MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends of EECS,

As we prepare for the 2016-17 academic year, we are excited by several exciting new opportunities for our students, faculty and staff. In October, construction is expected to be completed on our newest engineering building. The $42 million Experiential Engineering Building will feature 25 hands-on, experiential learning laboratories designed to engage our students in group problem-solving and entrepreneurial thinking. We are particularly excited about the impact that the Computational Hub and Collaborative Software Studio will have on our computer science, computer engineering, and computer networking programs. Likewise, we think that the Virtual Instrumentation Studio, Electronics Hub and Controls Lab will provide our electrical engineering students access to state of the art facilities. All of our students will be able to take their ideas from concepts to reality in the Project Innovation Hub and the GoCreate Makerspace. This new building is considered the gateway to Wichita State’s Innovation Campus, located on the old Braeburn Golf Course. The area is being transformed to make way for private partnership development that will bring industry to campus to employ our students and provide experiential learning opportunities. The initiative was recently highlighted in the New York Times. The first partner building will house Airbus Americas. In addition, a new Law Enforcement Training Center and a 123-room Westin Hotel, which shall serve as an anchor to a Braeburn Square development at 21st and Oliver, which will include privately financed shops and restaurants. The new building is just one of many ways the EECS Department is embracing innovation as its
mission. As this newsletter will highlight, our faculty, alumni and students are all engaged in significant projects developed under this mission.

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

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**Faculty and Research**

**Dr. Murtuza Jadliwala** (PhD, Computer Science, The University at Buffalo, State University of New York) has been granted a $180,000 National Science Foundation award to explore methods for using smart phones and wearable technology to improve pedestrian safety. [Read the abstract here.](#) The research will track distracted behaviors and explore ways to alert mobile users to possible dangers. Dr. Jadliwala also has a $400,000 National Science Foundation grants to support his on-going research in the privacy and security vulnerabilities of wearable technology. [Read this abstract here.](#) Dr. Jadliwala is working to develop and grow student interest in the field of cybersecurity by helping establish a student-led Cybersecurity Student Association and leading a cybersecurity summer camp as part of WSU Engineering for 7th-12th graders. Jadliwala welcomed the new experience: "As college/graduate educators, we often overlook high school students who are as much interested in the topic of cybersecurity as undergraduate and graduate student but do not have appropriate avenues to learn more about it."

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**Alumni**
**Timothy Unruh** received a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Wichita State University in 1992. He currently works in Washington, D.C., in the Department of Energy as a program manager for the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). This agency facilitates sound, cost-effective energy management and investment practices to enhance the nation's energy security and environmental stewardship. FEMP is central to this responsibility, guiding agencies to use funding more effectively in meeting Federal and agency-specific energy management objectives. He previously worked for 10 years at Custom Energy Services in Overland Park, Kan., reaching the position of Vice President of Engineering and Operations. [Learn more.](#)

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**Students**

**Satya V P K Maddukuri**, a PhD student in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, was one of several students working on a collaborative project called [GoBabyGo!](#), a project involving WSU engineering students, physical therapy students, and Rainbows United, a local nonprofit serving students with disabilities. The team adapted off-the-shelf ride-in cars for children with disabilities. Maddukuri took part in the service project on behalf of [IEEE-Eta Kappa Nu Honor Society](#). His role was to program the Arduino microcontroller and assist other students on the team in wiring the car. "I felt honored to see that my education and programming skills made a contribution in creating mobility to a child," said Maddukuri. "Even though I made few robots as part of my academic career earlier, I haven't ever had this great feeling."
The College of Engineering Open House Awards Banquet was held on May 7 at the Hyatt Regency. Sponsored by Westar Energy, the banquet featured Kelly Harrison (BSEE 1981) as the keynote speaker. Harrison is Westar Vice President of Transmission. Also speaking was Julie-Ellen Acosta (BSEE 1980, MSEE 1984), Vice President of Boeing Defense Space and Security- Phantom Works. Acosta was recognized as our Distinguished Alumni Fellow this year. To see photos from the 2016 Engineering Open House, visit our Facebook page.

Also in May, outstanding accomplishments of EECS Department individuals were celebrated at the EECS Department Awards Ceremony, organized by IEEE-HKN Epsilon Xi Chapter: Alicia Keow was recognized as the Outstanding EECS Graduating Undergraduate Student, an award that led to her nomination for the 2015-2016 Alton B. Zerby and Carl T. Koerner Outstanding Electrical or Computer Engineering Student Award, an honor for which she is one of three national finalists; Nimanthi Nandasiri was recognized as the Outstanding EECS Graduating Graduate Student; Anton Hettiarachchige-Don was recognized as the Outstanding EECS Graduate Research Assistant; and Dr. Visvakumar Aravindan was recognized as the "Student Choice of the Faculty Member of the Year."
Read more.

Two Ph.D. students from the EECS department, Uddipan Das and Mojtaba Sepehry, were awarded 11th and 12th Maha "Maggie" Sawan Fellowship respectively. Maha "Maggie" Sawan Scholarship is awarded to Ph.D. students or M.S. students admitted to a Ph.D. program based on their academic achievement. Read more.

Four students from the EECS department were recognized by the Graduate School with the most prestigious awards: Nimanthi Nandasiri, Meysam Ghanavati, Thanatheepan Balachandran, and Mohammad Heidari-Kapourchali. Two more were recognized with fellowships: Sara Zanjani and Ali Behfarnia. Read more.

Partnerships with industry developed through Ennovar have led to employment for 40 students who are getting applied-learning experience in solutions reference architecture, coding and content development for web and mobile apps. Learn more.

In another partnership between WSU students an area, Dr. Abu Asaduzzaman, associate professor of electrical engineering and computer science, and former student Chok Meng Yip explored ways to help Spay Neuter Kansas City address challenges posed by dated technology in the microchip scanners. Learn more.
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.

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