Pryor named Founders Day 2002 keynote speaker

By Lori Gavaghan, University Relations intern

On Friday, April 26, Virginia Tech celebrates Founders Day 2002. This year marks the 130th anniversary of Virginia Tech’s service to Virginia.

In honor of this distinguished milestone in the life of the university, this year’s keynote speaker will be Charles W. Pryor Jr., Westinghouse president and CEO and Virginia Tech alumnus.

Pryor is responsible for all Westinghouse world-wide commercial nuclear operations and the British National Fuels (BNFL) business group in the United Kingdom.

“We know that the nation’s economic might undergirds our democratic system and national security. Pryor brings to Virginia Tech a wealth of knowledge about the changing face of the global economy and the challenges facing American industry as the world, not the nation, becomes our marketplace. Westinghouse has been through a major structural overhaul this past decade and I feel that Dr. Pryor can address the challenges facing American industry and how American universities can help corporate America maintain its edge,” said President Charles Steger.

Pryor joined Westinghouse as president of the Energy Systems Business Unit in 1997. Leading the Westinghouse acquisition of the ABB-Combustion Engineering nuclear business, Pryor helped transform Westinghouse into a global nuclear power company, with $1.8 billion in revenue and more than 9,300 employees.

Before leading the sale of the Westinghouse industrial businesses to BNFL, Pryor was president and CEO of the Westinghouse Electric Company, responsible for all industrial businesses, including Energy Systems, Government and Environmental Services, and the Science and Technology Center.

Originally the owner and operator of a successful management-consulting firm, Pryor spent 23 years with the nuclear-power operations of Babcock and Wilcox (B&W). From 1991 to 1995 he served as the president and CEO of B&W Nuclear Technologies. French President Francois Mitterand presented Pryor (See Pryor on 3)

Graduate students receive recognition, win awards

By Julie Kane

For the second year, the Graduate Student Appreciation Week (April 1 through 5) formally recognizes the contributions of graduate students and their important role at Virginia Tech. The week consisted of student competitions, a keynote speaker, seminars, recognition by the individual colleges and an awards banquet.

Acting dean of the Graduate School, Joseph Merola said, “I wish to convey my honest and sincere appreciation to all of you who are pursuing graduate studies at Virginia Tech. Your commitment to education and your contributions to the Virginia Tech Community of Scholars are highly valued.”

The dissertation committee selected Ralph Sandfly to receive the 2002 Outstanding Dissertation Award. His dissertation, entitled “Equilibria with a Discrete Damper” was submitted in summer 2001, and is cited as a superb example of effectively communicating a variety of complicated results through prose, mathematics, and illustrations.


Graduate students contribute to the teaching and service missions of the university. The Graduate School established two awards in 1984—the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award and the Graduate Student Service Award. These awards are funded by the Alumni Association.

The Graduate Teaching Award went to Gregory Hartman, a Ph.D. student in mathematics.

The Graduate Student Service Award winner is Marqueea King, a Ph.D. student in veterinary medical sciences.

Medical researchers gather at Swiss immunology conference

By Jeffrey Douglas

Leading medical researchers from Virginia Tech, Johns Hopkins, Georgetown, and Wake Forest Universities recently convened in Switzerland to meet with European scientists during a three-day immunology conference that was also designed to serve as a blueprint for future international collaborations.

The conference, entitled “Vaccine Technology and Immune Responses,” was held at Virginia Tech’s Center for European Studies and Architecture at Riva San Vitale. Scientists from the Center for Molecular Medicine and Infectious Diseases, the Virginia Tech Bioinformatics Institute and senior university officials spent three days sharing scientific presentations and exchanging ideas about ways in which they might forge research partnerships with the Swiss Italian University (USI), the Institute for Research and Biomedicine (IRB) and the biotechnology company Chrono.

