

SPECTRUM

Virginia
Tech

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

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TODAY'S EDITION
See page 2 for
information on events
and programs.

Tech among top universities in ag research

By Stewart MacInnis

Spending on agricultural research at Virginia Tech increased more than 6 percent in 2000 compared to the year before, according to figures released by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

"This increase in funding is a tribute to the high esteem in which our faculty members are held, which in turn is a reflection of the consistent quality of the work they have produced through the years," said Andy Swiger, dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Despite the increase in funding, Virginia Tech's agriculture research spending dropped two places to the number-seven position in the NSF's nation-wide ranking of programs in 2000.

"Our agricultural research program continues to grow, and our program is still firmly among the top 10 programs in the nation despite slipping in the rankings," said Kriton Hatzios, associate dean for research and director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station. "The programs in some other states grew faster."

Virginia Tech, which was number five in last year's rankings, was overtaken by

(See *TECH* on 3)

President's Letter to Members of the University Community

(Editor's note: President Charles Steger issued the following letter on February 12.)

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing today to provide a follow-up to the article that appeared in *Spectrum* last week regarding the status of the university's efforts to address the budget reductions.

The General Assembly has requested the governor provide plans regarding actions required by agencies and institutions to implement the General Fund reductions of 3 percent in the current year, moving by 4 percent more to 7 percent on July 1, 2002, and by one more percent to 8 percent on July 1, 2003.

The governor asked that we provide a preliminary plan to his staff outlining any actions that may be necessary to meet our budget-reduction targets so that the General Assembly could be briefed. With assistance from the deans, vice presidents and vice provosts, we completed and submitted these plans last week.

Over the next several weeks, you may hear references in the news to the plans we provided to the state. Please know that these are preliminary plans and that we will be continuing to work with departments to develop more detailed plans that will be due by March 1.

These plans will be reviewed with our Board of Visitors at their March meeting, and we will reach our final decisions after meetings with the vice presidents, vice provosts, deans and the

(See *LETTER* on 3)

Budget forum scheduled for February 19

The budget forum to be presented by Provost Mark McNamee and Chief Operating Officer Minnis Ridenour on February 19 at noon will be at the Donaldson Brown Conference Center auditorium for those who would like to attend on campus. In addition, it will be broadcast via V-Tel to the following locations off campus: Northern Virginia Center, room 323; Richmond Center, room 108; Roanoke Center, room 716; Southwest Virginia Center, room 242; Tidewater AREC, auditorium. Transmission for the Alexandria Center will go to the Northern Virginia Center.

Those who would like to participate interactively in the forum may do so by attending at one of the above sites.

Professor named to national food-safety post

By Stewart MacInnis

Professor Merle D. Pierson has been named deputy undersecretary for food safety by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. The appointment, which was effective February 4, makes Pierson the second-ranking federal official concerned with food safety.

"This is an exciting opportunity," said Pierson, who has been a member of the Department of Food Science and Technology since 1970. "I've worked closely with the USDA and other government agencies over the years and look forward to furthering the application of science to meeting our government's public-health goals."

President Charles Steger credited Pierson with bringing international prestige to the university.

"Dr. Pierson has developed a richly deserved reputation among colleagues and policy makers around the globe," Steger said. "I am gratified that the same expertise that has been so well-applied to educating our students, assisting industry, and advising regulators over the years will now be focused at the national policy-making level to ensure the safety of the food supply for all Americans."

The food-science-and-technology department was recently ranked as one of the top such departments in the country, which Department Head Susan Sumner said was due in part to Pierson's contributions. "Food safety is one of the strengths of our department," Sumner said. "We are certainly honored and pleased to have one of our faculty members appointed to such a high-level government position."

