

CONNECTION

SUMMER 2014, ISSUE 14

Your Link to the Department of Civil Engineering



INSIDE

- ▼ Students Make Strong Showing at Mid-Pac Competitions
- ▼ Ken Kerri Luncheon Focuses on State Water Challenges
- ▼ Steve Balbierz: It's All About Company Culture

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Summer is the season in which students, faculty, and staff at the University recharge and reflect on the academic year gone by – and prepare for the next one. In my second official year as Department Chair, we have many reasons to celebrate and many opportunities to anticipate the future. The Department continues to flourish in terms of accomplishments and achievements by our students and faculty, as well as improvements to the curriculum.

Student enrollment remains strong, and among the highest in the College of Engineering and Computer Science with nearly 800 students in our program. Approximately 120 students completed bachelor's degrees and about 20 students completed master's degrees (see page 9).

One of the biggest challenges is offering more variety in courses and also reducing total unit requirements to shorten the time to graduation. The Department is doing both. Along with small changes to chemistry and math requirements (requiring three units of linear algebra instead of four units of a third semester of calculus), the Department was recently granted six units of relief in General Education (GE) requirements through courses already required in the major. And for the first time ever, the Department will be offering an applied course in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) as an upper-division elective, taught by our newest faculty member, Dr. Ghazan Khan (read about him on page 7).

This past February, the Department celebrated its 50th anniversary with an alumni reunion and open house. It also hosted many other events all of which had excellent participation and industry sponsorship. We encourage our alumni to stay connected and get involved at these events and others throughout the year.

I expect the upcoming academic year will provide a new set of challenges and opportunities as we anticipate administrative changes within the College of Engineering and Computer Science, plan to hire additional full-time faculty, work on developing a new strategic plan, and prepare for our accreditation visit in fall 2015. I will keep you updated on these issues in future editions of CE Connection. In the meantime, I hope you all have a wonderful summer, and I thank you for your continued support.

Kevan Shafizadeh, Ph.D., P.E.
Civil Engineering Department Chair



Send Us a Vacation Photo!

Send a picture showing you or a family member wearing your civil engineering T-shirt or Sacramento State gear while on vacation. Include a few words about who's in the photo and what you're visiting. We'll publish a few of the best in future editions of CE Connection.

Here's Dr. John Johnston, PE, at the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge, the widest concrete arch in the western hemisphere, taken from the top of the Hoover Dam in Nevada. Of course, we also want to hear about any other life or career changes (like getting married or getting a promotion) or noteworthy accomplishments (like passing the PE exam). Email items to ceconnect@ecs.csus.edu.

Students Make Strong Showing at Mid-Pac Competitions

This year's ASCE Mid-Pacific Student Conference, or Mid-Pac, brought several wins and plenty of excitement to the Sacramento State Civil Engineering team. Held at CSU Fresno in April, the competition included Concrete Canoe, Steel Bridge, Water Treatment, Transportation and Geo-Challenge.

Fifteen universities – including one each from China, India and Canada – took part in Mid-Pac, which gave many students their first taste of hands-on design and construction. Sacramento State tied for third with CSU Chico in overall score and had notable results in other areas.

As one of only two universities competing in the final phase of the Transportation Challenge (the other was China's Tongji University), Sacramento State pulled an impressive overall win and also won the design portion of that competition.

"Our project was to design a rural section of highway in Fresno County," said Spencer Ord, co-captain of Sacramento State's Transportation Challenge team. "It introduced many challenges and was definitely a team effort to pull it together in the end. We ended up competing against other schools on the west coast and while only one other school submitted the final bid package, we ended up winning the competition."

Spencer and his team had put in six months of effort on this challenge beforehand, so taking home the win certainly validated that work. When he's not leading the Transportation Challenge, Spencer works part time as an intern at Mark Thomas & Company, and serves as an officer of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) student chapter.

Sacramento State also shined in the Professional Paper competition, placing third overall but taking first place in the written report portion. The theme was "Resourceful Engineering: The

Link Between Sustainability and Resilience." Reaa Ali took the lead on this part of the event: "I used wood as an example because it's easily understood: forests and homes," she said.

Sacramento State also won the Spirit Bell for the second year in a row. "Spirit Bell represents the school that's most spirited and had great team energy, was helpful and had a good attitude," said Reaa.

