

Mechanical Engineering @ Iowa State



InCyde Mechanical Engineering January 28, 2010

Women in Mechanical Engineering to host mini golf tournament

On Wednesday, February 24, the Women in Mechanical Engineering program will be hosting the first annual Black Engineering Mini Golf Tournament. There will be a mini golf course set up on the second floor of the Black Engineering building featuring holes designed by Women in Mechanical Engineering students. The course will start in the southwest corner of the second floor and zigzag across the hallways to end in 2004 Black for refreshments. All students, faculty, and staff are welcome to attend. The event will begin at 6 p.m. and end at 8 p.m., giving students a break from classes and time to network.

Iowa State engineering technology appears on 'The Biggest Loser Couples'

Software technology developed by Iowa State University engineers gave contestants of NBC's *The Biggest Loser Couples* a close look inside their bodies. A doctor used the [BodyViz](#) technology to show contestants their MRI scans in 3-D during the January 12 show.

James Oliver, an Iowa State professor of mechanical engineering and director of the university's [CyberInnovation Institute](#), and Eliot Winer, an Iowa State associate professor of mechanical engineering and an associate director of Iowa State's [Virtual Reality Applications Center](#), developed the technology to convert flat images from medical scans into 3-D images that can be easily understood and can be manipulated with an Xbox game controller. Thom Lobe, a pediatric surgeon based at Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines, helped the engineers design a tool doctors could use.

BodyViz.com, a start-up company founded by the three and based at the CyberInnovation Institute, is now marketing the software as "Simple. Visual. 3D."

Read an *Ames Tribune* [related story](#).

Engineering alums help third-world countries through nonprofit

The *Rockford Register Star* recently carried a [story](#) about Emerging Opportunities for Sustainability ([EOS International](#)), a nonprofit organization started by Greg McGrath, a 25-year-old Iowa State graduate in mechanical engineering, and three fellow Iowa State grads (Chris Deal and Wes Meier, ME; and Lee Beck, horticulture, food science, and Spanish). McGrath is a native of Rockford and was interviewed for the article.

Brown part of \$78 million national effort to develop advanced biofuels

Two teams of Iowa State University researchers will receive a total of \$8 million over three years from a \$78 million U.S. Department of Energy program to research and develop advanced biofuels. Robert C. Brown, Anson Marston Distinguished Professor in Engineering, the Gary and Donna Hoover Chair in Mechanical Engineering, and the Iowa Farm Bureau director of the Bioeconomy Institute, is leading one of the teams. Brown's team, which is part of the National Advanced Biofuels Consortium, will conduct a \$2.7 million study of the thermochemical and catalytic conversion of biomass to fuels. Brent Shanks, CBE professor and director of the Center for Biorenewable Chemicals based at Iowa State, is a member of the team. ([News release](#))

Engineering students build robot to fight in national battlebots competition

About once every two years robotics enthusiasts from around the country gather to show off their own creations—complete with wireless remote control capabilities, hydraulic and pneumatic systems, and weapons—and to destroy the competitions' newest creations. This year, a team of Iowa State University students is attempting to join in the fun by designing and building their own robot to compete in the national BattleBots Collegiate Championship April 6–11 in the San Francisco Bay Area. ([News release](#))

Department seminars

- Robert Brown, Anson Marston Distinguished Professor in Engineering and Gary and Donna Hoover Chair in Mechanical Engineering, Iowa State University, will present "Thermochemical Pathways to Biofuels" on February 2. The seminar will be held in 1116 Sweeney Hall from 11:00 to 11:50 a.m.
- Anastasios Matzavinos, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Iowa State University, will present "Spectral Clustering Methods in Data Processing and Image Analysis" on February 23. The seminar will be held in 2004 Black Engineering from 11:00 to 11:50 a.m.

Correction

In the January 14, 2010, issue of *InCyde Mechanical Engineering*, Galen F. Smith's name was spelled incorrectly in a story about the design competition award presented in his honor. The article has been corrected online and is available at www.eng.iastate.edu/html/email/menews/me_news_01-14-10.html.

Do you have department news you'd like to share? Please e-mail news items for InCyde Mechanical Engineering to Jessi Strawn at jlstrawn@iastate.edu

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