Pierson will work with the undersecretary for food safety in providing overall direction to the activities of USDA's

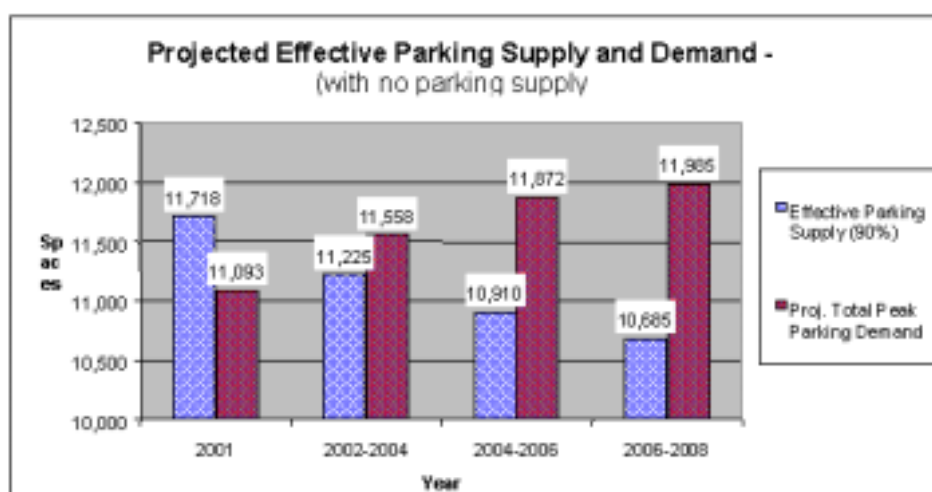
(See *PROFESSOR* on 4)

Parking master plan comment deadline extended

By Karen Cronin

The comment period for the university's Parking and Transportation Master Plan has been extended from February 15 to February 28. According to Director of Transportation Steve Mouras, the extension is a continuation of the open nature of the process which started more than a year ago and has included a customer survey, transportation fair, and the designated Transportation and Parking Committee providing contacts for faculty and staff members and students.

Mouras said the plan seeks to address parking and transportation problems proactively by projecting parking demand through the year 2008. (See accompanying chart for specific projection figures.) New construction in the central campus area removes parking spaces and increases the number of cars needing parking spaces. During the 2002-2004 biennium, the Bioinformatics Building, New Engineering Facility (Phase 1), Biology Building, Agriculture and Forestry Research Laboratory, and Chemistry/Physics Building will result in a loss of 548 parking spaces. These buildings plus a Dining and Student Union Facility, Fine Arts Center Performance Hall, New Vivarium Facility, and Building Construction Facility would bring 865 new faculty/staff members and



The graph above illustrates the projected parking situation on campus without creating new facilities. The right column in each pair represents projected parking demand.

students to the central campus area. Additional projects slated for future years will decrease available parking by another 600 spaces and bring even more people to the campus. The goal of this plan is to have spaces available before new buildings are constructed.

Another goal is to increase pedestrian safety by decreasing traffic. Mouras said traffic is a problem because drivers hunting for parking spaces create traffic.

Surveys and comments have shown that faculty and staff members want convenient

parking. The only way to expand convenient parking is with parking structures, which are expensive. According to Mouras, structures are 10 times more expensive than surface lots. Surface-lot expansion is also a possibility, but these lots can only be expanded on the campus perimeter. Surveys indicate that people find perimeter parking inconvenient.

Even without structures, Mouras said parking-permit fees will increase because the cost of constructing and maintaining lots

(See *PARKING* on 3)

Torgersen appointed to state advisory panel

Governor Mark Warner has appointed former President Paul Torgersen to a seven-member panel established to advise him on appointments to state college boards, the State Council of Higher Education and the Virginia Community Colleges Board.

The panel members will review the qualifications, judgment and experience of the potential appointees. Warner said that board appointments have apparently been made as political statements or rewards to contributors rather than in the "best interests of higher education in Virginia."

Torgersen served as president of the university from 1994 until 1999 and earlier served as dean of the College of Engineering.

ACTIVITIES

EVENTS

Friday, 15

Pay Date for Faculty and Staff Members.

CommonHealth Program, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., Southgate Personnel classroom.

Black History Month Event, 5 p.m., Squires Black Cultural Center.

Saturday, 16

Men's Basketball, 4 p.m.: At St. Johns.

Chamber Music, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon.

Sunday, 17

Engineers' Week.

YMCA Hike, 1:30 p.m., YMCA Parking Lot.

