MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends of EECS,

This spring we are proud to report on many achievements by our faculty and students that will have the effect of elevating the scholarship and research of our department in the coming years.

Specifically, EECS is pleased to welcome four new Koch Honor Scholars and two new Wallace Scholars among our incoming freshmen. Each of the Koch Honor Scholars will be awarded between $30,000 and $50,000 over the course of four years. Of the nine Koch Honor Scholars named, four have declared EECS majors including: R. Chase Crenshaw, Andover High School, computer science; Kiehn A. Foraker, Rose Hill High School, computer science; Morgan K. Jarrett, Mulvane High School, computer engineering; and Nicholas A. Perkins, Andover High School, computer engineering. Wallace Scholars will receive $28,000 each to attend Wichita State for four years. 2016 Wallace Scholars who have declared EECS majors include William Mohr, Kapaun Mt. Carmel High School in Wichita, computer engineering, and Danny Nguyen, Wichita East High School, Kansas, computer engineering.

On May 6, Wichita State will present its 2016 Faculty Awards, which recognize those "setting the gold standard in teaching and research activities." Of the nine to be presented, three are going to our EECS faculty. They include: Dr. Visvakumar Aravindhan, (PhD, electrical engineering, Wichita State University), who will receive the
WSU Leadership in Teaching Award; **Dr. Huzefa Kagdi** (PhD, computer science, Kent State University) who will receive the WSU Excellence in Teaching Award for this year; and **Dr. Animesh Chakravarthy**, (PhD, aeronautics and astronautics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology), who will receive the WSU Young Faculty Scholar Award for this year. In addition, **Dr. Abu Asaduzzaman** (PhD, computer engineering, Florida Atlantic University) will be granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor in the Fall 2016 semester.

Finally, we would like to extend an invitation to our annual **Engineering Open House**, being held this year on May 7 at Koch Arena. This event serves as our annual celebration of student accomplishment and highlights our senior projects with a showcase of student design and research projects. [Learn more here.](#)

**Dr. John Watkins**  
Chair, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science  
WSU College of Engineering

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**Faculty and Research**

**Dr. Zheng Chen** (PhD, Electrical Engineering, Michigan State University) has received an National Science Foundation EPSCoR First Award for his project "Solar Energy Storage Using Ionic Polymer-Metal Composite Enhanced Water Electrolysis for Hydrogen Production." This project aims to develop a high efficient solar energy storage system that converts solar energy into hydrogen fuel through polymer-based water electrolysis. The enabling technologies developed in this project will lead to a clean, renewable, and storable energy system with zero carbon-dioxide emission, which will help resolve our climate change issues. An NSF EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) First Award helps early career faculty become competitive for future NSF funding. Dr. Chen, an assistant professor, joined Wichita State in August 2013. His research interests include dynamics and control, electroactive polymers (EAPs), bio-inspired robotics, biomedical devices, and renewable energy systems
Alumni

Ahmed Aziz came to Wichita from Egypt in 1993 looking for greater opportunities. Ahmed was working toward his bachelor’s in computer science, but left his senior year when he and his partners - also international students from Egypt - decided to start Cybertron International, a Wichita-based personal computer manufacturer. At the time, he and his partners -- fellow WSU alums Shadi Marcos and Emad Mekhail -- sensed a great opportunity in the technology sector. With only a few thousand dollars each and no real business plan, they got started. Ahmed says they had a clear vision of what they wanted to accomplish and eventually narrowed their focus as they identified their core competencies and what would give them a competitive edge.

Three years after starting Cybertron, Ahmed was ready to return to WSU. He went on to complete his computer science degree, earn a master’s in computer networking and is now working toward earning a Ph.D., while simultaneously using what he learns in school to help advance his company. Ahmed chose to give back to WSU earlier this year with a $2.5 million gift from Cybertron, which will equip the new Experiential Engineering Building with computers. We are proud to call him a Shocker!
Students

Andrew Trefethen, a junior computer science major, together with two other WSU students in January launched a new business called ProtoBench, which uses 3-D printing, CAD modeling and various forms of casting to create complete product prototypes, such as wearables, product housings and replacement components. Trefethen told The Sunflower that he pitched the idea to his boss at Electronic Sensors Incorporated (ESI): "It stemmed from seeing the problem that ESI had trying to make a prototype of my own for a different type of level sensor, and not being able to find the parts I needed. So I pitched it to them and they liked it a lot and they wanted to help me get it started," he said.

Trefethen's boss provided an empty space for the students to use right next door to ESI, which got ProtoBench moving. Trefethen says he and the other two founders are still working on gaining a steady client stream and have been active in various networking events, such as 1 Million Cups and the 2016 Engineering Expo. They are also working with the Kansas Small Business Development Center, which Trefethen says has been a big support, along with the College of Engineering.
IN THE NEWS

The latest Engineering Innovator magazine from the College of Engineering is full of exciting news about EECS. Learn about the new Experiential Engineering and Makerspace building that is coming to the Innovation Campus this fall. Read about EECS students and alumni making an impact and faculty receiving numerous research and teaching awards.

Wichita State's Epsilon Xi Chapter of the IEEE-HKN honor society received a national Outstanding Chapter Award for 2014-15 at the ECEDHA annual conference held in March. Learn more.

Dr. Pu Wang (PhD, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology) has received a John A. See Innovation Award granted by the university. Dr. Wang, assistant professor of electrical engineering and computer science, won for his project, "SKYNET: A Smart Swarming Drone System for Rapid and Reliable Communications Services." Learn more.

The Ennovar Institute at Wichita State University has a new partner that will allow students to gain unparalleled experience working with big data storage solutions. Re-Store is a California-based IBM premier partner focused on infrastructure engineering. Learn more.

The Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science is a sponsor of an upcoming 2016 Kansas Linux Fest, a free event being held on the WSU campus May 21-22, 2016. Linux users are invited to attend, learn and share knowledge about the free and open source software. Click here to register.

Wichita State College of Engineering is offering grants to train teachers in teaching a computer science curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way, a national non-profit dedicated to bolstering the pipeline of future engineers and computer scientists. Read more about this effort.

A free new outreach program designed to identify and engage gifted, young coders that allows them to build their skills by working side-by-side with professional software developers, web developers and computer scientists has been launched by
Wichita State in partnership with the College of Engineering, STEMpact2020 and the National Center for Aviation Training. Learn more about this program drawing youth and mentors from all over the area.

We appreciate your support of the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department. If you wish to express your support with a financial contribution, please know it will benefit current and future students, faculty and staff, and programs that enhance the student experience. All donations are tax deductible.

Make a Donation

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