She concluded that it was important to be confident and ready to lead as well as having a dream or vision of where you want to go.

"Sometimes it means doing what no one else is willing to do," Allen said. "Get out of your comfort zone and seek to learn something from every opportunity."

She suggests having a passion for learning and making it a lifelong endeavor. This is the only way to keep your skills current, she said.

"Work hard, put in the hours and make the sacrifices," she said. "Successful leaders embrace, drive and thrive on change! Be an enabler of new ideas ... and be the agent of the change that you desire."

Darren Jacobs, a freshman psychology major, plans to apply all of these ideals to his college career.

"I'm so grateful for this lecture because it puts a lot of things in perspective for me," said Jacobs. "Success is more than just being lucky. It takes hard work and the right opportunities."

Alisa Morris, a high school senior and hopeful future ECU student, shared the same sentiments.

"She really opened my eyes," she said. "If I can be half as successful as her, I'll be happy."

Allen concluded by saying that success is an attitude, an opportunity is always knocking and that there is value in networking.

She also said that even though her lecture was about success, no one gets to where they are without some bumps in the road.

"You can't be afraid to fail, but don't continue to rehash those failures," Allen said. "Look at them as learning opportunities."

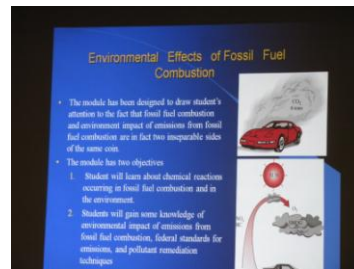


Angela Allen (left) receives a special gift from Interim Dean David White

FACULTY NEWS

The faculty from the College of Technology and Computer Science was extremely active during the Research and Creative Achievement Week events. **Dr. Tarek Abdel-Salam** from the Department of Engineering was the College recipient for 2008-2009.

The purpose of the annual Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs's *Scholar-Teacher Awards* is to recognize faculty members who effectively integrate research/creative activity in classroom teaching. The award winners will excel in these two central facets of faculty responsibility. The recognition will provide additional opportunities for these outstanding faculty members to mentor others.



Dr. Abdel-Salam presented his research, along with the other ECU Scholar Teacher Award winners, on April 2nd as a part of the week's events. Congratulations to Dr. Abdel-Salam!!!

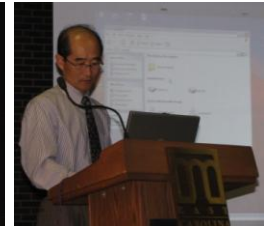
The College also had three faculty members participating in the International Symposium held in the Mendenhall Student Center during Research and Creative Achievement Week. The presenters included **Dr. Michael Behm** from the Department of Technology Systems, and **Drs. BJ Kim and Jason Yao** from the Department of Engineering. These research presentations were well received and greatly appreciated by all in attendance.



Dr. Jason Yao



Dr. Michael Behm



Dr. BJ Kim

Congratulations to Dr. Behm, Kim and Yao!



Robert A. Chin (Technology Systems) was elected director of publications, Engineering Design Graphics Division of The American Society for Engineering Education and editor of the Engineering Design Graphics Journal.

ECU's ASHRAE Student Chapter Recognized on the National Website

ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers) recently chartered a Student Branch at East Carolina University. Members of the branch include (front, L-R) Tarek Abdel-Salam, advisor; David Bateman, branch vice president; John Hinson, branch president; Jamelle Simmons, secretary. With the branch members are (back, L-R) Kent Woodard, Triangle Chapter president; Keith Hightower, chapter Scholarship Committee member; Ira Poston, Region IV director and regional chair; Ken Tursam, chapter student activities chair; and Chuck Curlin, Region IV regional vice chair for student activities. For more information, [click here](#) for the ASHRAE website.

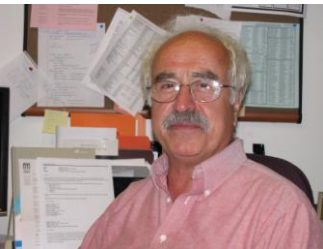


Construction Management hosts NC DOT Business Development Informational Session



On Thursday, May 14th, the North Carolina Department of Transportation Business Development section (with CMGT assistance) held an informational session at the Willis Building for Division 2 (Pitt, Beaufort, Greene, Lenoir, Craven, Pamlico, Jones, Carteret counties) area contractors. The purpose of the session was to inform local contractors of construction opportunities with the State as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and to review pre-qualification and certification requirements for contractors to allow participation / bidding on State funded projects (including MBE, SBE, WBE companies). Additional sessions will be planned and made available to Eastern North Carolina construction firms.