TA Event, 2 p.m., Squires Studio Theater, "Never in My Lifetime."

Women's Basketball, 2 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Seton Hall.

Chamber Music, 3 p.m., Squires Recital Salon.

Monday, 18

Presidents' Day Holiday for Staff Members.

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

CommonHealth Program, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., Southgate Personnel classroom.

TA Event, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theater: Forum Series.

Tuesday, 19

Faculty Senate, 7 p.m., 32 Pamplin.

Leadership Development Workshop, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., DBHCC room C.

CEUT Program, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Hillcrest Dining Hall.

CommonHealth Program, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC conference room A.

Black History Month Event, 7 p.m., Hillcrest dining room.

TA Event, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theater, "Never in My Lifetime." (Through 2-23).

Wednesday, 20

Family, Work/Life Resources Program, noon to 1 p.m., DBHCC conference room G.

CEUT Program, 3 to 5 p.m., Hillcrest Dining Hall.

Black History Month Event, 7 p.m., Squires Multicultural Center.

Women's Basketball, 7 p.m.: At Miami.

Thursday, 21

Staff Senate, noon, 1810 Litton Reaves.

Family, Work/Life Resources Program, noon to 1 p.m., DBHCC conference room C.

STS Lunch Discussion, noon to 1:30 p.m., Squires Cardinal Room.

Friday, 22

Last Day to Drop.

CEUT Program, 1 to 2:15 p.m., Hillcrest Dining Hall.

Black History Month Event, 3 p.m., Fralin auditorium.

SEMINARS

Friday, 15

Highlands in Chemistry, 11:15 a.m., 3 Davidson: Barbara J. Garrison, Penn State.

Tuesday, 19

ECE, 3:30 to 4:20 p.m., 300 Whittemore: Mark McNamee.

Thursday, 21

Geological Sciences, 4 p.m., 4069 Derring: Michael Underwood, University of Missouri.

CSSES, 4 p.m., 246 Smyth Hall: Alexandria Graves.

Friday, 22

Highlands in Chemistry, 11:15 a.m., 3 Davidson: Daniel E. Falvey, University of Maryland.

MCBB, 12:20 to 1:10 p.m., Fralin auditorium: Troy Duster, NYC/UC-Berkeley.

BULLETINS

CHCI sponsoring Summer Fellows Program

The Center for Human-Computer Interaction (<http://www.hci.vt.edu>) will sponsor a Summer Fellows program in 2002. Fellows will be appointed in the center to carry out research projects with the goal of developing interdisciplinary research proposals in human-computer interaction.

For 2002, the focus of the Summer Fellows program is computer-supported cooperative activity. This includes requirements identification and engineering for collaborative systems and software, design and software engineering, application domain studies, usability evaluation, measurement and analysis of social and organizational impact, and policy studies.

Fellows will receive one month of summer salary to support their research and proposal development projects. All Virginia Tech faculty members are eligible for this program. The program is funded by the College of Arts and Science, and preference will be given to proposals from Arts and Science faculty members.

To apply, submit a pre-proposal not more than five pages long, describing (1) the plan or vision that will be developed into a research program, (2) the specific activities that will be carried out during the period of summer funding, and (3) the motivation for carrying out this research program in the Center for Human-Computer Interaction. A letter of endorsement from the faculty member's department head should be submitted. These materials are due March 1.

For more information, contact Andrea Kavanaugh at kavan@vt.edu, or call 1-1806.

Pulitzer for Poetry winner to read

Yusef Komunyakaa, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry will read from his work at 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 22 at Volume Two Bookstore.

The reading is expected to be of particular interest to students and scholars of African American literature and contemporary poetry. Komunyakaa is the author of 12 books of poetry, the most recent of which include *Pleasure Dome: New and Collected Poems*, *Talking Dirty to the Gods* and *Thieves of Paradise*.

President's Award for Excellence nominations sought

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2002 President's Award for Excellence. The purpose of this award is to annually recognize up to five selected employees who have made extraordinary contributions by consistent excellence in the performance of their job or a single incident, contribution, or heroic act.