“This was truly an event of lasting significance for Virginia Tech,” said University Provost Mark McNamee. “Not only did this conference illustrate the global significance of what we are doing in the biomedical sciences, it demonstrated the value and the promise of the research relationships we are forging with schools like Johns Hopkins, Wake Forest and Georgetown. I think everyone was impressed with the quality of the scholarship and with the robust platform for future collaboration which began to take shape.”

Both the timing and the environment are ripe for such collaboration, according to Gerhard Schurig, associate dean for research and graduate studies in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM) and architect of the meeting held at the Virginia Tech facility.

Under the leadership of immunologist Marco Baggiolini, the region known as “The Italian Switzerland” is experiencing an academic “renaissance,” according to Schurig. Baggiolini helped convince the privately funded Institute for Research and Biomedicine (IRB) to locate at Bellinzona, just 40 kilometers from Riva San Vitale. Immunologist Antonio Lanzavecchia, who formerly led the Basel Institute for Immunology and now heads the IRB, worked closely with Schurig in organizing the conference.

“This is a region of Switzerland that is gaining momentum in the biomedical sciences, and in particular, immunology,” Schurig said. “We now have a situation where Virginia Tech, working through its European facilities, can leverage its biomedical expertise in partnership with other major American universities in a rapidly emerging global research effort.”

After introductory remarks from Baggiolini, Lanzavecchia and Schurig, the three-day conference featured about 20 (See MEDICAL on 4)

Finch selected Fulbright scholar, visiting lecturer

By Jean Elliott

Curtis R. Finch, professor of career and technical education, has been named a senior Fulbright scholar and visiting lecturer in Taiwan. Finch departs in August for a 10-month appointment at National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei where he will teach graduate classes, lead seminars, and conduct research related to curriculum process and outcomes.

Much of Finch’s early international work was centered on workforce preparation in Europe, more recently his interests have expanded to countries in East Asia which have undergone tremendous economic growth.

(See FINCH on 4)

Engineering names Wilkins 2002 outstanding alumnus

By Karen Gilbert

Vance Wilkins Jr., a Virginia Tech industrial engineering alumnus of 1957, will receive the College of Engineering’s 2002 Outstanding Alumnus Award and will be honored at the spring Commencement ceremony on May 11.

“Mr. Wilkins has successfully helped build the positive reputation of the College of Engineering through his good works and career accomplishments, indeed serving as a role model for students and alumni for years to come,” said Malcolm McPherson, interim dean of the college.

A well-known statesman throughout Virginia, Wilkins made political history in January of 2000 when he became the first
Students showcase solar-house designs on Earth Day

Haack to present a public lecture
Susan Haack, professor of philosophy and law at the University of Miami, will present a public lecture Friday, April 19, at 3 p.m. in 209 McBryde entitled “Clues to the Puzzle of Scientific Evidence.”

The lecture is sponsored by the Department of Philosophy and co-sponsored with Science and Technology Studies, both in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Haack is a philosopher in the pragmatist tradition who addresses tendencies in society that are most in need of philosophical clarification. She is the author of Deviant Logic, Philosophy of Logics, Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology, Deviant Logic, Fuzzy Logic: Beyond the Formalism, and Manifesto of a Passionate Modérade: Unfashionable Essays, as well as numerous articles on philosophy of logic and language, epistemology and metaphysics, pragmatism, philosophy of science, and feminism. Her work has been translated into Italian, Spanish, French, German, Polish, Russian, Portuguese, and Chinese.

Music department sponsors Alumni Weekend
The Department of Music is sponsoring the first annual Music Education Alumni Weekend April 26-27.

More than 20 alumni are returning to campus to lead seminars, classes, and conduct ensembles for Tech’s undergraduate music-education majors. Music-education faculty, alumni, and undergraduates will participate in a series of seminars and ensemble performances that will bring the real world of public school music education to Tech’s undergraduate music-education program. Alumni will experience the latest in music-education theory and technique while undergraduates experience the “real world” of music-education alumni.

