

## Your Link to the Department of Civil Engineering



Dr. Ramzi Mahmood, P.E.  
Department Chair

**KEN KERRI**  
Endowment Fund

**RSVP NOW**  
(DEADLINE APRIL 9TH)

Ken Kerri Luncheon

When: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., April 14

Where: Sacramento State Alumni Center

Cost: \$25

RSVP to Neysa Bush by April 9

[nbush@ecs.csus.edu](mailto:nbush@ecs.csus.edu) or

916-278-6982

Welcome to our second issue of CE Connection. This issue brings good news even as higher education faces the challenges of state budget decisions and the continuing poor economy. First, let's celebrate the following:

- ▶ The ABET Commission will vote on our accreditation in July. Based on the draft statement ABET issued after their visit last October and the response we recently submitted, we do not anticipate any problems.
- ▶ Our students have won many competitions and scholarships (see News & Notes inside for details), as well as admission to prestigious graduate schools. This demonstrates our continued capacity to produce tomorrow's engineering excellence.
- ▶ We are anticipating another record enrollment next year, based on the acceptance letters now on their way to students. This comes at a time when many experts are worried about a lack of enough graduates in science-based fields to keep our country competitive.

At the same time we are enjoying these successes, we have been coping with the potential for cutbacks that could affect classes and students, as well as our ability to continue our much-valued master's program. Many of our alumni who have achieved industry prominence have given us much-appreciated support in making the argument that the Civil Engineering program is the kind of investment that is critical to the recovery of California's economy and the state's future growth.

I am excited about our first Annual Alumni Day on April 14. I want to thank the Civil Engineering Program Industrial Advisory Committee (CEPIAC), whose members were instrumental in assisting the Department to organize this important event. The Alumni Day coincides with our Ken Kerri Luncheon, our annual fundraiser for an endowment fund to benefit Civil Engineering students. Look for stories inside for more details on both events.

Finally, we're delighted to have received e-mails from alumni who shared news about their careers. Read about them in the News & Notes section. If you wish to be included in the next issue, just drop us an e-mail at [ceconnect@ecs.csus.edu](mailto:ceconnect@ecs.csus.edu).

# Evening with AN INDUSTRY

## An Evening with Industry: A Night to Remember

The sixth annual An Evening with Industry was highly successful, drawing more than 180 attendees and 17 sponsoring companies to the November 2009 event.

Carrie Pourvahidi, a Sacramento State alumna who is Deputy Director of the California High-Speed Rail Authority, spoke about the status of the rail project. Afterwards, she talked to individual students about their plans to make civil engineering a career.

A panel of local professionals followed the keynote speech. Panel members later said they were impressed with the quality of questions from students, who took advantage of the opportunity to network with professionals.

The photos on these pages include some of the participants who made the night so successful.



The industry panel included (from the left) Pamela Creedon of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board; Myriam Frausto of the Sacramento County Department of Transportation; Jeremy Zorne of GeoCon; Jerry Applas of Burrell Consulting Group; and Maxwell Katt of Quincy Engineering. All except Ms. Frausto are CSUS alumni.



Carrie Pourvahidi speaks to attendees at this year's Evening with Industry.



Below are images from from the networking portion of Evening with Industry



Above, left: Rick Liptak of Dokken Engineering, the emcee for the program.