All salaried classified staff at any pay-band level, as well as administrative or professional faculty, with at least two years of university service are eligible for consideration. Specific exclusions for the award are instructional faculty members, academic department heads, deans, assistant and associate deans, vice presidents, Extension agents, and wage employees. Previous award recipients are not eligible until five years after receiving the award. For more information regarding the eligibility of any employee, contact Personnel Services at 1-7784.

Award recipients will receive a certificate and a \$2,000 award. The award will be publicized internally and externally.

Nominations can be made by any employee; however, self-nominations are not acceptable. All nominations must be submitted on an Award for Excellence nomination form that is available through deans, directors, or department heads, or may be downloaded from the Personnel Services web page, <http://www.ps.vt.edu/>. Evaluation criteria and nomi-

(See *PRESIDENT'S AWARD* on 3)

Internationally noted educator to give Black History Month keynote address

By Clara B. Cox

Johnnetta B. Cole, recipient of 45 honorary degrees from colleges and universities throughout this country and abroad, will deliver the keynote address for Virginia Tech's celebration of Black History Month at 7 p.m. on February 27 in Squires Colonial Hall. Her topic will be "The Color Line Revisited: Is Racism Dead?"

The talk is open to the public and is free.

Cole, now the presidential distinguished professor of anthropology, women's studies, and African American studies at Emory University, became the first woman president of Spelman College in 1987. During 10 years there, she led the liberal-arts school for women to an eighth national ranking in *Money* magazine's "Best College Buys" and a 21st national faculty ranking in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual college issue.

Under her leadership, Spelman raised \$113.8 million in a major capital campaign, at the time the largest amount ever raised by an historically black college and more than \$20 million over the goal.

In 1998, President Clinton appointed Cole to an 11-member commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, and the following year, she was named to Georgia Governor Roy E. Barnes' Education Reform Study Commission.

Cole has written two books, *Conversations: Straight Talk with America's Sister President*, published in 1993, and *Dream the Boldest*



COLE

Dreams: And Other Lessons of Life, published in 1997. She has edited two textbooks, *All American Women* and *Anthropology for the Nineties*, which are used in college and university classrooms throughout the country.

She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Anthropological Association and the recipient of numerous awards, among them the Radcliffe Medal bestowed by the Radcliffe College Alumnae Association, the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal, and the Dorothy I. Height Dreammaker Award from the National Council of Negro Women.

For more information, contact Alan Bagby at 1-6023 or Kimberly Philpott at 1-3787 or visit <http://www.mcp.vt.edu/calendars/> on the web.

International topics subject of lecture series

The Pamplin College of Business and the French program of the Department of Foreign Languages will host a lecture series featuring speakers on globalization, technology, and interdisciplinary programs.

John Mathis, professor of international finance and banking at Thunderbird, the American Graduate School of International Management, will give a talk on Friday, March 15, at 11:15 a.m. in 1045 Pamplin. His talk is titled, "Globalization: the Use and Impact of Technology."

Gilles Bousquet, professor of French at the

(See *INTERNATIONAL* on 4)

Open Session on New Commission February 20

The university community can learn about the proposed Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity at an open session at noon on Wednesday, Feb. 20, in 150 Squires

Representatives of the University Committee on Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action and the Advisory Council on Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, the two units that drafted the resolution to establish the commission, will be on hand to answer questions and provide information. Written comments and questions can be sent via e-mail to multicultural@vt.edu.

EMPLOYMENT

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

The following classified positions are currently available. Position details, specific application procedures/position-closing dates may be found on Personnel Services web site <http://www.ps.vt.edu>. Positions are also listed on the Job Line, a 24-hour recorded message service. For information on all job listings, call 1-5300. Some positions include state benefits. Positions with numbers beginning with "W" are hourly and do not include state benefits. Individuals with disabilities desiring assistance or accommodation in the application process should call by the application deadline. Closing date for advertised positions is 1 p.m. Monday. An EO/AA employer committed to diversity.

FULL TIME

Administrative Assistant, 001854F, PB 3, BFP.
Administrative Staff Assistant, 001771Y, PB 3, VP for Admin./Treas.
Assistant Manager, 001209H, PB 3, RDP.