Dr. M.H.N. Tabrizi (Department of Computer Science) - presented his paper “An International Collaboration in Software Engineering” and it was published in the ACM SIGCSE conference proceedings. The SIGCSE 2009 Conference was held March 3-7, 2009 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The paper was co-authored by Carol Collins, a retired faculty member from the ECU Department of Computer Science as well as Vipul Kalamkar from The M S University of Baroda, in India. About the paper – “Students in software engineering need experiences that prepare them for a global work environment that is more and more likely to be structured around team work in which team members may come from a variety of disciplines and cultures and be geographically dispersed. New grads in software engineering are more and more likely to communicate with team members and managers solely via electronic means (e.g. teleconference, videoconference, e-mail, e-file sharing). This paper describes a highly successful international collaboration of students from two universities enrolled in undergraduate software engineering classes, one in the USA and the other in India. Within a semester, these students collaborated remotely to produce software for a leading international software development company. This collaboration, repeated for two semesters and planned for a third, met all learning objectives while successfully producing the desired software. This experience truly engaged our students and enabled the students to learn via a standard course in software engineering about many aspects of professional practice without resorting to special programs like co-op/internships, honors /research independent study, or capstones.”



Dr. Sergiy Vilkomir (Computer Science) recently had two papers published in journals:

- “Consistency preserving co-evolution of formal specifications and agent-oriented conceptual models”, Information & Software Technology journal, Volume 51, Issue 2, February 2009, pp. 478–496.
- “Using Formal Specifications to Support Testing”, ACM Computing Surveys journal, Vol. 41, No. 2, February 2009, pp.9:1-9:76. This large (76 pages) article reviews the state of the art regarding ways in which the presence of a formal specification can be used to assist testing and is authored by researchers from leading UK and USA Universities.



Dr. Vilkomir also had his paper – “Statistical testing for NPP I&C system reliability evaluation” -presented at the conference and published in the proceedings of the 6th American Nuclear Society International Topical Meeting on Nuclear Plant Instrumentation, Controls, and Human Machine Interface Technology (ICHMI 2009), Knoxville, TN, USA, April 5-9, 2009.

East Carolina University Associate Dean John Reis Appointed Examiner for 2009 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

Gaithersburg, MD (5/20/2009) – East Carolina University’s John Reis has been appointed by Dr. Patrick Gallagher, Deputy Director of the Commerce Department’s National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), to the 2009 Board of Examiners for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.



Dr. John Reis
Associate Dean, College of TECS

Reis, an Associate Dean in the ECU College of Technology and Computer Science, is responsible for reviewing and evaluating applications submitted for the award. The board is composed of approximately 500 leading experts selected from industry, professional and trade organizations, education and health care organizations and government.

The National Quality Award, created by public law in 1987, is the highest level of national recognition for performance excellence that a U.S. organization can receive. Those selected meet the highest standards of qualification and peer recognition.

This is the second straight year Reis has been appointed as a board examiner. All members of the board must take part in a preparation course based on the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and the scoring and evaluation processes for the Baldrige Award. Awards may be given annually in each of six categories: Manufacturing, Service, Small Business, Education, Health Care, and Non-profit. As of 2008, awards have been presented to 77 organizations.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Blount Family Continue Tradition of Support to East Carolina University with New Construction Management Scholarship

The Blount family has been very special to East Carolina University and vice versa.

“East Carolina University has always had a special place in my heart and always will,” said William (Bill) Blount.

Bill and his family have been proud Pirate supporters for several decades. The Blounts have already made a large impact on ECU’s campus through their generous contributions, which led to the intramural athletic complex behind the Belk Building being named after them. And now they are taking another milestone step forward which will directly impact the lives of future East Carolina students.



The Blount Family (left to right)
Bill, Hunter and Gray

The Blount family created a scholarship for a Department of Construction Management student which will become the premiere scholarship in the department. The scholarship is named after Home Builders Supply Company, which is co-owned by Bill Blount and his son Gray, will support a full-time undergraduate student who is considered to be a premiere rising junior or senior in the construction management program.

“It gives me a warm feeling inside,” Blount added. “To know that a student will benefit from this, that they will be able to further their studies and that we played a small part in making that happen, it’s very rewarding.”

Why Construction Management?

While Bill Blount is a graduate from the University of North Carolina, make no mistake about it, he bleeds purple. And that purple bloodline runs throughout his family, including Bill’s other son, Hunter.

