

January 2007

Special points of interest:

- **New Faculty Members**
- **Faculty Awards**
- **Student Awards**
- **2006 Graduates**
- **Former Student News**

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Biological and Agricultural Engineering News

Vijay P. Singh Named to Distinguished Water Engineering Chair

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Dwight Look College of Engineering at Texas A&M University take pleasure in announcing the selection of Vijay P. Singh as the inaugural holder of the Caroline and William N. Lehrer Distinguished Chair in Water Engineering within the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at Texas A&M University. The Distinguished Chair in Water Engineering was established through the generosity of Mrs. Caroline Lehrer and the Lehrer family to memorialize William N. Lehrer's lifetime dedication to the water industry.

As the inaugural holder of the Distinguished Chair in Water Engineering, Dr. Singh will provide for the continuation of leading edge research, teaching and Extension programs in a broad array of water engineering topics including surface water and groundwater hydrology, irrigation engineering and water management, urban water resource management, reuse of municipal wastewater, water quality, drought and climate forecasting, wildlife habitat

management, pollution management, water quality remediation, and water conservation.

Professor Vijay P. Singh obtained a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering with an emphasis on Hydrology and Water Resources from Colorado State University and a D.Sc. in Engineering with emphasis on Environmental and Water Resources from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. In his most recent position, Professor Singh held the Arthur K. Barton Endowed Professorship in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Louisiana State University.

A registered professional engineer, Dr. Singh is a Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Water Resources Association. Professor Singh's publications include twelve textbooks, fifty-two book chapters and more than 400 technical journal articles. He is a fellow of ASCE, AWRA, IE, IAH, ISAE, and IWRS. He is also a fellow or member of 7 international science/engineering academies. He is Editor-in-Chief of Water Science and Technology Library Book Series of Springer and Editor-in-Chief of ASCE Journal of Hydrologic Engineering, and is a member of 16 journal editorial boards dealing with water, irrigation and environment. He has received more than 42 awards, including the Distinguished Service Award from the National Research Council of Italy in 1995; the Fulbright Scholar Award in 1997; and the Aris Lands Hydraulic Engineering Award given by the American Society of Civil Engineers in 2002. Most recently Dr. Singh was awarded with the 2005 Ven Te Chow Award given by the American Society of Civil Engineers.





**Gerald L. Riskowski,
Professor and Head**

Howdy from the Department Head

The faculty, staff and students of the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department send greetings to all of our former students and many friends. Our department continues to have successes and good news that we wish to convey.

As promised in the last newsletter, this issue includes information about Dr. Vijay P. Singh, the inaugural holder of the Caroline and William N. Lehrer Distinguished Chair in Water Engineering. The Distinguished Chair in Water Engineering was established through the generosity of Mrs. Caroline Lehrer and the Lehrer family to memorialize William N. Lehrer's lifetime dedication to the water industry. The addition of Dr. Singh to our faculty further strengthens what we feel is an outstanding water engineering program.

In addition to Dr. Singh, I'm pleased to welcome Dr. Yongheng Huang to our faculty as an assistant professor with specialization in impaired water

treatment engineering. Dr. Huang has outstanding credentials and we are excited to add such a promising young engineer to our faculty. We are continuing the search process for two additional faculty members and we will share more information about that when we are able.

I'm pleased to report that our enrollment remains strong for the current academic year. There are approximately 289 undergraduate students, 136 in Biological and Agricultural Engineering and 153 in Agricultural Systems Management, and 47 graduate students, 50% of whom are doctoral students. Graduates continue to find excellent employment opportunities and continued success in their careers.

I want to thank you for your continued interest and support in the success of our Department. I hope that you find this newsletter informative and interesting.

Dr. Riskowski can be reached by email at riskowski@tamu.edu or by telephone at 979-845-3931.