Data Reporting Coordinator, 007916S, PB 3, University Development.
Fiscal Technician, 007918S, PB 3, University Development.
One full-time food-service position available.
Office Specialist, 000940H, PB 2, RDP.
Program Support Technician, 001017J, PB 3, College of Business—Undergraduate Programs.
Program Support Technician, 007917G, PB 3, CPAP.
Radiologic Technologist, 002394M, PB 3, VTH.
Sales/Marketing Manager, 000478H, PB 3, RDP.
Service Leader Senior, 006552H, PB 1, RDP.
Sous Chef, 007881H, PB 3, RDP.
Stockroom Clerk, 000794H, PB 2, RDP.
Student Services Assistant, 007886R, PB 3, Graduate School.

PART TIME

Computer Operations Technician, W022848J, PB 3, UUSA.
Conference Registration Specialist, W022340G, PB 2, CE—Conference Registration.

Isb Program Assistant, W023360M, PB 3, Biochemistry.
Pharmacy Assistant, W022097J, PB 2, Health Center.
Production Office Receptionist, W023373J, PB 2, UUSA.
Program Support Technician, W022538M, PB 3, APS.
Program Support Technician, 004570M, PB 3, CSES.
Program Support Technician, W023259B, PB 3, Mathematics.
Radiologic Technologist, W022412M, PB 3, VTH.
Research Assistant, W023351M, PB 3, AAE.
Veterinary Technician, W023340M, PB 4, VTH.
Visitor Center Receptionist, W022957S, PB 2, University Relations.

OFF CAMPUS

Director of Nursing, 002178M, PB 4, CVM—Equine Medical Center.
Geographic Data Developer, 007913M, PB 4, BSE.

Radio Announcer, W020800S, PB 3, UR/WVTF Radio.
Secretary Senior, 002089R, PB 2, Northern Virginia Center.

FACULTY POSITIONS

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL

Geological Sciences. Research Associate (re-advertised). Contact: Patricia Dove, 4069 Derring (0420). Open until filled.
Electrical/Computer Engineering. Research Associate. Contact: Anbo Wang, 340 Whittemore (0111). Deadline: February 25.
University Development. Director of Development, College of Engineering (re-advertised). Contact: Rhonda Arsenault, 201 Pack Bldg. (0336). Review begins immediately.
Talent Search Program. Talent Search Coordinator. Contact: Thomas Wilson, Hillcrest Hall-Lower Level (0146). Screening begins May 1.

PERSONNEL SERVICES INFORMATION

Memorandum to State Employees from Secretary of Administration Sandra D. Bowen

On January 22, Governor Mark Warner submitted a number of executive budget amendments to the General Assembly for consideration during its budget deliberations. As you know, state revenues are down significantly, requiring the governor to make some very tough decisions to reduce state expenditures.

One of the most difficult issues was the decision not to retain the salary increase proposed in the introduced budget. Funding it would have required deeper cuts in agency budgets, and more reductions in funding for programs that many Virginians consider essential.

Although the salary increase could not be

retained, Governor Warner has been very concerned about the major changes in your health insurance benefits that were included in the original budget. That proposal would increase your premium costs, impose a deductible, and increase co-payments and other expenses. To minimize the impact on your family's finances, he has requested a commitment of an additional \$37 million to reduce premium increases by half and to increase the portion of your health insurance premium paid by the state. In addition, he has eliminated the proposed deductible of \$150 per family and the added co-insurance, and held out-of-pocket maximums for medical expenses at their current level. His action will

reduce the burden on you and your family as we weather this difficult period.

You may hear about another of the proposed actions—this one concerning funding of the Virginia Retirement System. The governor's amendments change the rates paid by state agencies and institutions of higher education to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) for retirement contributions made on behalf of state employees—in part by using the contribution rate that the VRS actuary recommended, and in part by clearing up accounts for which no beneficiary is known.

Although these changes do allow budget savings in this year and in the next biennium, let

me assure you that the retirement system is sound and your benefits will not be reduced now or in the future by these actions. The commitment that the state has made to you regarding your retirement benefits remains unchanged.