Though he started out as a business major, Hunter said he always knew he wanted to build things. And with his father in real estate and home building, it’s easy to see where the spark ignited. He transferred from Elon College to ECU and said he found a perfect fit in construction management.

“As a student in Construction Management, you get the type of education which opens doors to a variety of career opportunities,” said Hunter Blount. “It did for me. I worked in a couple of different jobs after college before becoming a general contractor and I was able to do that because of the thorough education and leadership in the program.”

And Bill agrees.

“Very often companies are looking for people to do jobs that have the skills and abilities to both understand how to do a project and how to supervise others to carry it to completion. At ECU, students are receiving both.”

The scholarship, which includes books and tuition, will be awarded each spring to the top student in the Department. Dr. Douglas Kruger, who is the chair of the Department of Construction Management, says this is a tremendous opportunity for a young person which will prepare them for a professional career in this field.

“For the last 25 years we have been committed to creating a first class construction management learning community,” said Dr. Kruger. “Supporters like the Blount family enable us to continue raising the academic bar to meet 21st century global demands. We are very appreciative for Bill and Hunter Blount’s generosity and commitment to our program.”

The Gift that Keeps on Giving

The Blount family was motivated to create this scholarship to enhance the opportunities and skills of ECU Construction Management students, which once they graduate, will hopefully help strengthen Eastern North Carolina businesses. The Blounts believe that getting young, enthusiastic people to take a vested interest in local companies, through things like internships, they are more likely to stay in the area after graduation.

“Eastern North Carolina and ECU has been good to me and my family,” said Gray Blount, also an ECU graduate. “Having grown up around development and the construction industry, I felt my degree gave me the necessary tools and education I needed to succeed professionally. Giving back to the school is something our family feels strongly about and we appreciate the opportunities this region and University has provided us.”

Bill added “East Carolina University has been a driving force in the growth and development of this region. I love eastern North Carolina. When I think about all that’s here and all the potential of what can happen here, a lot of it is because of what East Carolina provides.”

Hunter whole-heartedly agrees with his family members and says graduates like him have a responsibility to give back to their alma mater when the opportunity arises.

“We need to do our part once we graduate and become business leaders to ensure that continues for years to come,” Hunter said. “I absolutely hope someone will see what we have been able to do as alumni, as business professionals and can find ways to give back. I think internships are a fantastic way for a young person to get some good hands-on experience, beyond what they can get in the classroom.”

And despite the fact that Hunter is still young himself and plans to be in the business for many years to come, he’s already looking to the future.

“Having students involved is already showing rewards, and I am hoping it leads to someone I can train to take over for me someday down the road.”

In the meantime, Bill and Hunter Blount are sharing in the joy that they are making a difference in the life of a young person. Bill likes to idea of serving as a role model in this manner and adds that everyone who can give back, should, no matter if it’s a big or small contribution.

Hunter agrees saying “it’s very gratifying to be able to give something back. We have built our family businesses up and the university has been a big part of that. We build places that house students. ECU has been very good to us and we want to do our part to give back.”

If you would like to join the Blount family by making a contribution to the Department of Construction Management, the College of Technology and Computer Science or East Carolina University, please contact Michael Ward at (252) 328-9566 or email him at wardmi@ecu.edu.

If you would like to find out more about this scholarship opportunity, please contact the Department of Construction Management offices at (252) 328-6490.

STUDENT NEWS

ECU’s ASHRAE Student Chapter Gets Tour of Steam Plant

On Tuesday April 28, the Triangle chapter's Membership Promotion chair Chris Silcott traveled to Greenville, NC to visit the Student Chapter of ASHRAE at East Carolina University. While at ECU, Chris teamed up with the ECU chapter's advisor Tarek Abdel-Salam and University Steam Plant supervisors Royce Thigpen and Neal Thorne to lead a tour of the ECU steam plant.

The objective of the tour was for the students to gain hands-on knowledge of the required processes for steam generation and distribution. The tour consisted of a 45 minute presentation on the basics of steam generation and watertube boilers, followed by a walkthrough of the plant. While touring the plant, the students were able to witness watertube boilers in operation and view the furnace of a 40,000 PPH industrial watertube boiler. Also, while touring the plant, Chris explained the condensate recovery, deaeration, and air preheating processes in the plant.



PHOTO GALLERY

Doug Kruger and Sue Williams Retirement Party



Robert and Betty Hill Breakfast of Excellence