2006 ASABE Blue Ribbon Awards

At the 2006 ASABE meeting several of our TCE faculty were presented with Blue Ribbon Awards.

ment Systems: An Operation and Maintenance Service Provider Program"

Publications: Fact Sheets

Juan M. Enciso, Xavier Peries - Texas A&M University System "Using Flexible Pipe (polypipe) with Surface Irrigation L5469 and L5469S"

Web Pages

Bruce Lesikar, Courtney O'Neill, Rachel Alexander - Texas Cooperative Extension "Onsite Wastewater Treatment and Reuse"

Monty Dozier, Rebecca Melton, Michael Hare, Dana Porter, Bruce Lesikar - Texas Cooperative Extension "Drinking Water Problems: Perchlorate"

Dana Porter, Thomas Marek, Terry Howell, Don Dusek, Mike Blanton, Patrick Porter - Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, USDA-ARS Conservation and Production Laboratory "Texas High Plains Evapotranspiration Website"

Publications: Manuals or Workbooks

Bruce Lesikar, Frank Aguirre, Nancy Deal, Dave Gustafson, Mike Hoover, Justin Jobin, David Kalen, Dave Lindbo, George Loomis, Courtney O'Neill, Jerry Stonebridge, John Thomas - Consortium of Institutes for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment "Residential Onsite Wastewater Treat-

Harold Wiedemann, Nancy Shaw, Mike Pellant - Texas A&M University Forest Service Bureau of Land Management "Revegetation Equipment Catalog"



Dr. Juan Enciso, Associate Professor and Extension Engineer, Irrigation and Water Management in Weslaco, Texas

Texas A & M University Student Engineering Branch Takes Honors In National Agricultural Engineering Awards Competition

The Texas A&M University Student Engineering Branch of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) took second runner-up honors in the annual Student Engineering and Mechanization Awards conducted by the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). AEM is the North-America-based international trade association for off-road equipment manufacturers and industry-service providers.

The Texas A&M branch won in the category for branches numbering 33 or more student members.

AEM initiated the awards in 1935 as part of its commitment to excellence in agricultural engineering education. Winners are ASABE student branches which have compiled the most outstanding record of activities and accomplishments in the previous year in areas including membership, committees, meetings,

attendance, programs, special member activities, inspection trips and publications. The awards recognize exemplary student achievement as an example to encourage continued quality of and active participation in ASABE student branches.

ASABE helped establish student branches to provide undergraduates interested in agricultural engineering some insight into their chosen profession. Today, student branches are active at most universities offering professional training in engineering related to agricultural, food and biological systems. For more information on the awards, visit the ASABE website at www.asabe.org.

The ASABE Preprofessional website URL is asabe.tamu.edu

The AGSM Student Club website URL is agsm.tamu.edu

Fulbright Scholar presents medal to former presidents in Philadelphia

Teuku Ferijal, a Fulbright Scholar from Indonesia who is currently studying in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, presented The Philadelphia Liberty Medal to former U.S. presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton in Philadelphia October 5, 2006. Ferijal was given the honor of awarding the two presidents for their efforts with the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund and the Bush-Clinton Tsunami Fund because he is a direct recipient of the benefits generated from the president's work: the Indonesian student was brought to the United States through the Fulbright Program on a grant made possible from the Bush-Clinton Tsunami Fund. "That was a big moment in my life to be face to face with two U.S. presidents at the same time. That moment will be one of the best things in my life," Ferijal said. As part of the trip, Ferijal toured Philadelphia to learn the value of The Philadelphia Liberty Medal, which is given to acknowledge the principles that founded the United States and

honors an individual or organization that "demonstrated leadership and vision in the pursuit of liberty of conscience or freedom from oppression, ignorance or deprivation." Ferijal said he learned the strength of the word "we" after the presentation that day. "As a Fulbright scholar, I realized that we all come from different backgrounds and opinions, but I hope that one day we can work together for our community."



Congratulations to four students, Garret Anderson, John Lyons, Joshua Meuth and Joshua Mosley, and to Texas A&M University for producing the third place winning team in the 2006 AGCO National Student Design Competition.



Yufeng Ge, a doctoral student with Dr. Alex Thommason, enjoys some Bluebell ice cream during the technical tour at the 2006 Texas Section ASABE meeting in Brenham, Texas.

Ferijal, far right, with former presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, and co-presenter Kariel Ellsworth, a 13 year-old girl from New Orleans who benefited from the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund.



Dr. Yongheng Huang, P.E., Assistant Professor in BAEN

Yongheng Huang, PhD, PE Joins BAEN Faculty

We'd like to welcome the newest member of our faculty. Yongheng Huang is an Assistant Professor of the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at Texas A&M University. He received his M.S. in environmental engineering in 1999 from Tsinghua University, China, and his Ph.D. in civil engineering in 2002 from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Before joining the faculty at Texas A&M University, he was a postdoctoral associate at Yale University.