During the Mini Games, Sacramento State also took first place in volleyball and second in concrete bowling. All in all, the competition proved challenging but fun and extremely valuable. "This was my first Mid-Pac, and it was amazing," said Spencer. "Since most of what I had to do for my competition was done before the conference, I went mostly for the experience and to have fun with other civil engineers."



KENKERRI
Endowment Fund

Ken Kerri Luncheon Focuses on State Water Challenges

Water was the topic of the day at the sixth annual Ken Kerri Endowment Fund Luncheon, held on April 9 in the Alumni Center. A record crowd of more than 200 people were in attendance to support the Ken Kerri Endowment Fund, with Jon Laird, California’s Secretary for Natural Resources, as the keynote speaker.



The luncheon began with time to meet and greet fellow members of the lively crowd, consisting of alumni, current and emeritus faculty, some current students and distinguished guests from the offices of Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson and Congresswoman Doris Matsui, along with Folsom Mayor Kerri Howell and representatives from regional water boards and sanitation districts.

After pointing out that a few years ago he had challenged each luncheon attendee to invite just one person – obviously a successful ploy – Dr. Ramzi Mahmood, Interim Dean of the College of Engineering & Computer

Science, introduced new Sac State Provost Fraka Harmsen. She reminded attendees that Civil Engineering was the first separate department from the College of Engineering, and, before introducing Dr. Kerri, explained that the endowment for which he’s named builds scholarships for future civil engineers and research projects and equipment.

“We appreciate all you’ve done,” Kerri told those in attendance. “We need your help to get students here, then once they’re here, we need you to hire them.”

Department Chair Dr. Kevan Shafizadeh pointed out some of the students who had recently received scholarships, including the \$1,000 Ken Kerri Endowment Fund Scholarship, sponsored by the Sacramento Post of the Society of Military Engineers (SAME), which went to graduating senior Erikson Betts.

“ “ We’re now in one of the three driest years in the history of California... ” ”

— *John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources*

Secretary Laird then took the stage, joking, “My honors undergraduate thesis was on the history of water in California, so you may end up doing what you write about.”



The focus of Secretary Laird's talk was water, a key concern during this record drought year. "We're now in one of the three driest years in the history of California," he said. "In January 2014, there were 247 fires in California versus zero in January 2013."



He also discussed the risk of salinity intrusion into the Delta, and talked about triage reservoir water releases to protect water quality for East Bay urban water systems and aquatic habitat. One of the greatest challenges during this drought state of emergency, he indicated, is ensuring basic public health and safety via drinking water and sanitation.

"I've been trying to educate people about the water system for three years," he said. "There's been a crash course in the past few months."

The Bay-Delta Conservation Plan was also part of Secretary Laird's presentation. Although he acknowledged it is controversial, he voiced his strong support, saying, "There are dual coequal goals: water reliability and ecosystem health."

His overall message was that California needs to end the "boom and bust" cycle of water by embracing new methods including water storage, the use of water meters, recycling, efficiency and, of course, conservation.

Support the Department

Looking for a way to support the Civil Engineering Department? We have four different funds that enhance our ability to educate students:

- ➔ The Ken Kerri Endowment Fund – Gifts to this fund support faculty and student enrichment activities.
- ➔ The CE Freshman Scholarship Fund – Scholarships are given to outstanding freshmen.
- ➔ The Graduate Environmental/Water Resources Scholarship Fund – Scholarships go to deserving graduate students in the environmental or water resources engineering areas.
- ➔ The Department Trust Fund – These resources support student attendance and participation at conferences and competitions, senior design project team expenses, and equipment for labs when other funds are not available.

To add your support to any of these funds, go to www.ecs.csus.edu/wcm/ce/support.html and follow the directions for online donations. Or mail a check made out to the appropriate fund to the Department of Civil Engineering, Attn: Neysa Bush, California State University, 6000 J Street, Sacramento CA 95819-6029.

On the cover...

Spring 2014 graduate Carlous Johnson Jr. is congratulated by Professor Matthew Salveson and the Civil Engineering faculty during commencement.

Graduate Student Presents Project at UCTC Conference

Amanda Lee, who this spring earned her master's degree in Civil Engineering, presented her master's project at the University of California Transportation Center (UCTC) Student Conference in April. The title of her master's project was "Evaluating Road Safety Audit Implementation in California."



