Tech, Wake celebrate partnership

By Lynn A. Nystrom

On Friday, Sept. 24, Virginia Tech and Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center will celebrate the establishment of the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest University School of Biomedical Engineering & Sciences (SBES) academic program and the completion of a new interactive video classroom that is helping to make the academic exchange possible.

These video classrooms, which are state-of-the-art facilities, connect the medical training provided by Wake Forest with the engineering education offered at Virginia Tech.

The SBES graduate programs allow the enrolled students to earn either master’s or Ph.D. degrees in biomedical engineering, or a joint M.D./Ph.D. program through the WFU School of Medicine, or a joint DVM/Ph.D. program through the Virginia Maryland Regional School of Veterinary Medicine. Students may take classes on either campus or via distance learning while residing on their home campus in either Blacksburg or Winston-Salem.

Both Virginia Tech and Wake Forest have installed high-tech interactive video classrooms as the primary learning spaces.

NSF award to fund three-year study of IT recruitment, retention

By Sookhan Ho

A research team led by faculty members from the Pamplin College of Business has received a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant of $617,000 to study the recruitment and retention of African-Americans in information-technology-related graduate studies and jobs.

Wanda Smith, associate professor of management, will direct the three-year study. Project members include France Belanger, associate professor of accounting and information systems and director of the Center for Global E-Commerce, Vernard Harrington of Radford University, George Kasper of Virginia Commonwealth University, industry consultants, and student research assistants.

Smith said the project will study the factors behind an encouraging development in the 1990s—the number of African-Americans enrolling in and graduating from graduate and undergraduate IT programs rose significantly. Citing NSF figures, she said the number of undergraduate computer-science degrees awarded to African-Americans, for example, rose 67 percent from 1,997 to 3,330 between 1991 and 2004.

Daily ‘Virginia Tech News’ multi-media service begins Monday

By Mark Owczarski

Staying informed of the wide range of Virginia Tech news stories, campus notices and university events has just become much easier.

Beginning Monday, University Relations will introduce “Virginia Tech News,” a daily, multi-media news and information service that will keep all members of the university community informed with up-to-the-minute campus news and notices.

The core of this service is the new Virginia Tech News website, located off the Virginia Tech News homepage. Complementing the website will be the “Virginia Tech News Daily” e-mail, a brief, daily morning information service that highlights each day’s major headlines and announcements. Approximately one to three news stories and one to three campus notices will be featured in each daily (Monday through Friday) e-mail that will be sent early each morning to those who subscribe to the service.

“We’re very pleased to offer this service to the Virginia Tech community because it will enable us to deliver in-depth information to faculty and staff members, students, and others much quicker than before,” said Larry Hincker, associate vice president for University Relations. “The daily e-mail will identify the important news of the day, and direct the reader to the website where more information will be available.”

The Virginia Tech News website will feature news stories, photographs, campus notices and the university calendar in one easy-to-access location. Information will be added to the website daily or as needs warrant. News stories will focus on major administrative initiatives, educational programs, research projects and the many accomplishments of faculty and staff members and students. Campus notices will include a wide range of campus-specific information.

AdvanceVT releases results of university childcare survey

By Juliet Crichton

AdvanceVT, a National Science Foundation-sponsored comprehensive program at Virginia Tech that promotes and enhances the academic careers of women in science and engineering, has released the findings of a questionnaire that addressed childcare needs of the university community.

“The survey clearly shows that finding appropriate childcare is a challenge for many parents at Virginia Tech, and that there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution,” said AdvanceVT Program Coordinator Peggy Layne. “The responses to the survey can provide the basis for an evaluation of the business aspects of various approaches to meeting the needs of the university community.”

Completed by nearly 1,400 university faculty and staff members and graduate students during the spring 2004 semester, the questionnaire was designed to determine what childcare arrangements are being used, what types of childcare parents would like to have available, and the impact of childcare on parents’ ability to do their jobs.

More than half of the 1,400 survey respondents report having children age 12 or younger, and over a third indicate plans to have or adopt a child in the next five years. Most respondents report using full-day childcare, five days a week, at a licensed or certified day-care provider.

