New classified compensation plan provides flexibility, rewards performance

The key objectives defined by the General Assembly were to move toward a performance-based system, to introduce flexibility to meet agency needs, to address pay concerns raised by employees and managers, and to improve the performance-evaluation process.

According to Woodard, “The new plan will address many problems found in the current system and includes some significant changes. The process of converting to the new plan will not be easy, but we are convinced that with careful implementation, the plan will provide significant opportunity for improvement in employee compensation and recognition practices. We are committed to providing the training and support needed to make the new plan work.”

The plan will replace the current systems of 25 pay grades with nine pay bands without steps. Pay bands will group three current salary grades, with approximately 10 percent more added to the top of each band. The new plan will provide more flexibility for employees to grow in their current positions without having to change jobs.

The proposed plan will collapse 1,650 job classifications into approximately 275 broad job groupings called roles. The broader roles will facilitate career planning and employee development.

The current five-level performance rating scale (from exceptional to does not meet expectations) will be replaced with a three-level rating scale. Among the new features are provisions for upward feedback from employees, recognition of team performance, and bonuses for high-performing employees. The plan will increase flexibility in pay practices. Agencies will be able to expand rewards and recognition programs, awarding range salary adjustments for increased responsibilities, and provide pay increases when employees acquire new skills or knowledge applied on the job.

Preparation for implementation of the new compensation plan is currently under way, with conversion scheduled for Sept. 25, 2009. This first phase will include activation of the new pay structure, broader job roles, and the new pay policies. Virginia Tech employees in the Information Technology compensation pilot will also be converted to the new pay plan.

There will be no change to employees’ salaries on September 25 of this year as a result of the conversion to the new plan.

(See NEW CLASSIFIED on 4)

Engineering faculty members recognized

By Lynn Nystrom

Twelve College of Engineering faculty members received the Dean’s Award for Excellence at a reception honoring them on Tuesday, April 4.

Honored for excellent performance in research were Chris Fuller of mechanical engineering (ME), Rakesh Kapur of aerospace and ocean engineering (AODE), and Anbo Wang of electrical and computer engineering (ECE). Students were recognized by engineers and engineering education (ECE), and Kostas Triantis of industrial and systems engineering (ISE) earned awards for excellence in teaching.

The recipients for the service award (see ENGINEERING on 4)

New CEE lab offers latest instructional technology

By Liz Crumbley

Thanks to its Alumni Advisory Board, the Charles E. Via Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) has a new computer laboratory that provides students with the latest in instructional and multimedia technology.

The associate professor and director of CEE computing, said the new media-capable lab is designed for students to learn in pairs, promoting teamwork in computer assignments. The lab’s 16 computers are networked and two hard drives for students can have an identical set of software at any of the stations. CEE students can use the lab as a workroom every day, whenever classes are not scheduled, and there are two overflow computer labs next door.

“The new lab enables us to teach students in how to use software tools in solving engineering analysis and design problems,” Dymond said. “We’re now at the state of the art and the faculty members and students are ecstatic about the new facilities.”

Any CEE course that uses software tools can be taught in the lab, including hydraulic design, airport design, geographic-information systems, land development, and geometric design of highways. At the teaching podium, Dymond said, the instructor can control the signals sent to each of two ceiling-mounted projectors. The lab can use video/audio inputs from portable computers, a dedicated podium computer, an Elmo video camera or a VCR.

The $300,000 renovation also includes matrix switching which, when coupled with a high-speed fiber-optic connection, will provide a link to Network Virginia in the future.

The CEE Alumni Advisory Board launched a fund-raising campaign that garnered the major portion of support for renovating the lab, said Bill Knocke, CEE department head. The Virginia Tech Transforming Instructional Space Grant program provided startup funding for the project.

Software for the lab has been donated by Autodesk, Bentley, Geopak and Eagle Point. Dymond said, and design and renovation support were provided by staff members from Instructional Services, the University Architect’s Office and Physical Plant.

The new computing lab, on the third floor of Patton Hall, will be dedicated today at 4:30 p.m.

Founders Day format revised

By Debbie Rhea

In an effort to improve the quality of recognition for award recipients the university has reorganized many of the functions traditionally held during the Founders Day Week celebration.

“We hope that this reorganization of events will provide the university community, as well as the larger community a more fitting and enjoyable opportunity to celebrate the founding of the university, while at the same time giving proper recognition to those outstanding faculty and staff members and students who make this university one of the best in the world,” said Larry Hincker, associate vice president for University Relations.

The plan affords special opportunities to appropriately recognize staff and faculty members, alumni, and students. It also creates a conversation where the president can annually address the community about the current state of the university.

Overall, there are three parts: 1) a Student Honors Banquet to honor major university student awards recipients, 2) a Founders Day Convocation with a keynote speaker and presentation of three of the university’s major awards, and 3) a Full Faculty/Staff Awards Day that will include an annual convocation and later that evening, a banquet honoring faculty/staff award recipients.