# FACULTY

## UP CLOSE



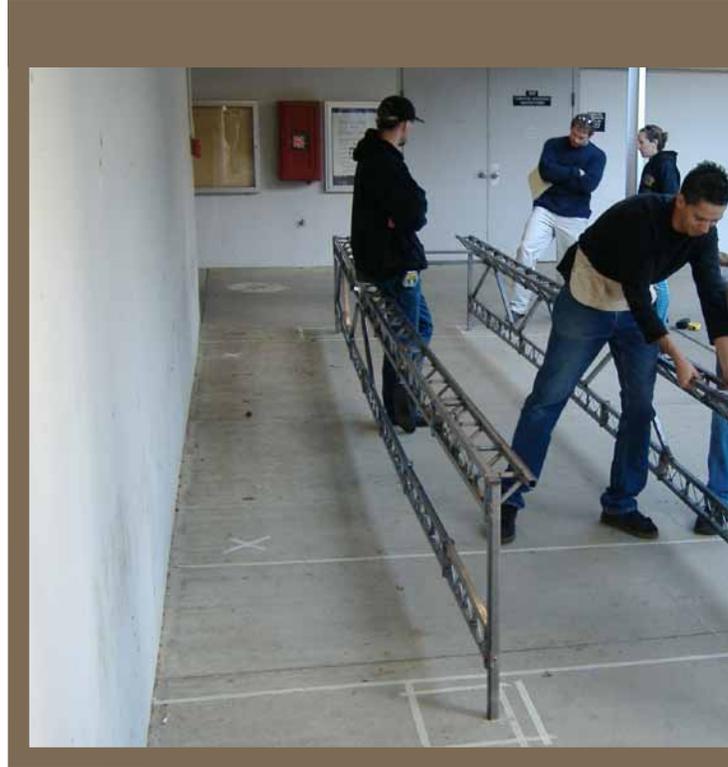
**Professor Justin Reginato**  
Construction Management

When Professor Justin Reginato says he can't wait to get to work each morning, he knows it may sound odd amid today's frustrations of tight budgets, university cutbacks and other challenges. Those are outweighed by the pluses, however – not the least of which is having a position that allows him to specialize in construction management.

He came to Sacramento State in January 2009, a three-year veteran of teaching at the University of the Pacific (UOP) in Stockton. He also taught at Santa Clara University as an adjunct professor while earning his Ph.D. in civil engineering with an emphasis on construction management at UC Berkeley.

"At UOP, where I had a joint position covering engineering management and civil engineering, I was wearing many hats, spread thin and unable to stick with one subject," he says. "Sacramento State offered me the opportunity to focus on construction

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Above, students work on the assembly for the steel bridge competition.



# STUDENT FOCUS

## Students Ready to Take on Rivals at MidPac



**A**mber Kirk knows the highlight of her senior year will be crossing the stage to get her civil engineering degree in May. But she wouldn't mind having a close second be her leading the Sacramento State student chapter of ASCE to victory at the Mid-Pacific Regional Conference (MidPac) when it takes place in Chico this month.

As president this semester, she's in a good position to know how the teams are coming together, and she's optimistic about their chances. Going up against schools like UC Berkeley, Cal Poly SLO, and UC Davis may sound tough, but Amber says Sacramento State students have pitched in like never before and the work is going well on the eve of the competition.

Close to 75 students are involved in preparing for three separate contests, and about 30 will be traveling to Chico for the April 8-10 final stage of the competition. The three projects they are working on are:

- The concrete canoe competition, which requires the construction of a 20-foot-long canoe that meets contest specifications and is raced by students. Amber says students not only have learned from last year's experience, but also have done an excellent job of project management to keep the team on track.

- The steel bridge competition, which involves a 20-foot-long scale model of a bridge that must sustain a specified load. After a rocky start with few volunteers, this team has picked up momentum and has been very active in moving the project toward completion, Amber reports.

- The water treatment competition, which tests the ability of a team to create an efficient system for treating and releasing 10 gallons of contaminated water. Separate teams on treatment and hydraulics have been working hard and are coordinating on a final solution, according to Amber.

In addition, student Jaimie Davis will be making a presentation at Chico based on her 2,000-word essay entry in the ASCE National Daniel W. Mead Student Contest.



Above, students work on the hydraulics portion of the water treatment competition.

While they will be focused on beating other competitors, Amber and the other students also will be taking special note of Chico's performance as a competition host. Next year, MidPac moves to Sacramento State, giving students not only the chance to compete but also the opportunity to help organize the annual event.

