Thinking Ahead

Well, classes are over now and we’re in that twilight time before finals and commencement. To wrap up the school year and get out of the gate fast in the fall, I met with a group of about 25 graduate and undergraduate students for lunch on Friday. We talked about two of the three ships: leadership and entrepreneurship (ran out of time for internships, but this trio is key to being effective engineers) and what the opportunities are for engineering students in these areas. There were some very good observations and comments and I hope that we can make progress over the summer and into the fall on moving ahead on multiple fronts!

Teaching Awards

Congratulations to Brent Houchens, assistant professor, MEMS and Ann Saterbak, professor in the practice, BIOE, who have received the Brown Award for Superior Teaching. All of the Brown teaching award recipients will be honored at 3pm today in Keck Hall, room 100.

Mark Embree, Doerr Professor, CAAM, who received the Brown Prize for Excellence in Teaching last year, will give a talk: “Ancient approaches for educating modern computational scientists.” Should be good! You can read the abstract for Mark’s talk here: http://engineering.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/School_of_Engineering/News/Hot_News/EmbreeBrown.pdf.

Bourland Award

On Friday last week, we jointly hosted the annual ice cream social with the School of Natural Sciences. This is an event to recognize the faculty who have received awards and honors throughout the year and to bestow the Hardy Bourland Award on a deserving engineering staff member. This year, Julie Kudelka, program administrator for BIOE, got the award (that’s Julie and me in the center photo). Her nominating letter said that “what truly sets Julie apart is that she balances multiple responsibilities with grace and exemplary results. She leaves people with the feeling that she is really looking out for them.” Congratulations, Julie, on a job well done!
Great TRIP!

For 21 years Bill Symes, professor of CAAM, has been working with industry partners on The Rice Inversion Project (TRIP), which does research into the mathematical side of seismic exploration. Last Friday the group had their annual meeting, and there were more project alums who have gone on to jobs in the energy industry than ever before. Also participating were graduate students Yin Huang and Muhong Zhou of CAAM; Lei Fu, Papia Nandi-Dimitrova and Jie Hou of earth science and complimentary visiting CAAM scholar, Yujin Liu. I want to congratulate Bill on the success and influence of this long-term collaboration with industry partners. Great job, Bill!

Legendary Entrepreneur to Speak on Campus!

On Wednesday at 6pm one of the top entrepreneurs of the 20th Century, Bob Metcalfe, will speak at the Jones School. Bob, who was co-inventor of the Ethernet and founder of 3Com, will talk about his entrepreneurial experiences. There’s free admission to the first 50 Rice students who sign up, so do it now: http://www.miteftexas.org/. I’m attending; the guy’s a superstar!

Students Win Awards and Compete for More!

Congratulations to Michael Liga, postdoctoral researcher in CEE, who has been named a Presidential Management Fellow by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. This program places fellows in federal agencies for two years and gives them the opportunity to stay on in permanent positions. You can read more about Michael and his fellowship at http://engineering.rice.edu/Michael_Liga/.

Congratulations to Sarah Mason, BIOE and Joseph Yu, ChBE, both seniors for receiving Whitaker International Fellowships and to Zachary Crannell, BIOE graduate student, who is a summer grantee. The Whitaker program is a funding opportunity for emerging U.S. leaders in biomedical engineering to build collaborative ties with individuals and institutions overseas. You can read more about this here: http://engineering.rice.edu/whitaker2013/.

Sumedh Warudkar, ChBE graduate student, has been recognized for his service to the university and to student life with two awards. Sumedh is the recipient of the 2013 Sallyport Award for his leadership as GSA president and his “efforts to strengthen relationships between the GSA, Rice Administration and the undergraduate Student Association.” He has also been selected to receive a Rice University Service Award, which is given to students who have made “tangible contributions to student life at Rice.” Congratulations, Sumedh, and thank you for your service!
ECE has three seniors who will be competing in the Microsoft Imagine Cup in May. Congratulations to Mira Chen, Lam Yuk Wong and Lee Xiong, who will compete with their smartphone facial recognition game, FaceFun. You can read more about what TeamSwag could have in its future here: http://engineering.rice.edu/Imagine_Cup/.

There’s only one event on the calendar for this week:

TODAY
Brown Teaching Awards Talk/Presentation
Keck Hall, room 100
3 p.m.

Here’s what’s coming up next week:
Tuesday, April 30
Ken Kennedy Institute for Information Technology
Shared Computer Training
2 p.m. in Ryon Lab, Ryon Engineering Bldg
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20231

Wednesday, May 1
Institute of Biosciences and Bioengineering
Commercialize It!
2 p.m. in 172 BRC
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20251

STAT
End-of-Semester Party
2:30 p.m. in the portico of Duncan Hall
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20254

Thursday, May 2
RCEL
4th Annual Rice Undergraduate Venture Challenge
12:30 p.m. Shell Auditorium, McNair Hall
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19595

Study, study, study – home stretch now – push, push, push.
And hey,.... have a great week!

Ned
Edwin L. Thomas
William and Stephanie Sick Dean of Engineering