Governor Warner is committed to finding ways to recognize the value that each state employee brings to state service. We will be aggressively looking for ways to encourage, support, recognize, and reward your efforts. We know that each of you is the face of state government to every Virginian you see, talk to, or deal with each day.

If you have questions regarding anything contained in this letter, please feel free to contact my office at (804) 786-1201.

TECH

Continued from 1

Mississippi State University and Texas A&M University. Other universities ahead of Virginia Tech in the rankings are the University of California at Davis, the University of Georgia,

the University of Florida, and North Carolina State University.

The NSF reported agricultural research-and-development dollars expended at Virginia Tech in 2000 at more than \$63.8 million, an increase of more than \$4 million over the 1999 figure.

The increase of funding of 6.6 percent is in line with the combined increase for the all of top-90 agricultural research programs, as reported by the NSF. Expenditures for the top 10 institutions, however, increased at a rate of about 13.5 percent. Only one university among those ahead of Virginia Tech in the rankings lost ground in the dollars devoted to agricultural research.

The NSF defines agricultural science to include such disciplines as agricultural production, aquaculture, soil science, animal science, plant science, agronomy, forestry, fish and wildlife, international agriculture, and many more.

Virginia Tech's agricultural research-and-development program accounts for one-third of the research spending at the university. With \$192.6 million in research expenditures, Virginia Tech has the largest research program among Virginia universities.

PARKING

Continued from 1

continues to increase and parking must pay its own way. Mouras also maintains that banning first-year student cars on campus would do little to relieve the parking situation because these students park in the most remote areas even now.

Mouras said the final recommendation will probably include three parking structures—a 600-space structure at B-lot in the Derring/Cowgill area, providing a net parking gain of 341 spaces; one behind Wallace Hall, providing a net gain of 800 spaces; and an 800-space structure in conjunction with the proposed Fine Arts Center which would provide a net gain of 550 spaces. The plan also calls for expansion and construction of surface lots on the north side of I-lot ("the cage") by 350 spaces and in the stadium area on "chicken hill" by 200 spaces.

In addition, the plan calls for a tiered parking permit system in which the most-desirable parking zones will cost a lot more than less desirable zones. More shuttles would be provided for movement around campus and from more remote parking areas. This would also reduce traffic as fewer cars hunt for spaces in the campus core and allow gradation in permit costs. The plan's example of tiered pricing shows a range from a low of \$30 for parking in the most remote lots to \$180 for individually reserved spaces in central-campus

area lots.

All members of the university community are urged to read the Parking and Transportation Master Plan and make comments. The plan can be accessed from the university's home page. Comments will be collected by the project consultants Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern, Inc., and presented along with the final recommendation.

LETTER

Continued from 1

University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning. This council is composed of faculty and staff members and students. We will communicate our decisions to the university community by May 1.

Since 80 percent of the university budget is personnel cost, we do know that these reductions will lead to reducing the number of positions in the university. We are working on alternatives for reducing these costs through holding open positions that are currently vacant, and holding positions as they become vacant through retirements and individuals leaving the university. We will make every effort to avoid laying off employees.

We will continue to provide updates to the university community as we learn more about the budget reductions and receive additional information. We thank all employees for their continued commitment to the university.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Steger, president



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

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PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Continued from 2

nation guidelines are included with the nomination form.

All nominations must be submitted no later than Monday, April 15 to the President's Award for Excellence Committee, c/o Personnel Services, Southgate Center 0318. For additional forms, call 1-7784.

Mentoring program helps minority students thrive at Virginia Tech

By Stewart MacInnis

A mentoring and support program for minority students at Virginia Tech has been so successful that it has helped the university become a ranking institution nationally in terms of minority graduates in the agricultural sciences.

Randolph Grayson, a professor, founder, and co-director of the university's Minority Academic Opportunities Program (MAOP) said participants in this program complete their academic careers at a greater rate than can be claimed by most other institutions.

"When you look at the success of this program, I don't know of any institution in the country that graduates such a large percentage of its minority undergraduates." Since 1993, 93 percent of the program's 177 undergraduate participants have graduated or are still in the program.