# NEWS & NOTES

## Students

**A Record Five Trophies...** Construction Management students set a new record for Sacramento State, bringing home five trophies including three first-place honors in the 2010 Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Regions 7 and Open Problems (National) competition in Sparks, Nevada in February. Sacramento State competed in four regional divisions and three open problem national divisions. The teams placed first in the Commercial Division, Mechanical Division and Electrical Division (the Mechanical and Electrical wins were national level), and second in the Multi-Family Division and Design Build Division. Additionally, the Heavy Civil team submitted a bid package placing them "closest to the pin," which meant their total estimate for their project was closest to the actual project bid.

**Three Honored at Sacramento ASCE Banquet...** Three Civil Engineering students were recognized at the regional ASCE awards banquet in February for their contributions to the ASCE Student Chapter. Jeffrey Meyer was awarded an Alfred R. Golze Scholarship, and Gillian Montgomery was presented with an Academic Achievement Award. Amber Kirk won the Professional Service Award for her work as student chapter treasurer in 2009 and president in 2010.

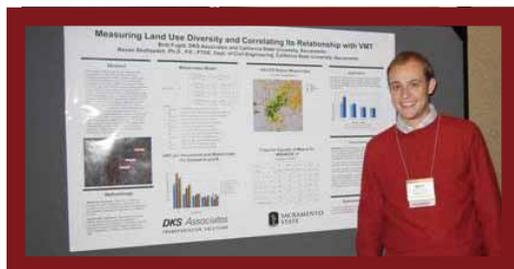
**Presentation at National Transportation Conference...** Civil Engineering student Britt Fugitt presented results from his master's thesis, titled "Measuring Land Use Diversity and Correlating Its Relationship with Vehicle Miles Traveled," at the 2010 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting in

Washington, D.C. in January. His work characterizes the relationship between the mix of surrounding land uses ("land use diversity") and household driving behavior (vehicle-miles traveled or VMT). His research, which combined parcel-level land use data with household survey data from the six-county SACOG region, was advised by Professor Kevan Shafizadeh and incorporated feedback from outside reviewers Bruce Greisenbeck, a senior analyst at the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and Mike Mauch, transportation engineer at DKS Associates in Sacramento.

**Winning National Transportation Data Collection Grant...** The Sacramento State Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Student Chapter was awarded one of five national \$1,000 parking data collection grants from the International Board of ITE. Twenty-two university student chapters applied for the grants to collect local parking and trip generation data. Led by Civil Engineering student Stephen Nelson, the Sacramento State team wrote a proposal to collect data at nearby Rio Americano High School, which will be used by engineers to help model the parking requirements at similar high schools. The proposal and data collection effort were supported by Professor Kevan Shafizadeh and practicing transportation engineer David Tokarski of Sacramento-based engineering firm DKS Associates.



**Winners of SEAOC Competition – Again!...** For the second consecutive year, Sacramento State Civil Engineering students won the Structural Engineers Association of Central California (SEAOC) student design competition. The design and construction phase of the competition was held at the University of the Pacific. Students were given instructions to design and build a wood structure to span length and



height specifications. The judges considered the uniqueness of the design, maximum load-to-weight ratio, and student presentations in their final decision. The first place Sacramento State team was awarded \$1,000, which will help fund future SEAOCC activities at Sacramento State. The team members were Jesse Ogren (captain), Daniel Bremerman, Zachary Craig, Grant Guerrieri, Gillian Montgomery and Phew Thao. Gillian Montgomery also received a \$750 SEAOCC Scholarship in recognition of her outstanding academic and extracurricular record.

**ASCE Construction Institute Scholarships...** Alex Yaroshevich (Civil Engineering) and Ryan Henry (Construction Management) were awarded the 2009-2010 ASCE Construction Institute Scholarship in recognition of their excellence in the classroom and their experience in civil construction. The pool of applicants included students from the San Francisco and Sacramento ASCE sections. The faculty sponsors for the applicants were Professors Benjamin Fell and Mikael Anderson.



### **Justin Reginato continued:**

management – and the real carrot was that the program is so highly respected.”