Earth Day commuter challenge issued
The university’s Office of Transportation and Blacksburg Transit are challenging the campus community to see which mode of transportation is the most efficient: bus, bike or car. At 10:45 a.m. on Monday, April 22 (Earth Day), three individuals will depart from two separate student residential areas in Blacksburg and will “commute” to Torgersen Hall on campus. Each person will ride the bus, one will ride a bike and one will drive their car. The first person from each route to reach Torgersen Hall will win the challenge.

For more information contact Suzanne Ducker, alternative transportation manager at 1-7051 or sducker@vt.edu.

WCS program director to speak
The College of Natural Resources is sponsoring a public seminar by Joshua Ginsberg, director of the Asia Program for the Wildlife Conservation Society. The seminar, “Edge Effects, Home Range, and the Persistence of Large Carnivores in Protected Areas,” will be held from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on April 25 in Fralin auditorium. Before the seminar, a reception will be held at 2 p.m. in the adjacent Fralin atrium.

By Sarah Newbill
Architecture and engineering students will unveil their solar-house design concept which will be the university’s entry in the national Solar Decathlon competition. A series of campus-wide events planned for Earth Day, Monday, April 22, will showcase this project.

The national Solar Decathlon is sponsored by the Department of Energy. Virginia Tech is one of 14 teams competing in a series of 10 categories for best solar house design. A schedule of events for Earth Day, Monday, April 22 follows:

**Wednesday, 24**
**Administrative Professionals Day.**
**Service Learning Expo, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Squires Old Dominion Ballroom.**
**Bloodmobile, noon to 6 p.m., Squires.**
**CommonHealth Program, 10:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC conference room G.**
**Family, Work/Life Resources Program, noon to 1 p.m., DBHCC conference room G.**
**“With Good Reason,” 7 p.m., WVTF.**

**Thursday, 25**
**Take Daughters to Work Day.**
**Bloodmobile, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Squires.**

**Friday, 26**
**Founders Day Program, 3 p.m., Burruss auditorium.**

More information about project can be found at http://www.eren.doe.gov/solar_decathlon/.

Parking changes in effect for Founders Day

Parking changes will be in effect for the Founders Day celebration during the weekend of April 25 and 26. On Thursday, April 25, the 15-minute spaces in front of Burruss Hall will be reserved from 1 until 9:30 p.m. On Friday, April 26, the 15-minute and metered spaces in front of Burruss Hall will be reserved from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. The handicapped and service spaces on Old Turner Street (lot between Randolph and Norris Halls) and the loading dock at Burruss Hall will be reserved from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m.

On Friday, April 26 through Saturday April 27, the Donaldson Brown Hotel/Squires lot along with the Donaldson Brown Hotel Circle will be reserved from 7 a.m. on Friday until midnight on Saturday. On Saturday, April 27, the Owens lot and the Media lot will be reserved from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m.

Contact Parking Services at 1-3200, or parking@vt.edu for more information.

Women’s Center announces 2002 award winners

By Denise Collins

The Women’s Center has announced that the recipients of the 2002 Advancing Women Awards are Julie Sherman, Erin Martin, Kelly Hayes, Linda Mitchell, Tom Brown, Peggy Meszaros, and Bevlee Watford. The awards were presented at a reception on April 4, sponsored by the Women’s Center.

The Advancing Women Awards recognize efforts to promote the advancement of women and address the needs and concerns of women at Virginia Tech. These awards were developed as a way to recognize and honor recipients for their leadership in supporting the mission of the Women’s Center, and were expanded in 2002 to include men.

Three undergraduate students at Virginia Tech were among those recognized. Sherman, a senior E-business technology major, was nominated for her varied work bringing awareness to issues affecting women.

Martin, a senior interdisciplinary studies major, was co-coordinator of the 2002 Take Back the Night Rally and March. She is active in Womanspace, the Montgomery County NOW, and Women’s Month planning.