Analysis of the survey indicates that an overwhelming majority of respondents—both with and without children—feel that a childcare facility should be available either on or near campus. In addition, those respondents with children generally indicate strong interest in using such a facility, and nearly half report that securing adequate childcare is difficult.
Events

Editor’s note: For timely and expanded events information, go to the Virginia Tech Events Calendar at http://www.calendar.vt.edu/main.php.

Friday, 24
Yom Kippur Begins (Sundown), New Faculty Workshop, 3 to 5 p.m., Fralin auditorium: Dan Inman.

Saturday, 25
Yom Kippur.
Football, noon, Lane Stadium: NC State.

Tuesday, 28
GSA Graduate/Professional School Day, 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., Squires Commonwealth Ballroom.
Women Faculty Research Series Program, 4 to 5:30 p.m., DBHCC Executive Conference Room.

Wednesday, 29
“With Good Reason,” 7:30 p.m., WYTF.
College of Science Distinguished Lecture, 5:30 p.m., 3100 Torgersen Hall: Astronaut Roger Crouch.

Thursday, 30
Pay Date for Faculty and Staff Members.

October

Friday, 1
Last Day to Drop.
Sexual Assault Awareness Month Begins.

Saturday, 2
Football, noon, Lane Stadium: West Virginia.

Monday, 4
University Council, 3 to 5 p.m., 1045 Pamplin.

Wednesday, 6
“With Good Reason,” 7:30 p.m., WYTF.
Theatre Arts Performance, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: Anton in Show Business.

Thursday, 7
Women Faculty Research Series Program, 4 to 5:30 p.m., DBHCC Executive Conference Room.
Theatre Arts Performance, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: Anton in Show Business.
Chamber Music, 8 p.m., Blacksburg Presbyterian Church: Burning River Brass.

Friday, 8
Theatre Arts Performance, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: Anton in Show Business.
International Faculty Reception, 5:30 to 7 p.m., Cranwell International Center.

Phi Beta Kappa Chapter updates membership
Virginia Tech’s Phi Beta Kappa chapter, the Mu of Virginia, invites members who are new to the campus or to the Blacksburg community to register with the chapter for mailings, invitations, and announcements by providing name, e-mail address and mailing address to Nita Newswarder, at nitnews@vt.edu, or by calling 1-5422. The chapter engages in service activities, awards scholarships, hosts two luncheons with invited speakers during the academic year, and especially values the opportunity to welcome members to Virginia Tech.

Teaching with technology workshops offered
The Faculty Development Initiative (FDI) has again expanded its free short-course offerings to address the instructional needs of faculty members. While FDI still offers courses on Blackboard, Dreamweaver, web design and others, an attempt has been made to develop workshops that integrate those skills within a more applied, pedagogical framework. As a result, many new topics are concerned with learner-centered instruction as well as practical applications of the Blackboard course management system.

Trifles and dates for these new courses are as follows:
To register and view full descriptions for the above workshops, visit http://www.fdi.vt.edu/fall/2004 and click on “Register Now.” The web site also contains listing for all of FDI’s fall offerings. Although courses are designed for instructional faculty members, graduate students and staff members may register as well.

For more information, contact Ed Schwartz at 1-4975, or e-mail ed.schwartz@vt.edu.

Water resources research symposium set
The Virginia Water Resources Research Center’s annual research symposium will be held October 4-6, 2004 at the Don and Mary Doreen Brown Hotel and Conference Center on the Virginia Tech campus. “Assessing and Managing Virginia’s Water Resources” is the theme of this year’s symposium.

Featured speakers include Brad Fenwick, vice president for research; Joseph H. Maroon, director of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; Kenneth Reckhow, director of the Center for the Analysis and Prediction of River Basin Environmental Systems, Duke University; and Virginia Senator Martin E. Williams.

The symposium presents the most recent research findings and technical innovations and facilitates discussions by individuals interested in water-resources management and assessment. Speakers will address storm-water-management issues such as low-impact development, watershed monitoring issues such as fecal contamination and source tracking, TMDL development and implementation, GIS applications and decision support systems, water supply, groundwater flow, contaminant transport, and advanced wastewater treatment.