Professor Reginato lists three other attributes that keep him enthusiastic. The first is the fact that the program has outstanding industry support. Local construction companies hire students, provide financial contributions for the program, pitch in as guest lecturers and are always ready to coach students.

“Other schools have alumni support, but here it’s off the charts,” he says. “It’s one of the important things that distinguishes Sacramento State from other programs.”

A second attribute is the hard work that his colleagues put into the program. Professor Reginato says the faculty care not only about the classroom work, but also about the overall well-being of the students. The professors go the extra mile to help students transition from classroom to workplace.

The third is the students themselves. “I’ve never had more fun with a group of students anywhere, whether it was in graduate school or in places where I’ve taught,” he says. “They are interested in learning, but they also bring their unique experiences to the classroom.”

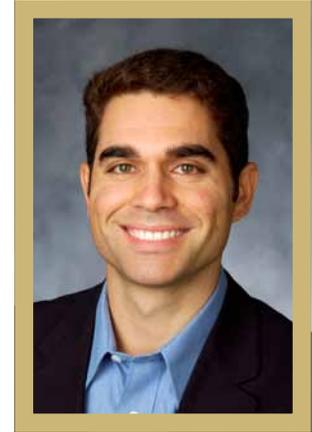
Professor Reginato, who did his undergraduate work at the University of Nevada, knows a bit about Sacramento State students – he married one. His wife, Tracey, graduated in 1995 with a bachelor’s degree in business. She works as a chief financial officer for an architecture firm. The couple has two daughters, 10-year-old Grace and 7-year-old Ella.

# NEWS & NOTES

## Faculty

Over the summer, Professors Karen Hansen and Kevan Shafizadeh were promoted from assistant to associate professors, and both were granted tenure at Sacramento State. Tenure is analogous to an attorney becoming promoted to a “partner” in a law firm. Both faculty members were reviewed by department-level and college-level committees, as well as the Department Chair, College Dean, and University Provost. Both faculty members were granted promotions based on their teaching, research, and service work while in the Department during their first six years.

*Congratulations, Karen and Kevan!*



## Alumni

Alumni from across the years have shared news about their careers. Send information to [ceconnect@ecs.csus.edu](mailto:ceconnect@ecs.csus.edu) if you would like to be included in the Fall 2010 issue. (Note: Unless otherwise designated, graduates received bachelor's degrees in Civil Engineering at the end of the academic year.)

### 2009

Jeremiah Camarena reports that until recently the poor job market kept him working as an intern, handling traffic engineering assignments in the City of Rancho Cordova. But he now is a staff design engineer with Civtel, Inc., a telecommunications engineering firm in Rancho Cordova. He adds, “I am excited to have graduated from Sacramento State where I received great instruction from very friendly and professional professors. I am excited about starting my career in civil engineering.”

### 2007

Moranda Kellogg Dahl is a Staff EIT in the Geotechnical Department at Carlton Engineering in Shingle Springs. See 2006 for an update on her husband, Erik. The two married in 2008.

Niranjen Kanepathipillai, a December 2007 graduate, is currently a Transportation Engineer/Civil with Caltrans. He joined the department immediately after graduation and has worked as a Design Engineer on barrier transitions, been exposed to the design procedures of underground structures such as retaining systems, and was recently assigned as an Assistant Structures Representative to assist on inspections of projects that are under construction. He writes that Sacramento State “is doing an awesome job of providing [the] knowledge [that] civil engineering students need to face the challenges in the real civil engineering industry with courage and determination.”

### 2006

Erik Dahl works as an Assistant Engineer at Quincy Engineering, a firm that specializes in transportation and bridge engineering, with offices in Sacramento and Salem, Oregon. He married Sacramento State alumna Moranda Kellogg in 2008.



## 2003

Lance Ablang, a fall 2003 graduate, is currently working as an Associate Civil Engineer for the County of Sacramento in its Department of Water Resources.