Hayes, a senior theatre-arts major, is coordinator of SAVES—Sexual Assault and Violence Education by Students—and directed Virginia Tech’s production of “The Vagina Monologues” in February 2002.

Mitchell, a Virginia Tech alumnus, currently serves as pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church. Brown, associate dean of students, coordinates the Project SAFE (Sexual Assault Facts and Education) program and served on the Sexual Assault Task Force.

Meszaros, former provost at Virginia Tech, is a distinguished Chevalier de L’Ordre National de Merite award for developing business relationships between the United States and France. The state of Virginia named him “Outstanding Industrialist of the Year” in 1993.

During his 23 years at B&W, Pryor served as a member of the Board of Directors of DTE Energy and Detroit Edison.

In addition to many business commitments, Pryor still found time to serve his university. He has served on the College of Engineering’s Committee of 100, the Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Advisory Committee, and he is a member of the Ut Prosim Society.

Pryor received three of his degrees from Virginia Tech. He earned his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1966, a master’s in 1968 and his Ph.D. in structural mechanics in 1970. He earned his M.B.A. from Northern Virginia University in 1990.

The convocation will begin at 3 p.m. in Burruss auditorium. Immediately following the program, the Corps of Cadets will hold a Review Ceremony on the Drillfield, followed by a reception for the university also on the Drillfield near the War Memorial Chapel. (In case of inclement weather, the reception will be held in Owens Basquet Room)
Visual Design Studio 4 provides professional experience for students

By Sally Harris

Several needs coalesced to make the formation of the Visual Design Studio 4 (VDS4) an idea whose time had come.

“Because of its national and international reputation, the number of graphic-design majors at Virginia Tech’s College of Arts and Sciences has nearly tripled in the past four years,” according to Josh McGilliard, vice president of Blue Ridge Advertising of Roanoke and managing partner of VDS4.

“The concept of the studio developed because we had so many talented students who would have to go far to get an internship,” said Truman Capone, director of VDS4 and associate professor of art and art history.

The studio would give students professional design experience. Also, there was a need at Virginia Tech to offer students opportunities to do special projects for various entities around campus, such as the Corporate Research Center and the Provost’s Office.

“Another need is for educated people to fill the many empty skilled positions in graphic and information technology (IT) created by the IT revolution,” Capone said. Also, such a studio would contribute to the research mission of the university by allowing teams of students to research and design corporate identities for clients. It also would meet the university’s goal of outreach by providing help to schools and community groups such as Explore Park in Roanoke and would provide exhibition space for student winning design projects.

As a result of all these needs, the Visual Design Studio 4 was born. The VDS4 provides quality design products and expertise.

Studio interns are chosen through a competitive application process that can adjust to the needs of the individual clients. The studio provides the client with everything from the initial idea to the final printing and production stages of a project, “including, but not limited to product and company branding, logos, concept development, multi-media presentations, printed publications, packaging, and web and site design,” according to the VDS4 brochure and direct mailer designed by interns.

“The studio provides students with professional experience that is not often available to undergraduates—designing specific projects for real clients instead of doing hypothetical design exercises,” Capone said.

The Visual Design Studio 4 provides students with the opportunity to gain professional design experience in a collaborative environment in addition to the classroom,” according to Jade Ryan Mimich, VDS4 project manager and senior graphic-design student.

“Through the internship at VDS4, I have gained invaluable experience working with clients on real projects from initial concept to printed piece. My VDS4 experience is an asset in my pursuit of a career in graphic design.”

Junior and senior design majors must meet the highest standards of skill and talent to participate in VDS4. They earn credit and receive a small stipend. The first three interns started with breakfast at Marriott’s Millenium New York publishing company, a Northern Virginia designer, and a Colorado furniture designer, Capone said.

Without the studio, the students will do work for campus groups and service groups around town, it will focus on national and international clients.