For registration information, go to www.vwrrc.vt.edu or e-mail Jane Walker at janewalk@vt.edu or Judy Poff at japoff@vt.edu.

MAOP office moves
The Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program (MAOP) office has moved from 101 Price Hall to 122 Hillel Hall. MAOP telephone and fax numbers will not change; however, the mail code will now be 0260.

The new location will give MAOP greater visibility on campus and allow synergy with related student programs. Hillel Hall also provides access to much better programming space for MAOP family meetings. MAOP will continue its mission and commitment to serve a diverse student body at Virginia Tech.

For more information, call 1-5023.

Free drop-in child care offered
“Kids Night Out,” a drop-in evening of child care for children aged 3-12 will be offered Tuesdays evenings, from 6 until 8:30 p.m. until November 2. The location is the Women’s Center, Price House, behind McBryde Hall. Children of any Virginia Tech student, aged 3-12 (must be toilet trained) may participate. There is no need to pre-register, and the service is free. For more information, e-mail jmnels@vt.edu.

Export-control-compliance training set
A training session on export control compliance will be held Tuesday, Sept. 28, from 10:30 to noon in 1045 Pamplin. More and more emphasis is being placed on compliance with export control laws. Individual faculty and staff members can be subject to fines and/or jail time for violating export control laws. The training will be presented by Regina Turner, manager Export Office, John Hopkins University Applied
Changes noted in offices serving students, employees with disabilities

Over the past year, several changes have been made in the offices that serve students and employees with disabilities. There have also been changes in assistive technologies that are available as well as new guidelines to make your web pages accessible to all users.

The Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator’s office has been relocated from the Office of Equal Opportunity to Personnel Services. The ADA coordinator is available to conduct training on ADA and employment, provide access/accommodations for faculty members, student employees and guests; and to assist departments in implementing accessibility policies, procedures, conferences and training sessions are accessible. An online map showing accessible routes is available at http://www.nps.gov/va/.

According to Communications Network Services (CNS), more than 85 percent of the university’s academic and administrative spaces now have wireless network service available. As a result of the Liberal and SUNY 2002-2003 obligations, from a pilot to a production wireless local area network (LAN). Wireless LAN access is being provided to departments as a supplement to the traditional "wired" Ethernet service. Effectively immediately, Ethernet service and Wireless LAN service will be bundled together for departmental users. There is no rate increase for this enhancement to the traditional Ethernet service. The current monthly rates of $7.75 for 10Base-T service and $10 for 100Base-T service will continue to apply to these services with the Wireless LAN enhancement. Departmental users may choose Wireless LAN without wired Ethernet service, for a monthly rate of $7.75.

Many students, employees and community members are finding the new wireless access very attractive, and they are using it for a number of reasons.

A wireless networking technology, while providing the benefit of mobility, provides only a fraction of the capacity of traditional Ethernet, and the quality of the service can vary greatly over time. Some factors which may affect the quality of service are the number of users on the same access point, building construction and antennas.

International center to host reception

The Cranwell International Center will host a reception in celebration of the university’s international faculty members, scholars, researchers on Friday, Oct. 1 from 5:30 until 7 p.m.

The celebration will be an informal occasion for the university’s international professionals to come together. This is the first time the center has hosted an event for international faculty members, scholars and researchers. Spouses and family members are welcome, and guests are encouraged to wear their normal university attire.

For more information, contact the center at 1-6527 or e-mail jutter@vt.edu.

Orange Effect T-shirts now available

The Student Government Association’s 2004 Orange Effect T-shirts are officially on sale.

The official "Orange Effect" weekend begins Friday, Sept. 24, and runs through Sunday, Sept. 26. On game day, fans are encouraged to wear the 2004 Orange Effect T-shirt. Faculty and staff members, alumni, and friends will be able to purchase Orange Effect T-shirts on line at vt.universitysportswear.com.