Delyn Ellison-Lloyd, a fall 2003 graduate with an MS in Civil Engineering, is a Senior Engineer for the City of Roseville in the Stormwater Management Program.

## 1986

Barbara Lebeck (maiden name Barbara Barnes), is President and owner of Lebeck Young Engineering Inc. in Cameron Park. Lebeck Young offers full-service civil-engineering and consulting to clients all over the greater Sacramento, Placer, and El Dorado County area.

## 1981

Tom Armour, a January 1981 graduate, is President of DBM Contractors, Inc., in Federal Way, Washington. DBM specializes in heavy civil and specialty geotechnical construction.

## 1972

W. Martin Roche, who graduated with his bachelor's degree in 1964 and master's degree in Civil Engineering/Water Resources Management in 1972 (he also has a master's degree from Stanford in Engineering Economic Systems), is currently a consulting civil engineer based in Grass Valley. His career includes more than 27 years with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and 5½ years with the Turlock Irrigation District. His foreign experience includes four months in Jordan and four months leading technical tours for Jordanian and Egyptian managers and engineers in California. His disaster recovery experience includes several assignments with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Alabama, California, Florida, and Guam.

## 1971

Mel Knutson retired in 2003 after a 30-year career at Teichert Construction in Sacramento. He now lives in Montana, where he went for his first job after graduation (Northern Testing Laboratory) before joining Teichert in 1973. He lives on Hebgen Lake near Yellowstone Park, but he notes that his living situation may not be permanent. "Teichert was great company to work for and Montana is a great place to retire. The fishing, boating, and skiing have been good in Montana. However, the long winters and missing our children and grandchildren may send us back to California where the winters are mild and the people are great."

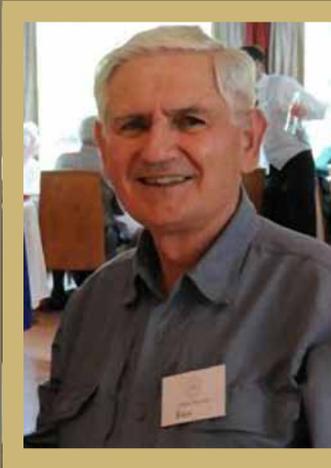
## Miyamoto in Haiti

Sacramento State alumnus Kit Miyamoto (MS in Civil and Structural Engineering, 1997) sent his earthquake and structural engineering company experts into Haiti shortly after the devastating earthquake to assess damages and begin planning for reconstruction.



Working in partnership with the government of Haiti and the United Nations and supported by the US Joint Task Force, Miyamoto International will provide training, technical management and quality assurance for reconstruction. "The most immediate goal for this joint task force is to get people out of dangerous camp sites, which will be exposed to flood and landslides in the upcoming hurricane season," Mr. Miyamoto said.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



## Bill Neuman: Emeritus Professor Still in the Game

Whether it is lecturing students about engineering ethics or helping a jury make sense of complex forensic testimony, Bill Neuman is finishing out his career much as he began it: sharing both his theoretical and practical knowledge with others.

It's a career that began more than 50 years ago when he learned geodetic surveying with the Army in Panama before enrolling at Sacramento State. He earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering with honors in 1961 and, with an eye toward teaching, completed his master's degree at Stanford in 1962.

"When I was ready to look for a job, I asked my former professors to critique my resume," Professor Neuman says. "Back came corrections for my typos – as well as the offer of a one-year teaching position at Sacramento State."

He never left, becoming a tenured professor in 1971. Altogether, he taught full time for 30 years, half time for five years, and finally retired in 1997 as Emeritus Professor of Engineering. During his time at Sacramento State, he saw the program become accredited for the first time in the late 1960s, watched the number of students grow from fewer than two dozen to hundreds, and helped prepare future engineers as technology changed industry practices.

“As a professor, it’s important to be involved in the field in some way, whether it is research, consulting or activities with professional organizations...In fact, all engineers should be active and give something back to the profession.”