Amanda's advisor was Dr. Ghazan Khan, who along with Dr. Kevan Shafizadeh assisted her in her research. "Dr. Khan specializes in safety, so we looked at some related topics," says Amanda. "I work a lot with the rural counties with my job [at Dokken Engineering], so it

started with seeing how to improve safety out there. He did road safety audit research when he was a Ph.D. student, so I wanted to see how much California agencies were using road safety audits."

"A road safety audit is a formal evaluation of a new or existing roadway whereby a special team is put together to try and identify any safety deficiencies," says Dr. Khan. Even though designers are presumably designing safe roads in the first place, he says the idea is to "have different sets of eyes look at the whole project from different perspectives and see if they can identify some safety deficiencies proactively. That's the key word as far as road safety audits: proactive. Identify the problem before it becomes a problem."

Road safety audits have been performed around the world since the 1980s but are a fairly new concept in the United States, having been introduced the late 1990s. While she wasn't sure what to expect from her research, Amanda says that ultimately, "there still aren't a lot of agencies using the road safety audits."

Amanda compiled a list of 400 transportation agencies throughout California, and Dr. Shafizadeh helped her develop a survey, put it online, distribute it, and collect the results. The goal of the survey was "to see if these local transportation agencies perform road safety audits or not," says Dr. Khan. "If they do, the survey aimed to find out if the audits have been useful, what have been some of the good practices and challenges as far as implementing them." Even those agencies that didn't use road safety audits – about half of respondents – provided useful information about why they weren't being used. Amanda found that liability and financial concerns were most often cited.

Even though Amanda was initially disappointed by what seemed like a "low" response rate, she was assured by Drs. Khan and Shafizadeh that the response she received was quite remarkable for a low-cost, Web-based survey without any direct incentive for responding. "With these surveys generally anywhere above a 5 percent response rate is considered fantastic," says Dr. Khan. "Amanda's survey had an almost 25 percent response rate. I've never seen that in my entire research career." Amanda completed her master's degree while working full time. "I've been working in the transportation engineering field for two years now," she says. "I do highway design at Dokken Engineering."

Still, the UCTC Student Conference was her first time speaking in front of a group other than Sacramento State students and professors. "It was a good experience because it was a student conference, so being able to do it as a student makes me feel more comfortable for later on in my career. I didn't have to have that first experience as a professional, but rather as a student.

"I want to thank my professors, Dr. Khan and Dr. Shafizadeh, for their support through both the graduate program and my master's project."

Roundabout Research Presented at International Conference



Dr. Ghazan Khan's research on roundabouts was presented at the fourth International Conference on Roundabouts, hosted by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) in Seattle this April.

Khan coauthored the research and findings with former colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS)

Laboratory, which presented at the conference. Before accepting a faculty position at Sacramento State in 2013, Khan was working at the TOPS lab and continued work on the project (even after moving to Sacramento) until its completion in November.

"Modern roundabouts are a new and upcoming trend in the U.S.," says Khan. "They have been around the world for some time – in the U.K. they've been there since the 1960s. The U.S. had their first modern roundabouts in the 1990s and just in the last 10 years, they've really picked up. All of a sudden there's a big push on how to design and implement the roundabouts to U.S. drivers and population. You can't pick up what is in Europe and put it here. It just won't work."

In Wisconsin, roundabouts are more widespread – more than 200 exist and more are planned, whereas in California there are fewer than 30 on state highways (the number on local roads is unknown). "Wisconsin has gone through a lot of good and bad experiences, so other states can learn from those," says Khan. The research centered on a before-and-after comparison of auto collisions at about 30 sites in Wisconsin where intersections had been converted to roundabouts.

"What we found was that fatal and injury crashes were reduced by approximately 40 percent at locations converted to roundabouts, which is huge," he says. "However, the total

number of crashes went up by 12 percent due to [lack of] familiarity. These 'modern roundabouts' are designed to slow traffic down, by which you can eliminate some of the T-bone [broadside] crashes you'd see at a traditional intersection. That speed reduction results in less severity but you get more of the fender-bender type of crashes; that's why the total number went up."

This particular conference drew people from all over the world; participants came from countries including Japan, Germany, the Netherlands and Canada, the latter of which Khan felt was especially helpful due to the similarity of our northern neighbor's transportation system to that of the U.S. "Their unique solutions and designs can be implemented here in the U.S.," he says. "TRB has been instrumental in trying to encourage international participants to share their experience but also encourage local agencies, state DOTs or county officials, and transportation people to come in and share their experiences because there are some states and localities that are much farther ahead."