“We don’t want to compete with local businesses,” Capone said.

Even before the studio became a reality, graphic-design students had worked with Papa Johns to create a corporate visual identity.

Summer youth leadership conference planned

By Sookhan Ho

The Pannip College of Business will organize a youth leadership conference this summer that will be sponsored on Virginia Tech’s campus by the Virginia Police Officers Foundation.

The event, known as the Commonwealth Youth Conference for Leadership Effective-ness, is aimed at giving rising tenth graders across the state “an opportunity to learn and use leadership skills and become contributing mem-

bers of society,” said Sharon Scott, director of the college’s Management and Professional Development Programs.

The conference, she said, will also give selected Pannip students ministering in business leadership a valuable opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills by working as conference facilitators.

“We will hire a team of seven rising seniors who will undergo 30 hours of training. As facilitators, they will provide instruction and lead the conference programs from start to finish.”

The program will focus on the basics of leadership. “We’d like to help these young people with the opportunity to gain practical experience, develop their leadership potential, and improve the national rankings of Virginia’s businesses,” McPherson said.

Students will be housed in dorms, with a facilitator housed in each suite. Five one-week conferences are planned from June 16 to July 21. For more information, please contact Scott at 1-5566, (scottcg@vt.edu).

FINCH

“Through discussions and further study,” Finch noted, the concept became clearer to me that Taiwan’s workforce-preparation system has made significant contributions to its economic growth.

My appointment to Taiwan is linked with my need to learn more about this system so I may include information about its precepts in my teaching and research.”

This is the second Fulbright award for Finch, who spent the first six months of 1980 in the Republic of Cyprus, another island country, as a consultant to the Greek Cypriot Ministry of Education and Turkish Cypriot Office of Education in technical-education curriculum development, evaluation, and teacher preparation.

Finch has served as a visiting research scholar in Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. He was also an on-site technical-education specialist in Egypt with a team from the Harvard Institute for International Development. He has worked as a consultant to the University of Quebec, as a resource person for programs in England and Italy, and as a representative to the Belize Consulate for Educational Cooperation. He has also managed international graduate programs in Chile, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic.

He is currently an Executive Board member of the European Educational Research Association’s Vocational Education and Training Network.

Finch was director of the Virginia Tech Site for the National Center for Research in Vocational Education for 11 years where he was responsible for research and development management and proposal development, securing over $6 million dollars in federal funding.

The U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program sends 800 scholars and professionals each year to more than 140 countries. The program’s purpose is to build mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and the rest of the world. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement and because they have demonstrated unusual leadership potential in their fields.

ENGINEERING

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Republican speaker of the House of Delegates in Virginia. As speaker, he is also chairman of the Rules Committee. The previous 10 years, he served as Republican leader of the House of Delegates.

Wilkins started his civic career in 1978 when he was first elected to the Virginia General Assembly as a delegate from the Twenty-Fourth District.

“Speaker Wilkins has improved the lives of many by being a pragmatic politician, mindful of his constituents. He actively promotes cooperation in the General Assembly to conquer the current problems in education and transportation. The speaker is in favor of fresh ideas and long-range planning to guide government policy,” McPherson said.

“He is making strong efforts on behalf of all Virginians to develop solutions to the state’s budget problems, and the high unemployment of southwest, south side and inner-city areas,” McPherson said.

Wilkins is dedicated to achieving three major goals for Virginia by 2007. They are to improve the national rankings of Virginia’s research universities; to have 95 percent of Virginia’s third graders reading at grade level; and for the state to have one million acres of land preserved as open space, an increase of 400,000 acres.

Wilkins is credited for improving the operations of the House of Delegates by streamlining the committee structure and limiting the number of bills members can file after certain deadlines.

Before his current role in state government, Wilkins earned his living as a highway bridge contractor. He has also worked as a bridge carpenter, certified welder, beef cattle farmer, printer, and manufacturer.