Dr. Huang's areas of research interest include: desalination; membrane technology for water treatment;

in-situ remediation of groundwater contaminated with nitrate, arsenic, radionuclides, and halogenated compounds; and the dynamics of the colloidal processes in aquatic systems. In his previous research, he investigated the use of zero-valent iron for remediating contaminated groundwater/soils. He also studied the transport of sediments and sediment-associated phosphorus through the surface waters of the Florida Everglades. His research has resulted in sixteen journal publications. He is a licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Nebraska.

BAEN Former Student David Wesson and GEODynamics Inc. Named #1 Firm in Aggie 100 for 2006

According to David Wesson '82, CEO of GeoDynamics Inc., "Going to A&M and working with other Aggies, taught me that I could do anything I put my mind to if I was willing to 'never give up'." That lesson and attitude paid off as Wesson started a company in the highly competitive and capital intensive oil field services industry.

GEODynamics was created in response to a convergence of broad trends and very specific needs. Changing energy regulations and the desire for U.S. energy independence after the tragic events of 9/11, combined with Shell's need for new solutions to well completion problems and technologies for increasing well production opened the door for Wesson and his team. Taking advantage of this convergence, the GEODynamics founders created a technology development company with "distributed manufacturing" for well perforating systems and solutions. Their dream was to create a truly global company with "game-changing" technology.

Today, the company is well on the way to realizing that vision. Wesson will tell you that it has gone better than expected. He'll note that there are always challenges to overcome but, by staying focused on the goals of the company, they stay on track. "On track" means a two-year compound annual growth rate of 537 percent, earning the company the number one position on this year's Aggie 100.

Wesson attributes their success to many things, one of which is the Aggie Network. He says he has never asked anyone to help him just because he is an Aggie. That Aggie relationship, however, has opened a number of doors and allows him to win the business based on merit and not just an Aggie Ring. He has traveled the world building GEODynamics and says he is always amazed how Aggies will help other Aggies.

GEODynamics' founder is not ready to start chasing the next dream yet. He has plenty of growth planned for the company. Looking forward, Wesson's dreams are varied between starting another company, going back to school or teaching and sailing the Caribbean. It will be fun to see where his dreams take him. Congratulations to David and the entire GEODynamics team.



David Wesson (AGEN '82) 2006 Aggie 100 top honoree, and CEO of GEODynamics Inc., with his daughter Kayleigh Wesson at the luncheon.



BAEN students and Dr. LePori in Mexico as part of the 2006 Mexico Exchange Program.

Congratulations To Our 2006 August and December Graduates

August 2006 Graduates

Graduate Degrees

Scott Jay Beech, M.S. with Dr. Bruce Lesikar
Xiaojing Duan, M.S. with Dr. Bruce Lesikar
Lynn Anne Lazenby, M.S. with Dr. Saqib Muhktar

B.S. AGEN

Marcelo Gabriel Guijarro Arias
Milton Leander Palmer, Jr.
Todd Edward Stiggins

B.S. AGSM

Erica Judith Cabrera
Matthew James Felcman
Taylor Rance Green
Darren Scott Hillger
Cody Ryan Orms
Dustin Wade Wiatrek
Shawn Daniel Zieger

Stephen James Mobley
David Alan Olson
Vincent Paul Schielack, III
Ryan Scott Szopinski

B.S. AGSM

Christopher Richard Aelvoet
Tyler Lee Boehme
Zachary David Boykin
Eric Crespo Brenner
Brian Patrick Fuselier
Mark Alan Geistweidt
William Christopher Hajdik
Ryan Scott Hanel
Kyle Ryan Johnson
Chad William Koonce
Brad Alan Kotzebue
Will Adam Miller
Scott David Ogg
Merriam F. Oliver
Edwin Vincent Pedraza
Justin Nicholas Putz
Joshua David Smith
William T. Stocker
Joseph Scott Stukey
Cody James Summers
Luke A Supak
Mark Lee Sweeney
Shawn Michael Wittig

December 2006 Graduates

Graduate Degrees

Lindsay Nicole Birt, M. S. with Dr. Russell Persyn and Dr. Patricia Smith

B.S. AGEN

Ryan Rene Hill
Rifky Husein
Jessica Lyn Ishmael
Joshua Louis Klein
John Patrick Lyons
Daniel Jay McMillon

Recent Graduates, if you have an update on your employment, please contact Monica Cortez at mo_cortez@tamu.edu

Raghavendra Jana, a Ph.D. student with Binayak Mohanty, was awarded a NASA Earth System Science Fellowship for the 2006-2007 academic year. His proposal entitled "Use of Satellite Data for Soil Parameter Estimation in Rio Grande Basin" addressed NASA's central mission to understand and protect our home planet. Raghavendra received one of the 55 fellowships awarded; \$24,000 per year; renewable for up to three years.