To view the presentation, visit:

http://teachamerica.com/RAB14/RAB14_TAC.htm

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Steve Balbierz: It's All About Company Culture



The Gene Simmons action figure is one of the first hints that things are different at Wood Rodgers. He sits atop a shelf at this Sacramento firm where Sacramento State alumnus Steve Balbierz is a cofounder and board member.

The miniature Gene Simmons has a storied past. Originally won during a White Elephant gift exchange at one of Wood Rodgers' annual stockholder holiday parties hosted by Steve and his wife, Gene has become a very sought-after trophy when he makes an appearance at each subsequent year's gift exchange. He has resided at several of the firm's different locations (Wood Rodgers also has offices in Reno, Oakland, Pleasanton, Salinas and Vista), been kidnapped and held for ransom (along with a photograph with Barbie doll groupies). He's just one symbol of the fun culture Steve promotes at Wood Rodgers.

"When Rich Wood, Mark Rodgers and I talked about having our own company, we always wanted it to be different because we didn't want it to be corporate America," says Steve of the firm the three of them – all Sacramento State graduates – started in 1997. "From day one the culture has been so important. The energy and momentum we created from that culture was contagious and exciting."

Indeed, engineers at the tree-lined Sacramento office grounds will occasionally be seen wearing shorts and flip flops. The break room is stocked with food for the staff to enjoy. Afternoon barbecues in the courtyard are not uncommon. "In the early years, we closed the office one day and took everyone to a Giants game," says Steve.

But make no mistake – they play hard but also work hard. "Top to bottom, Wood Rodgers is loaded with talent. We are a one-stop shop," he says. "Land development, site design, structural, water resources, transportation engineering, mapping and surveying, land planning, landscape architecture, GIS, LEED and sustainable design, geotechnical, water supply, and environmental.

"When we first started it was 100-hour work weeks, never seeing your family, a lot of sacrifices; but it was all worth it," he continues. "We didn't turn down any work. We accepted all the jobs and figured out how to get it done."

Although they're well past that phase, things can still get intense. Steve describes a structure of "flat management," meaning it's not the traditional hierarchy where managers are removed from the everyday work. "I call it servant leadership," he says. "Our partners are plugged into their jobs. If we have something that has to be worked on this weekend, the partners are here with the guys, not checking back in on Monday to make sure it got done. They know we'd do

anything for them, and in turn they'll do anything for the company."



With just over 200 employees companywide, Wood Rodgers has hired many engineers (and interns) over the years from Sacramento State. Steve has been attending the College of Engineering and Computer Science career fair for 15 years, and says his advice to students is always the same: "You've got to

work on yourself and be able to communicate effectively while juggling your schedule and priorities," he says. "I've met engineers who never had [less than] a B in their life, but I couldn't employ them because they can't hold a conversation.

"It all comes down to developing strong relationships with coworkers, clients, contractors, local agencies. If I go to a career fair, I may talk to 100 kids and the ones I remember aren't the ones who have a 4.7 GPA, it's the ones who impress me with their work ethic and personality, and whether they can handle pressure. That's what I look for."

Attending those career fairs for so many years attests to the fact that Steve believes Sacramento State produces high-quality engineers, and it's about more than just the work they do. "I wouldn't trade my Sac State years for anything," he says. "Besides the schooling, I met so many of my longtime friends there that I have now. I still stay connected."

Steve's approach to life is evident in his hobbies – he enjoys golf, poker and shooting pool, as well as philanthropic work. He's been a longtime supporter of Keaton Raphael Memorial, a charity benefiting children with cancer and their families. "My M.O. in life is that I think we all have to—it sounds cliché, but, leave the world a better place," Steve says. "I want to have a positive impact on people I talk to, or the school I went to, or charity I volunteer for or employees in my company. I count my blessings every day."

At Wood Rodgers, he's the self-described "culture guy," always thinking of new events or initiatives to bring fun into the workplace. "For me, one of the most satisfying things is at our Christmas party when spouses come up to me and say my husband or my wife loves to work for your company," Steve says. "To me that's the true test; when you hear it from the spouse. It all rolls back into the culture of the company. People want to feel valued and that their contribution is important to the success of the company."

