

InCyde Mechanical Engineering

September 24, 2010

Welcome back faculty, staff, students, and friends of the Department of Mechanical Engineering!

Associate Chair Changes

With the new academic year brings a few structure changes for points of contact in the department. Sriram Sundararajan has stepped down as the Director of Graduate Education (DOGE) and is now the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies. His office is located in the Kiewit Undergraduate Student Services Center in 2043 Black. Pranav Shrotriya has been appointed as the new DOGE and will take over the duties as the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and Research. His office is in the Graduate Programs suite, 2019 Black.

New Professorship

Professor Judy Vance has been named the inaugural recipient of the Joseph C. and Elizabeth A. Anderlik Professorship in Engineering. "I'm honored to have been selected to receive this professorship," Vance said. "It will allow me to continue exploring ways to utilize virtual reality techniques within engineering design that will advance both the education students receive and the research conducted at Iowa State." ([News release](#))

Faculty Patent

Professor Erin MacDonald has an idea to increase the sustainability of an everyday object many of us wouldn't want to be caught without: the umbrella.



Professor Erin MacDonald has an idea to make life easier on rainy days.

MacDonald, assistant professor and Michael and Denise Mack 2050 Challenge Scholar, was recently awarded a U.S. patent with three former colleagues from the University of Michigan. The patent, which started from an idea as a team project back in her graduate school days, aims to improve the shelf-life of umbrellas. The research group created an umbrella using compliant mechanisms with plastic components reducing the number of parts significantly for each umbrella. When caught in a windy rainstorm with an umbrella turned inside out, the user would then be able to manually repair the umbrella thanks to plastic joints that snap together and spare parts that could be stored in the handle. The umbrella idea had also previously won a prestigious design competition through *I.D. Magazine* where viewers could vote online for best student design submissions.

Faculty Award

Schafer 2050 Challenge Professor Valery Levitas received the Da Vinci Diamond, an international award recognizing his outstanding contributions to engineering, science, and education. ([News release](#))

Welcome Back Picnic

The [Women in Mechanical Engineering](#) (WiME) welcome picnic was held on August 26 and boasted a record number of attendees. Assistant Professor Baskar Ganapathysubramanian, one of the faculty leads of the WiME program, said "it was gratifying to see that the kick-off event was so well attended. Such social events help build an environment of camaraderie which play a big part in retention and in convincing undeclared engineering students to pick mechanical engineering." The next WiME event will be an ice cream social on Thursday, September 30 in 2004 Black at 5:30 pm.



Students get new WiME t-shirts and register for door prizes.

Galloway Recipients

Four graduate students have been named Galloway Teaching Assistants. Congratulations to Isaac Garlington, Kristin Tucker, Wu Zhuoru, and Kaelynn Koch. The assistantships are made possible through the Roderick Seward, Flossie Ratcliffe, and Helen M. Galloway Foundation, Inc.

Superior Teacher



Jim Heise is congratulated by engineering dean, Jonathan Wickert.

Jim Heise has been recognized by mechanical engineering students and the College of Engineering for his outstanding contributions to teaching. Heise, a lecturer and design project coordinator, was nominated as the 2010 ME Teacher of the Year this spring and also received the Superior Engineering Teacher Award at this fall's college convocation. Dean Jonathan Wickert noted that Heise has been "instrumental in revitalizing the curriculum for the introduction to mechanical engineering design and the senior capstone design courses."

Fall 2010 Seminar Series

Seminars are currently underway and the full schedule for the Department of Mechanical Engineering Seminar Series is available at <http://www.me.iastate.edu/events-and-seminars.html>.