Six Flags America offers discount

Six Flags America in Largo, Maryland is hosting Government Appreciation Days on Saturday, Sept. 25 and Sunday, Sept. 26. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling 1-8508 for $16.49 per person. (Children 3 and under are free). Credit-card orders can be placed at www.sixflags.com/parks/americana. In the upper-right-hand corner use Promotional Code 04GOVTDAYS and print the ticket.

ODK accepting membership applications

Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society, is now accepting membership applications for undergraduate students, senior, or graduate student, having a minimum 3.0 GPA overall and excelling in at least one of five areas: scholarship; athletics; campus/community service, social/religious activities, campus government; journalism, speech, mass media, creative/ performing arts. Faculty and staff members are requested to encourage qualified students to apply. ODK is also accepting nominations by ODK members for faculty, staff, and alumni members. Contact Nicki Cantrell at cantrell@vt.edu for more information. Student applications can be picked up and turned in to 319 Squares, and are available at www.filebox.vt.edu/odk/.

Most academic, administrative spaces now wireless

In the Sept. 17 Special Awards edition, the Commission on Outreach and International Affairs, which selects the recipients of the Alumni Awards for Excellence in Outreach, was incorrectly referred to as the Commission on Outreach. Additionally, the correct title of the award listed as the Alumni Award for Excellence in Outreach, was incorrectly referred to as the Commission on Outreach. The award presented for Excellence in International Programs is now the Alumni Award for Excellence listed as the Alumni Award for Excellence in International Programs.

The Cranwell International Center will host a reception in celebration of the university’s international faculty members, scholars, researchers on Friday, Oct. 1 from 5:30 until 7 p.m.

The celebration will be an informal occasion for the university’s international professionals to come together. This is the first time the center has hosted an event for international faculty members, scholars and researchers. Spouses and family members are welcome, and guests are encouraged to wear their normal university attire.

For more information, contact the center at 1-6527 or e-mail jutter@vt.edu.

Orange Effect T-shirts now available

The Student Government Association’s 2004 Orange Effect T-shirts are officially on sale.

The official “Orange Effect” weekend begins Friday, Sept. 24, and runs through Sunday, Sept. 26. On game day, fans are encouraged to wear the 2004 Orange Effect T-shirt. Faculty and staff members, alumni, and friends will be able to purchase Orange Effect T-shirts on line at vt.universitysportswear.com.

Six Flags America offers discount

Six Flags America in Largo, Maryland is hosting Government Appreciation Days on Saturday, Sept. 25 and Sunday, Sept. 26. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling 1-8508 for $16.49 per person. (Children 3 and under are free). Credit-card orders can be placed at www.sixflags.com/parks/americana. In the upper-right-hand corner use Promotional Code 04GOVTDAYS and print the ticket.

ODK accepting membership applications

Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society, is now accepting membership applications for undergraduate students, senior, or graduate student, having a minimum 3.0 GPA overall and excelling in at least one of five areas: scholarship; athletics; campus/community service, social/religious activities, campus government; journalism, speech, mass media, creative/performing arts. Faculty and staff members are requested to encourage qualified students to apply. ODK is also accepting nominations by ODK members for faculty, staff, and alumni members. Contact Nicki Cantrell at cantrell@vt.edu for more information. Student applications can be picked up and turned in to 319 Squares, and are available at www.filebox.vt.edu/odk/.

Changes noted in offices serving students, employees with disabilities

Over the past year, several changes have been made in the offices that serve students and employees with disabilities. There have also been changes in assistive technologies that are available as well as new guidelines to make your web pages accessible to all users.

The Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator’s office has been relocated from the Office of Equal Opportunity to Personnel Services. The ADA coordinator is available to conduct training on ADA and employment, provide access/accommodations for faculty members, student employees and guests; and to assist departments in implementing accessibility policies, procedures, conferences and training services are accessible. An online map showing accessible routes is available at http://www.maps.vt.edu/.

Many students, employees and community members are finding the new wireless access very attractive, and they are using it for a number of reasons.