Jackie Michalka, Dominique Dawkins, A.J. Sjolander, Tim Gertson, and Craig Birkenfeld take a break from volunteer work at the 2006 Radio MASH, a community toy drive for disadvantaged children.





BAEN engineering students on the Belgium Study Abroad program in 2006 were (from top to bottom), Dominique Dawkins, A.J. Sjolander, Phillip Gieger, Brandon Hartley and Craig Birkefeld.

Former Student News

1980–1989

Colin Ashmore (AGEN '82) passed away on July 6, 2006 in Houston of complications from cancer. A Memorial service was held at St Teresa's Catholic Church in Carson City, Nevada on July 21. In memory of Sam Colin Ashmore, the family has asked for donations to be sent in lieu of flowers to:

The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, P.O. Box 4486, Houston, TX 77210-4486.

Each donation made in memory of Colin will go to Gastrointestinal Research, and M.D. Anderson will notify his wife, Claudia Ashmore.

Gary Clark who received a PhD with Dr. Don Reddell in 1986 has become department chair of the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at Kansas State.

Tommy Davis (AGEN '86) is currently a consulting engineer based out of Athens, Texas. Tommy and his wife Hope have 4 children. Their oldest daughter Rachel is a freshman at Texas A&M, majoring in Biomedical Science.

John E. Sutton (B.S. Mech Ag., '80) went on to earn two more degrees; a BA in Broadcast Journalism from University of Arkansas-Little Rock, and a MS in Administration in Health Care Administration from Central Michigan University. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army and currently serves as the Troop Commander/Chief of Human Resources for Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, Georgia.

1990–1999

Jay Yelvington (AGSM '99) is currently R&D Lab Manager for Powell Industries in Houston, Texas.

Shawn Flannigan, PE (AGEN '95, MS '97) is currently President of Alliant Environmental, LLC in Houston, Texas.

2000–2006

Jada Tullos Anderson (AGSM '96) has taken a position as staff scientist with Engineering Consulting Services, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Her coursework from A&M, lab experience thanks to Dr. Parnell, and experience in high-demand situations at the Red Cross made her a well-rounded candidate.

Stephen Pageler (AGSM '03) is currently Sales Manager for Van Wall Equipment, a John Deere dealer, in Colfax, Iowa.

Shane Porter (AGEN '02, M.S. '05) is an environmental engineer with URS, currently working in Qatar.

Aaron Sutherlin (AGEN '02) is an engineer with Ducks Unlimited in Vancouver, Washington.

Matthew Butters (AGSM '05) is serving as a heavy decontamination platoon leader in 12th Chemical Company, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Andrea Froboese Missildine (AGEN '04) is working as an environmental engineer with URS in San Antonio, Texas.

David Yeh (AGEN '01) is working in regulatory affairs for Bayer Crop Science in Tianjin, China.

Ramiro Rivandeneira (M.S. '05) is working for The Ken Bratney Companies in Urbandale, Iowa; a design built engineering firm that specializes in seed, grain and feed processing.

Christopher Morrison (AGSM '05) is working for Sewell Lexus of Ft. Worth.

Former Students, if you have news you'd like to share, please contact the editor at

ron-lacey@tamu.edu

Or enter your info on-line at

http://baen.tamu.edu/info/former_students.asp

BAEN Belgium Study Abroad 2006

The second annual BAEN Department Study Abroad program took a group of eighteen students from Texas A&M to Leuven, Belgium, this past summer. Drs. Clyde Munster and Cady Engler, taught AGSM 335 (Soil and Water Management) and AGSM 337 (Technology for Environmental and Natural Resources Engineering) and AGEN 350 (Hydrologic Principles in Agriculture) at the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven. AGEN 350 was added to the Study Abroad curriculum this year to allow BAEN engineering students to participate for the first time. Recent curriculum changes in the BAEN Department now permit engineering students to take the AGSM 337 Study Abroad course as a technical elective to fulfill graduation requirements. Therefore, engineering students can also get six hours of credit towards graduation by going on the Study Abroad program. These courses also satisfy the six hours of cultural and international diversity required for graduation.