Larry Moore, professor and MAOP co-

director, credits the program with helping the university earn an impressive ranking of number three nationally in awarding master's degrees in agriculture to African-Americans and number eight nationally in awarding master's degrees to all minority groups. MAOP'S program for Virginia Tech graduate students has funded 70 students since 1995 and has a 90-percent graduation/retention rate.

The publication, *Black Issues in Higher Education*, releases these rankings and ranked other measures of the university's success as well. Virginia Tech jumped 10 places to the number 18 spot among all U.S. colleges and universities in awarding bachelor's degrees in agriculture to all minority groups. It moved to the number 15 position for awarding bachelor's degrees in agriculture to African-Americans (the university was not ranked in this measure previously).

MAOP has three major academic parts: an undergraduate-scholars program, a summer research-intern program, and a graduate-scholars program as well as a mentoring program. Grayson said, "Every incoming MAOP freshman is assigned an older undergraduate or a graduate student as a mentor, someone who can give her or him guidance and is knowledgeable about the challenges that many minority students encounter outside the classroom."

For minority members, many of those challenges are influenced by sociological and financial factors, distractions that can deflect even the most diligent student from academic success. MAOP is a multi-cultural, multi-racial program designed to help minimize those distractions through scholarships, mentoring, and creating bonds among the participants.

"When students become MAOP scholars they must agree to participate in all official MAOP functions and to be active in Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS)," Grayson explained. "We meet regularly to create an informal support network for the participants—an integral element of the program."

Another reason for the success of students in MAOP is the quality of students accepted into the program. All of the participants have shown potential or have achieved academic excellence on the high-school level. Grayson said grade-point averages are neither the first nor the last things evaluated when considering a student for participation.

"We attempt to evaluate a student's capabilities in all aspects," he said. "We try to cut through everything that distracts students, cut through the stereotypes, and evaluate the individual based on present performance and potential. Our goal is to move them from where

they are to where they want to be."

Grayson added, "If students understand what is expected of them, and if you set standards with a challenging level of performance, most students will give you that or better."

He stressed that the graduate component of MAOP represents the program's ultimate goal of helping minority members and women obtain advanced degrees. The number of minority members with advanced degrees, especially in the sciences, technology, architecture, business, and some related areas is generally very low. Grayson pointed out that increasing the number of students with master's, doctorates, and professional degrees will contribute to the breaking of "glass ceilings" found throughout society.

Grayson emphasized that the achievements of the MAOP program have been possible because of the talents and commitments of many dedicated individuals including Moore, Patricia Hyer, Lanny Cross, Barry Simmons, Martha Reifsnider, Dixon Hanna, and Peni Ratcliffe. A key to the program's success is the partnership between the deans and faculty members of six of the eight colleges at Virginia Tech. The daily commitment of these individuals as advisors, teachers, mentors, and role models is what is helping these talented students succeed.

Pethtel named interim transportation commissioner

Governor Mark Warner named Ray Pethtel as interim commissioner of the Virginia Department of Transportation in December.

Pethtel is currently university transportation fellow at the university. He served from 1986 to 1994 as the state's transportation commissioner. He was chairman of the Commonwealth Transportation Board from 1986 to 1990, and vice-chairman from 1991 to 1994.

From 1974 to 1986, he served as the founding director of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, the program-oversight agency of the Virginia General Assembly.

Pethtel is past president of the Intelligent Transportation Society of Virginia, executive vice president of the New Century Technology Council, vice chairman of the Virginia Technology Alliance, and a member of the Board of ITS America.

Warner expects to name a new VDOT commissioner by April 30, after a national search and recruitment effort is complete. In the interim commissioner role, Pethtel will begin making some of the reforms to VDOT that are needed to restore accountability.

Ellis honored for contributions to ISE education

By Liz Crumbley

The Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc. (SAE) is recognizing Kimberly Ellis, an assistant professor, for outstanding contributions as one of the nation's top engineering educators in the field of industrial and systems engineering (ISE).

Ellis will receive the 2002 Ralph R. Teetor Educational Award during SAE's 2002 World Congress and Exposition in Detroit, Michigan, in March.