A wireless networking technology, while providing the benefit of mobility, provides only a fraction of the capacity of traditional Ethernet, and the quality of the service can vary greatly over time. Some factors which may affect the quality of service are the number of users on the same access point, building construction and antennas.

According to Communications Network Services (CNS), more than 85 percent of the university’s academic and administrative spaces now have wireless network service available. As a result of the Liberal and SUNY 2002-2003 obligations, from a pilot to a production wireless local area network (LAN). Wireless LAN access is being provided to departments as a supplement to the traditional “wired” Ethernet service.

Effectively immediately, Ethernet service and Wireless LAN service will be bundled together for departmental users. There is no rate increase for this enhancement to the traditional Ethernet service. The current monthly rates of $7.75 for 10Base-T service and $10 for 100Base-T service will continue to apply to these services with the Wireless LAN enhancement.

Departmental users may choose Wireless LAN without wired Ethernet service, for a monthly rate of $7.75.

Wireless networking technology, while providing the benefit of mobility, provides only a fraction of the capacity of traditional Ethernet, and the quality of the service can vary greatly over time. Some factors which may affect the quality of service are the number of users on the same access point, building construction and antennas.

According to Communications Network Services (CNS), more than 85 percent of the university’s academic and administrative spaces now have wireless network service available. As a result of the Liberal and SUNY 2002-2003 obligations, from a pilot to a production wireless local area network (LAN). Wireless LAN access is being provided to departments as a supplement to the traditional “wired” Ethernet service.

Effectively immediately, Ethernet service and Wireless LAN service will be bundled together for departmental users. There is no rate increase for this enhancement to the traditional Ethernet service. The current monthly rates of $7.75 for 10Base-T service and $10 for 100Base-T service will continue to apply to these services with the Wireless LAN enhancement.

Departmental users may choose Wireless LAN without wired Ethernet service, for a monthly rate of $7.75.
CHANGE  Continued from 4

students. Students who ask for any modifications due to a disability should be referred to the SSD office. All videos that are purchased or developed by a department should be open or closed-captioned. Contact Susan P. Angle, 1-3788 (voice), 1-1740 (TTY); spangle@vt.edu; www.ssd.vt.edu; 150 Henderson Hall (0185). Federal guidelines require that webpages be accessible for people with disabilities. The Faculty Development Institute (http://www.fdi.vt.edu) offers classes each semester on making websites accessible, with one-to-one follow-up assistance to individuals available through the New Media Center located in 1140 Torgersen. Contact Shannon Phillips, NMC manager, 1-5377; http://www.nmc.vt.edu.

DAILY  Continued from 1

information, such as parking notices, Personnel Services announcements, event reminders, and various administrative policies or updates. The university community is encouraged to submit notices for inclusion in campus notices. All Virginia Tech-affiliated organizations may post calendar items to the university calendar. The site will also have links to other sources of campus and community information. News stories will be archived for future reference and campus notices and university calendar listings will be posted until the information or event has expired. The daily e-mail will be available to anyone on a subscription basis. Messages will be delivered overnight and be on your computer first thing every Monday through Friday morning. To subscribe to the service, send an e-mail to listserv@listserv.vt.edu and write in the body of the message, “subscribe VTnews firstnamelastname” (“firstnamelastname” is the name of the person subscribing to the service). Information how to unsubscribe is posted on the bottom of each daily message.

The university will continue to send emergency “broadcast” e-mail and voicemail messages in the event that an urgent message needs to be conveyed to students, the faculty and staff, or the entire university community. “Historically, our campus newsletter, Spectrum, has been the primary way in which we have communicated university information to faculty and staff members,” Hincker said. “Because Spectrum is published once every two weeks, and has limited space, we are not able to be as timely and as in-depth with new and updated information as we would like. The Virginia Tech News website and Virginia Tech News Daily e-mail will enable us to inform the community as news happens, and in greater depth. We plan to discontinue Spectrum at the end of the year.”

Hincker added that a printed weekly summary of information posted on the Virginia Tech News website will be produced for Virginia Tech employees who do not have daily access to e-mail. University departments with large populations of employees without computer access will be asked to post the daily e-mail on public bulletin boards for all employees to read.