The Study Abroad program lasts five weeks and coincides with the second summer session at Texas A&M. This year, the students arrived in Belgium on July 5 and departed on August 9, 2006. A total of ten students from the BAEN Department were on the program with five from Agricultural Systems Management and five from Biological and Agricultural Engineering. The remaining students were from the departments of BESC, ADEV, AGLS, ENGS and ANSC.

Four field trips were conducted during the Study Abroad program to compare European and U. S. approaches to environmental protection and wa-

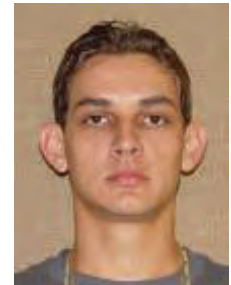


ter supply. One field trip toured the Delta Works in the Netherlands, where a state-of-the-art coastal protection system has been installed to prevent the type of storm-surge flooding that flooded New Orleans during hurricane Katrina. Other field trips were to the Helmholtz Research Center in Julich, Germany; a unique groundwater collection system in the Ardennes region of Belgium; and a tour of the Group Machiels facilities throughout Belgium. Group Machiels is a family run Belgium environmental company with global offices ranging from Vietnam to Chile. The students toured their recycling plant for hospital wastes in Leuven, hazardous waste landfill in Houthalen, soil remediation plant in Genk, and the corporate headquarters in Hasselt.

For the first 2 or 3 weeks of the program, the temperatures were in the low 90's in Leuven, which is extremely hot by Belgium standards. In fact, July 2006, was the warmest month in Belgium since records began in 1830. For the last two weeks of the program, the weather was more seasonal for July and August with highs between 65 and 70 °F.

Recruiting for the Belgium Study Abroad program for the summer of 2007 is now underway. Drs. Clyde Munster and Ann Kenimer will lead this program from July 4 to August 9. The courses offered in the summer of 2007 will be AGSM 335, AGSM 337 and BAEN 460 (Principles of Environmental Hydrology). The cost for the Study Abroad program is \$2,000. Four work-study scholarships, two for AGSM students and two for BAEN students, worth \$500 each are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Scholarships and financial aid are also available through the TAMU Study Abroad office. Anyone interested in the Belgium Study Abroad program for the summer of 2007 please contact Dr. Munster (c-munster@tamu.edu) or Dr. Kenimer (a-kenimer@tamu.edu) for details. An on-line application and information about the 2007 Study Abroad program can be found at: studyabroad.tamu.edu/programs/belgium.asp

Dr. Engler with a group of students at the Group Machiels soil remediation facility in Genk, Belgium.



AGSM Students on the Belgium Study Abroad program in 2006 were (from top to bottom), Jacob Bures, Anthony Reimer, Chad Lemmond, Edwin Pedraza and Jonathan Edge.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
BIOLOGICAL AND
AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING

201 Scoates Hall
2117 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2117

Phone: 979-845-3931
Fax: 979-862-3442
E-mail: newsletter@baen.tamu.edu



Eight Agricultural Engineers from the Class of 1956 participated in their 50th Anniversary Reunion, April 21, 2006 on the Texas A&M University Campus. This was the first time most had seen each other since graduation. In attendance were Al Cordes, Spring Branch; Sam Curtis, Midland; Bill Evans, Kooskia, ID; Bill Johnson, Claremore, OK; Milton Nitsch, Brenham; John Petter, Temple; Bill Sandars, Fort Worth; and Harold Wiedemann, College Station. A good time was had by all, and all were amazed at the changes in the campus during the past 50 years.

Picture: (L to R) Nitsch, Cordes, Curtis, Sandars, Wiedemann, Evans
Not pictured: Petter, Johnson

Mark Your Calendar

**International ASABE Meeting
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

June 17–20

**Texas Section ASABE Meeting
YO Ranch Resort, Kerrville, Texas**

October 10–11

Please pass this newsletter along to your friends. If you received this from someone else, you can sign up at baen.tamu.edu/news to receive your own copy