Since joining the Virginia Tech faculty in 1996, Ellis has been cited three times on the College of Engineering Dean's List for Teaching Excellence. Her undergraduate and graduate courses are designed to instruct students in successful methods of manufacturing design, production and distribution.

As a senior-design-project adviser for the

ISE department, Ellis provides guidance for undergraduates who work directly with industry sponsors. Currently, she advises a senior-level project on redesigning an assembly operation at Volvo Trucks in Pulaski. She also is helping to plan a conference at Virginia Tech that will increase undergraduate students' awareness of career opportunities in the automotive industry.

For the past five years, Ellis has been the faculty adviser for the Virginia Tech chapter of Alpha Pi Mu, the national industrial engineering honor society. She also is active in the student chapter of the Institute of Industrial Engineers.

Ellis is co-director of the Dover Laboratory for Manufacturing Systems at Virginia Tech and an associate of the Center for High Performance Manufacturing. Her research focuses primarily on improving productivity in manufacturing systems and she has received funding from the National Science Foundation, Ericsson Inc. and Lucent Technologies. She has organized two Industry Forums on Computer Integrated Manufacturing with Ericsson, during which graduate students and industrial engineers exchange research information and ideas.

As a participant in the Teetor Award Program, Ellis plans to increase industry involve-

ment in the education of her graduate and undergraduate students.

SAE's Teetor program offers engineering educators the opportunity to learn more about professional activities in the automotive and aerospace industries and to exchange views with practicing engineers. Teetor, an SAE member for 50 years, established the educational award in 1964.

SAE is a non-profit educational and scientific organization with a membership of more than 83,000 engineers, business executives, educators and students who share information and exchange ideas for advancing the engineering of all forms of self-propelled land, air and water vehicles.

PROFESSOR

Continued from 1

Food Safety and Inspection Service, an 8,500-employee agency. He will also have responsibilities in developing, planning, and coordinating the implementation of federal food-safety policies and programs. In addition, his duties will include consultations with members of Congress, officials of other government agencies, farm and industry organizations, and other groups.

Another duty will be to provide overall oversight for U.S. participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission, an international effort to develop world-wide standards and principles for food quality and food safety. More than 180 countries participate in Codex, which was established in 1962.

Pierson has been involved in Codex for a number of years as a technical representative. He twice served as chairman of the Institute of Food Technologists' Codex committee. The IFT is a 26,000-member international scientific society focusing on food hygiene, food processing, nutrition, labeling, and numerous other areas related to food safety and quality.

He is recognized internationally as an expert on Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points, known as HACCP in the industry. That is a system for designing safeguards in the processing of foods to eliminate food-borne pathogens. He has worked closely with the government and industry in facilitating the implementation of the program in the United States.

INTERNATIONAL

Continued from 2

University of Wisconsin-Madison, will speak on Friday, April 12, at 11:15 a.m. in 1045 Pamplin. His talk is titled, "Creating New Partnerships across the Disciplines, Internal and External Synergies."

A member of the executive education faculty at Thunderbird, Mathis is also president of Transnational Corporate Advisory Services, a financial consulting, training, and research company. He played an integral role in international development projects in Russia and China and heads the Thunderbird International Trade Finance Center.

Bousquet has written extensively on the political, cultural, and international issues of contemporary France. He has helped establish several exchange programs with French institutions. He will discuss innovative interdisciplinary programs he developed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, including team-taught courses and internships, and present networking strategies for working with business, government agencies, the public, and NGO's.

The lectures are part of a collaboration between the Pamplin College and the French program to promote the study of French and study and internship opportunities in France for students in both colleges. The effort is supported by a two-year federal grant with addi-

tional funds from Virginia Tech.

For speaker information, contact Debbie Cook at 1-4847, (dcook@vt.edu).

For more information about the collaborative program, contact Robert T. Sumichrast, Pamplin associate dean for graduate and international programs at 1-6152 or rsumichr@vt.edu; or French faculty members Sharon Johnson at 1-9859, (spjohnson@vt.edu) and Richard Shryock at 1-8304, (shryock@vt.edu).

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