Graduate Student Project/Theses

Fall 2013

Gerry Lenehan, "A Review of Hydraulic Conductivity Values: Sacramento and San Joaquin Levee Systems." Advisor: Aryani.

Paul Sorci, "Rapid Drawdown Comparison: The Duncan, Wright, and Wong Three-Stage Analysis to a Transient Drawdown Analysis – American River North Levee, Sacramento, CA." Advisor: Aryani.

Colin Stock, "The Use of Geofoam in Geotechnical Engineering Applications." Advisor: Aryani.

Anthony Tran, "Current Practice of Identification of Expansive Clay Soils and Foundation Design." Advisor: Aryani.

Spring 2014

Sean de Guzman, PE, "Potential of Seismic-Induced Transverse Cracking at Perris Dam, California." Advisor: Aryani.

Amy Doman, "Three-Dimensional Equivalent Static Analysis and Design Methodology of a Reinforced Concrete Floating Offshore Wind Turbine Platform." Advisor: Fell.

Clint Gregory, "Phosphorous Removal in Bioretention with Engineered Soils." Advisor: Johnston.

Kurt Horiuchi, "Structural Health Monitoring with the Modal Strain Energy Method During Seismic Loading." Advisor: Fell.

Amanda Lee, "Evaluating Road Safety Audit Implementation in California." Advisor: Khan.

Lucas Miner, "Effect of Abutment Skew and Horizontally Curved Alignment on Bridge Reaction Forces." Advisor: Fell.

Joshua Plenert, "Seismic Upgrade of an Existing Masonry Building." Advisor: Fell.

Jason Quiñones, PE, "Analysis of Protected-Permitted Left Turns in Sacramento." Advisor: Shafizadeh.

Summer 2014

Addisu Workineh, "Analysis of the Relationship Between Traffic Conflicts and Level of Service at Four-Legged, Signalized Intersections in Sacramento." Advisor: Shafizadeh.

Pavel Zakusilo, "A Study of Dedicated Dual Right Turns in the Sacramento Area." Advisor: Shafizadeh.

SWE Shadow Day Exceeds Expectations

The Society of Women Engineers' (SWE) Sacramento State chapter breathed new life into its annual Shadow Day on April 17, shaking things up from previous years and ending up with a smashing success.

A collaboration among all five disciplines in the College of Engineering and Computer Science, Shadow Day allows female middle- and high-school students to see what it's like to be an engineering student at Sacramento State. "We're here to support women in engineering and to encourage more women to pursue engineering and science," says Lauren Oliver, Sacramento State's SWE chapter president. "In past years there have been 20 to 30 participants. This year, we reached out to a lot of different schools and had over 60 young women participate."

To increase involvement, SWE members reached out to their friends and former schools, and Jaime White, Minority Engineering Program (MEP) Honors Partnership Coordinator, worked with MESA directors in the area. In the end, SWE accepted nine more students than intended. "We didn't want to say no," says Lauren.

In the past, Shadow Day consisted of literally shadowing one engineering student for an entire day, but this year the program got a makeover.



After a breakfast provided by the Dean's office, Interim Dean Ramzi Mahmood, Ph.D., PE, gave an inspirational introduction to engineering. "He got them thinking about how something as simple as turning on the tap or driving your car; your phone or computer – everything in your life in some way relates back to engineering," says Lauren. "That was a good start to the day.

"From there we broke off so that half the women went to tour the ECS building, Santa Clara and Riverside [Halls] and saw the different labs. The other half was in the engineering quad visiting with engineering clubs and speaking to students on a one-to-one basis about what they do. The ladies got to hop into the Hornet Racing formula car."

The groups then rotated so that each student could experience both events. Next was a chance to choose from five different engineering classes to attend. The Civil Engineering options included water coagulation, surveying



(which allowed them to go out onto the levee and practice using surveying equipment), and the most popular, an earthquake engineering competition using K'Nex to build a structure and test its stability during a simulated earthquake.

After lunch, students again chose from five class options, including soil classification and concrete mixing, both of which allowed students to get their hands dirty. "All the classes were popular, but I thought the Civil Engineering classes were the best," says Lauren.

The day ended with a panel of women professors, students and graduates. "Any questions the young women had or were wondering about engineering and college, they were able to ask the panel," says Lauren. "We had prepared a list of questions to ask in case it was quiet, but we didn't have to use a single one. They kept it going the entire time."