Today, Professor Neuman keeps his classroom skills in play, occasionally teaching engineering ethics as part of a UC Davis course. He also continues to serve on national committees for the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), as well as staying involved with a long list of other organizations. But what occupies most of his time is a robust consulting business as a forensics engineer who serves as an expert witness in litigation. It is a sideline he developed in the 1960s that kept him active in the engineering field while he was teaching.



“As a professor, it’s important to be involved in the field in some way, whether it is research, consulting or activities with professional organizations,” he says. “In fact, all engineers should be active and give something back to the profession.”

That’s just one piece of advice that the professor has for students and alumni. Others include:

- “It’s important to keep learning. When you are well along in your career, you’ll find that you don’t use what you learned in college – because what you learned there is how to learn.” That means engineers who pay attention will grow and do things in new ways as the industry evolves.
- “You need to keep in touch with people – with faculty, colleagues and friends. You can learn so much from other people, the projects they are working on, the methods they are using.” This is particularly important in an era where it is less likely that people will stay with one employer throughout their careers.
- “It’s not all about ‘me’ – there is almost always a whole team of people behind any successful project.”

Professor Neuman stays connected with Sacramento State, serving on the Department’s industry advisory committee. He enjoys the dual role of alumnus and emeritus professor for an institution that he sees as continuing to grow and improve, producing talented engineers for the future.

### **Grant Awarded for Traffic Lab**

The Sacramento Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) has awarded the Department of Civil Engineering a \$15,000 grant to purchase equipment for a new traffic laboratory.

Students will use the lab to do traffic-related assignments and research projects in transportation engineering and traffic operations courses, according to Professor Kevan Shafizadeh. The funds will be used to buy new traffic controller systems and computers, which will serve as a small traffic operations and research center.

Sacramento State is partnering with other public transportation agencies in the area on analyzing traffic operations data available on Sacramento’s proposed regional transportation data network known as STARNET.

**1st Annual Alumni Day  
Puts Grads in Classes**

When students walk into their civil engineering classes on Wednesday, April 14, they will get a first-hand reminder that they are preparing for careers that can take them in many directions. They will hear from a variety of Sacramento State graduates who have been lined up to speak in 13 classes as part of the first Annual Alumni Day.

“The purpose is for students to see the kind of careers that people who have graduated from Sacramento State are pursuing,” says Rick Liptak, who partnered with Fran Halbakken to organize the event. “We invited alumni with different levels of experience, from several years to several decades, who have worked on different types of projects and for different types of employers, both public and private.”

Besides speaking in classes, the past graduates will join other alumni and industry members in attending the second annual Ken Kerri Endowment Fund Luncheon. In addition, retired professors have been invited to return for Alumni Day to reconnect with past students.

While Ms. Halbakken, who manages projects for the City of Sacramento, is a Sacramento State alumna, Mr. Liptak is a graduate of Chico State who has worked for Dokken Engineering for 24 years. A similar alumni day at the Chico campus inspired him to suggest the idea to the Civil Engineering Program Industrial Advisory Committee for Sacramento State.

**KEN KERRI**  
Endowment Fund  
**2ND ANNUAL LUNCHEON**

**Army Corps Commander to Speak  
at Ken Kerri Luncheon**

The Commander of the Sacramento District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be the keynote speaker for the annual Ken Kerri Endowment Fund Luncheon. Col. Thomas Chapman



has been in charge of the district since July 2007, following a lengthy career in the Corps that has taken him throughout the United States and overseas to the Middle East, Italy, and Korea.

The event, which coincides with the Department’s first Annual Alumni Day, is from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 14 in the Sacramento State Alumni Center.

The annual luncheon is held in honor of Professor Emeritus Ken Kerri. Last year, the Department established an endowment fund in his name to recognize his contributions to the civil engineering profession, the Department and the University. The fund is dedicated to the education of future civil engineers.

Reservations for the luncheon must be made by Friday, April 9. Contact Neysa Bush at [nbush@ecs.csus.edu](mailto:nbush@ecs.csus.edu) or 916-278-6982.