Leading off spring semester recognition events will be the Student Honors Banquet, which will honor the most outstanding students of the year. Outstanding students from each college, and other student award recipients. The banquet is scheduled for April 18 but will usually be held on the first weekend in April.

On April 28, the university will celebrate its founding with a traditional convocation (in late April or early May in future years). Held in Burruss auditorium and fest
**EVENTS**

**Friday, 7**
- OWF Coffee Hour, 8-9 a.m., The Easy Chair. Women’s Network, noon, Women’s Center conference room.
- Student Recital, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon: Andrew Simmons.

**Saturday, 8**
- Animal Expo, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., VMRCVM.
- YMCA Hike, 10 a.m., 403 Washington St.: Rock Castle Gorge.
- Student Recital, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon: Brian Nyson.

**Sunday, 9**
- Student Recital, 3 p.m., Squires Recital Salon: Sandra Johnson, John Bible.
- Student Recital, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon: William Adkins.

**Monday, 10**
- Storytelling Program, 7 p.m., 146 Smyth: Osvale Hicks.

**Tuesday, 11**
- Multicultural Program, 4 p.m., 125 Squires: Dialogue Series.

**Wednesday, 12**
- Family Support Program, noon-1 p.m., DBHCC, conference room C: David Wooten.
- “With Good Reason,” 7 p.m., WVTB: Topic TBA Theatre Event, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: “Much Ado about Nothing.”

**Thursday, 13**
- YMCA Slide Show, noon, Cranwell Center: John Murray.
- Theatre Event, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: “Much Ado about Nothing.”

**Friday, 14**
- Salary and Wage Paydate.
- CEUT Program, noon-2 p.m., hillcrest: Lunch and Learning communities.
- Theatre Event, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theatre: “Much Ado about Nothing.”

**Seminars**

**Friday, 7**
- Geological Sciences, 9 a.m. 4069 Derring: Matthew Mikulich, Chevron.

**Activities**

- Storytelling Program, 7 p.m., 32 Parkpur.
- Musical Event, 7:30 p.m., Lyric Theatre: Audubon Quartet: “Seven Last Words of Christ.”
- Student Recital, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon: Andrew Simmons.

**Monday, 10**
- Statistics, 3:45 p.m., 4091 Hixson: Here-Kozl, Michigan State.
- Horticulture, 4 p.m., 101 Saunders: Maurice Ogpu.

**Monday, 14**
- Highlands in Chemistry, 11 a.m., 3 Davidson: Charles载, Wisconsin.
- Geological Sciences, noon, 300 Whittemore: Matthew Mikulich, Chevron.

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Y.E.S. program encourages good nutrition

By Leri Grenier

Residential and Dining Services wants you to eat smarter. That’s why Culinary Services developed the “You’re Eating Smarter” (Y.E.S.) nutrition-education program. In its second year, the program has grown to include personal counseling, residence-hall programs, a web site and other educational opportunities.

RDP Administrative Dietitian Jenny Lindsey coordinates the Y.E.S. program. “The program was designed to give students the nutritional information needed to make healthy eating choices,” Lindsey said. “The most visible part of the program are the table cards that are distributed in the dining centers periodically. Each card contains information on an important nutritional topic. They provide an easy way to learn about nutrition.”

Other components of the program include personal counseling, residence-hall programs, and “Ask the Dietitian,” which gives students an opportunity to talk directly with Lindsey in the dining centers about their nutritional needs.

(See Y.E.S. PROGRAM on 4)
Lessening children’s exposure to pesticides aim of professor’s work with local schools

By Stewart MacInnis

Children will face less exposure to pesticides when they attend school, thanks to the efforts of a Virginia Tech professor. Dini Miller, assistant professor of entomology and an urban pest-management specialist with Virginia Cooperative Extension, is beginning a project with five Southwest Virginia school divisions to reduce the use of pesticides in and around school buildings. She hopes to eventually extend the project state wide.

Her collaboration with school systems in Montgomery, Giles, Pulaski and Floyd counties and the City of Radford starts as Congress is considering a measure to ensure parents know when pesticides are applied in schools. The U.S. Senate adopted a “right-to-know” amendment to the Education Savings Account Bill in mid-March. In addition to notification requirements, the amendment, if passed by the full Congress and signed into law, will require schools to take steps to reduce exposing children to pesticides.

Miller said the pilot IPM program is giving the five Southwest Virginia school systems a head start in meeting that requirement, as well as demonstrating to other school systems the effectiveness of alternative pest control methods. IPM, or integrated pest management, involves treating for pests only when they are detected, and using a variety of strategies to control them. Some of the strategies may not involve any toxic material at all, she said.

Miller said many school divisions control pests in their schools by applying pesticides on-