Lauren is quick to point out that this event was a hugely collaborative effort among Sacramento State faculty,

staff and students. "We couldn't have done it without professors helping coordinate between different departments, and staff who gathered information to put in folders for the participants," she says. "Everyone was really excited to help out. We used student volunteers to help run the classes so they could assist professors and answer questions."

Ashley Gregory, a computer science major, also coproduced the event along with Lauren: "I couldn't have done it without her," says Lauren. "Another huge supporter was the Dean's Office. They were very supportive of our event and tried to make it the best it could be."

Nearing graduation in the fall, Lauren says she's a "CE major and proud of it. I've been involved in a couple of different organizations, but this year being president of SWE has been the most rewarding thing I've done at Sac State."

Third Annual Civil Engineering Golf Tournament

Amid billowing white clouds in a cobalt blue sky, participants couldn't have asked for better weather for a day on the green at Mather Golf Course on May 9.

With 56 players, it was a day of fun, catching up with old friends and colleagues, and most of all, camaraderie. The first group to finish included Marco Palilla, PE ('81, MS '84), of HDR Engineering; Kent Craney, PE ('88, MS '92), of the County of Sacramento; and Bill Busath, PE ('90, MS '12), of the City of Sacramento.



"Ken Kerri is a legend," said Craney. "[When teaching] he always had two chalkboards filled before you got into the classroom. You'd be writing notes and he'd be erasing the first board. We had to slow him down."

“ The best part is seeing alumni from Sac State and helping the school meet its fundraising goals. ”

— Marco Palilla

"Anytime you can get out in the sunshine, that's a good day," said Palilla. "The best part is seeing alumni from Sac State and helping the school meet its fundraising goals." The good-natured ribbing and laughter gave way to a discussion about Professor Emeritus Ken Kerri, PE, who was traveling on the day of the tournament.

While waiting for the other groups to return to the clubhouse, each had an opportunity to reflect on the event, their former professors and their experience at Sacramento State. Palilla recalled recently treating Dr. Kerri and his wife to dinner after a conference that they had attended. "I like taking him out," he said. "I feel I can never repay him enough."

When thinking of Professor Ramzi Mahmood, PE, Busath remembered him saying "It's my job to go as fast as I can and your job to slow me down."

Speaking of Dr. Mahmood, this was his first tournament (he has been overseas during the two previous tournaments). "It was my first time playing golf," he said. "Therefore, success in my view was to be able to hit the ball. I accomplished that. However, the success of the event was to be able to spend time with colleagues. This time I played with the Dokken Engineering group. Most importantly, the event was successful because we are a step closer to our goal of building a sustainable endowment fund for the Civil Engineering Department."

Another foursome of Sacramento State grads included Becky Money, PE ('01, MS '06), Paul Sorci, PE ('05, MS '13), Steven Wiesner, PE ('05, MS '12), and Ted Oien ('92), all of Kleinfelder. "Last year our team played with a student," said Becky. "They're doing [CE] 190 project [presentations] today; that's why we got stuck with Ted."

Joking aside, Oien and Money have both taught classes for the Department as part-time lecturers. As a lecturer, "I always thought it was fantastic to hear the industry talk to the students," says Money.

Recalling his experiences as a student listening to professionals speak in class, "It was inspiring to see where you could go," said Wiesner.

Over on the Wood Rodgers team, cofounder Steve Balbierz, PE ('89), enjoyed lunch with Paul Petrowsky, PE, a longtime consultant to his firm. They were expecting to win first place. "We've been longtime supporters of Sac State," said Balbierz. "All the founders of Wood Rodgers are Sac State graduates."

Added Petrowsky, "This is a wonderful event. We had a very fun time."

Mike Penrose, PE (MS '93), of the County of Sacramento, who also helped to organize the event, summed up the day succinctly: "Awesome day. Awesome cause."

See page 8 for an Alumni Spotlight article on Steve Balbierz of Wood Rodgers.



NEWS & NOTES

Students

A flurry of scholarships have been bestowed upon Sacramento State Civil Engineering students, including:

CE Freshman Scholarship

To demonstrate its commitment to younger Civil Engineering students and encourage perseverance, Sacramento State's Civil Engineering Department awarded two new freshman scholarships:

Ashley Arreola: "I was both surprised and very grateful upon receiving the scholarship," he said. "As a first-year student, it means a lot to receive financial help from the Civil Engineering Department because it shows that they really want their students to succeed."