“We now live in a world where news and information is distributed continuously around the clock,” Hincker said. “Our new Virginia Tech News service will enable us to provide information and retain the absence of a thriving job market, especially for under-represented groups,” she said.

Their project, Belanger said, will focus on the characteristics of African-Americans who succeed in IT careers. It will examine the impact of rarely studied intrapersonal factors such as learning style, visual-spatial intelligence, and resilient personality as well as interpersonal factors such as mentor and on-campus relationships on African-Americans’ “job-fit” perceptions.

Their multidisciplinary, culturally diverse research team, Belanger said, has developed a model that describes how students select, persist in, and graduate from IT programs and make the transition to the IT workplace, including faculty jobs at colleges and universities. The NSF grant will enable the researchers to test their model and its applicability to African-Americans.

The researchers will conduct three waves of surveys to examine groups of participants—college juniors and seniors, first-year graduate students, and first-year employees. They will develop an intervention/training program, Web groups, and practitioner-student mentorships.

Smith and Belanger said their study has potential practical benefits to the scientific, educational, and business communities, and society as a whole. The benefits include increasing African-American student awareness and attitudes about academic careers in IT, improving teaching methods that leverage African-American students’ visual-spatial intelligence, and improving the processes by which African-American IT workers will be trained, recruited, and retained.

“For the United States,” Smith and Belanger said, “employment of a qualified diverse workforce is both an economic and a social imperative. Economic global competition places a premium on the availability of qualified diverse workforce. Studies have shown that diversity provides multiple perspectives and stimulates novelty, innovation, and evolution in both academe and business.”

To take academe as one example, they said, a loss of diversity “translates into myopic research pursuits, limited institutional creativity and innovation, and, ultimately, uniformity in shaping the future of society.”

ADVANCEVT  Continued from 1

Essentially, the responses reveal that a childcare facility located on or near campus would alleviate many of the difficulties parents face, including help on those days when the university would be open but local childcare providers are closed.

Respondents note that improving the availability and flexibility of childcare options accessible to university employees would help recruit and retain excellent employees at Virginia Tech in the future.

A summary of these findings was presented to local childcare providers at the Blacksburg Community Center on Sept. 20. A complete report of the findings is available at www.advance.vt.edu, and paper copies of the report may be requested from Barbara Johnson at 1-7682.

For more information, contact Layne at 1-9948 or playn@vt.edu. To learn more about AdvanceVT, go to http://www.advance.vt.edu.

TECH  Continued from 1

for the SBES program. A key feature of the new learning environment is the ability for the professor to easily interact with students using multiple types of technologies, including new, scalable, state-of-the-art interactive video conferencing. Learning tools such as Centra One and Blackboard designed for the World Wide Web represent two of the key technologies. These tools are supported by the Virginia Tech Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning (IDDL), located in Torgersen 3046, and Special Services (0434), or e-mail assist@vt.edu.

Informal and formal complaint processes are available through the OEO, 1-7500 or eoooffice@vt.edu.

ACADEMIC  Continued from 3

renovation, interference from electrical equipment, and prevailing meteorological conditions. For these reasons Wireless LAN is not intended to replace traditional Ethernet at the desktop. Refer to the wireless website, http://wireless.vt.edu, for information to assist in deciding when the use of wireless LAN is appropriate.

For more information, contact CNS Ordering and Provisioning at cnsdesign@vt.edu or calling 1-6460.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new classroom facility will occur at 4:30 p.m. in 220 Hancock Hall on the Virginia Tech campus. Simultaneously, the Teleconference Center on the Wake Forest campus will hold a ribbon-cutting.

During the past year Glenda Scales, associate dean for distance learning and computing in the College of Engineering at Virginia Tech, and John Boehme, associate dean for academic computing and information sciences, Wake Forest University School of Medicine Office of Academic Computing, were co-project leaders for launching the distance-learning infrastructure project to support the SBES program.

A key feature of the new learning environment is the ability for the professor to easily interact with students using multiple types of technologies, including new, scalable, state-of-the-art interactive video conferencing.