Christopher Hatton: "At first when I received the scholarship, I was in disbelief, because this scholarship was the difference between being in debt and not," he said. "I realized that this scholarship marked the beginning of my active involvement in the civil engineering community."

ASCE Women's Auxiliary Scholarship

The local American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Ladies' Auxiliary awarded its \$1,000 scholarships to Leticia Torres and Khanh Nguyen.

COMTO Rosa Parks Scholarship



Ariana Castillo was the recipient of the Rosa Parks Scholarship, the highest award given by the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO). COMTO's Northern California section typically meets in the San Francisco Bay area and offers scholarships to most colleges and universities in California.

"It was such an honor to receive this scholarship," said Ariana. "When accepting my scholarship at their annual banquet, I used this Rosa Parks quote: 'Each person must live their life as a model for others.' Throughout my college career I have worked hard to be a good role model for my younger sister and others. This is one of the largest scholarships I have received and I am incredibly grateful for COMTO's support of my education in my final semester."

After graduating on May 24, Ariana accepted an entry-level, civil engineering position with Quincy Engineering in Sacramento. "Eventually, I hope to pursue a master's or doctorate degree in civil engineering," she says.

Alfred R. Golze Scholarship American Public Works Association Scholarship



Reaa Ali was recently awarded these scholarships. "Winning these scholarships in the past year has been a tremendous source of motivation for me," says Reaa. "I often doubt myself and spend endless hours concerned and contemplating the future."

Having my hard work and dedication to the profession recognized by members of the industry is exceptionally reassuring and encouraging.

"Most significant, however, are the smiles that adorn my parents' faces when they hear of my accomplishments. I would apply for a million scholarships just to see them so happy and proud!"

Planning a December graduation, Reaa looks forward to entering the industry and is considering a possible grad school experience later in 2015. "I am excited about working in the transportation field and making a difference in any way I can. I plan to stay connected with Sacramento State even after graduating, and hope to be a mentor to the future generation of engineers."

CE Student Brent Ducker also received a \$3,500 scholarship from the Sacramento Section American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

ITE Student Leadership Summit

Eight Sacramento State CE students attended the inaugural western district Leadership Summit conducted by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), held in February at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

"There are always events like this for professionals but there hadn't been one for students," said Reaa Ali, Sacramento State's ITE chapter president. "That was the vision, to do it specifically for students with the help of professors and hopefully make it something perpetual."

The three-day event included workshops, activities and networking opportunities. One memorable event was an interview skills workshop that operated in a similar fashion to speed dating – each student rotated between tables, each with a professor conducting a two-minute interview. It required students to think quickly on their feet, much like in a real job interview.

"Sac State students are really pumped up and energetic, so we took that enthusiasm with us," says Reaa. "The best thing is you really get this opportunity to talk to a lot of students

from other chapters and learn what makes them successful, and there are professors you can talk to and get feedback."

The students' enthusiasm paid off – Sacramento State was unanimously voted the Most Spirited Chapter. As a result, Sacramento State was chosen by ITE's Western District to host the summit next year.

Faculty

On March 22, Dr. Benjamin Fell, PE, married Jen Richter in a small ceremony at the UC Davis Shields Grove Gazebo. "We wanted an outdoor wedding and live in Davis, so it was very convenient," he says. With only 25 family members in attendance, the group enjoyed a post-wedding dinner at Village Pizza, "one of our favorite restaurants in Davis." You are invited to send your congratulatory notes to Dr. Fell at fellb@ecs.csus.edu.

Alumni

1970

Javed Siddiqui, PE (MA '73) was one of five people who received a 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award from Sacramento State on April 24. To learn more about Siddiqui and other award winners, visit the Sac State Magazine at: <http://www.csus.edu/sacstatemagazine/> and click on "2014 Distinguished Alumni Awards."



SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF OUR 2013 SPONSORS

The companies or agencies below have made donations or sponsored events of the Civil Engineering Department during the 2013 calendar year. There is still time if your company or agency is interested in sponsoring an event in the 2014 or 2015 calendar years.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 6, 2014:

Eleventh Annual An Evening with Industry

Apr 13-17, 2015:

Alumni Week

Apr 15, 2015:

Seventh Annual Ken Kerri Endowment Fund Luncheon

May 8, 2015:

Fourth Annual Civil Engineering Golf Tournament