

Environmental Engineering Department News

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Special Points of interest:

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- AAEE Student Chapter
- Undergrad Corner

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EVEN Highlights



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Student Achievements

A Dedication Ceremony was held for **Denis Guleiof** and **Jonathan Gorman** (BS) who created and demonstrated the newly up-and-running wind turbine that is currently powering one of the club cars at the TAMUK Physical Plant garage.

The AAEE Student Chapter Organization hosted a **Valentine's Day fundraiser** (pictured right) and sold decorated Rice Krispie treats. Yum! Later in the month the organization met and voted in their **New 2013 Officers**: **Theresa Perez**, President; **Maegan Saverline**, Vice-Pres.; **Jerry Carmona**, Secretary; **Ashley Rivera**, Treasurer; **Crescencio Fonseca**, Corr. Secretary; **Juan Martinez**, Historian, and **Hunter Balzen**, Sergeant of Arms. They also created a facebook page to their group. Please go to <http://www.facebook.com/groups/tamuk.aee/> or search TAMU-Kingsville AAEE and click "Like"



Denis Guleiof, Daniel Guerra, Maegan Saverline,
Teresa Perez and Ashley Rivera

A **Mandatory Graduate Student Meeting** was held to discuss topics such as Student Support, Thesis/Research Project/Dissertation, Program Academic Milestones, Lab Support/Logistics, and Q & A Open Forum. **Drs. Kim D. Jones** and **Lee Clapp** were on hand to present and answer all questions. February 5, 2013.

Raul Rivas Cantu (Ph.D.) gave two presentations at the **AIChE 2012 Conference** in Philadelphia, PA titled "[Adsorption of Galacturonic Acid onto Anion-exchange Resins to Enhance the Enzymatic Hydrolysis in a Proposed Citrus Processing Waste Biorefinery](#)" and "[Utilization of Citrus Processing Waste as Renewable Feedstock for Biorefinery Applications: Technical Advances, and Analysis of Engineering Challenges for the pretreatment and Enzymatic Hydrolysis Steps](#)".

Undergrad Corner

The Due Process Response Report was sent to the **ABET** team in February. The Department hopes to hear something back in the next month or two in regards to the BS program being accredited as early as Fall 2013.

A **Mandatory Student Advisory Meeting** was held Feb. 28th for all Env Eng undergrad students as a condition of getting their advising hold removed. If you did not attend the meeting there will be one final meeting available. **Dr. Breanna Bailey** has not set the date of that meeting yet. You **will not** be able to register for Summer/Fall classes until you attend the Advisory Meeting.

If you are interested in joining the **AAEE Student Organization** please contact **Jerry Carmona** (BS) secretary at gerardocarmona24@yahoo.com. If interested in joining the **AWMA Organization** please contact **Iris Facundo** (BS) Secretary at irisfacundo@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions you can contact our department at 361-593-4330 or send Cathey an email at allen@tamuk.edu.

Alumni

Dr. Jose Cabezas (Class of '13) accepted a position as a **Professor of Petroleum Engineering** within the **Earth Science Department** at the *Escuela Superior Politecnica del Litoral* in Ecuador. His responsibilities include teaching and serving as program coordinator for the MS program in Petroleum Engineering.

Dr. Xubin Pan, E.I.T. (Class of '12) and **Jingyi Zhang** (MS, Class of '13) had a publication published titled "Dynamic behavior of storm water quality parameters in South Texas" in *Frontiers of Environmental Science & Engineering*. December 2012, Volume 6, pp 825-830. Dr. Pan is an **Environmental Researcher** with **Chinese Academy of Inspection and Quarantine**, Beijing, China.

Syamala Diwakaruni, E.I.T. (Class of '04) who married **Ranjith Dandanayakula** (Class of '04) have relocated to India this past November. Syamala is the **Engineer-in-Charge for the Integrated Solid Waste Management Project** with **Environmental Protection Training and Research Institute (EPTRI)** in Hyderabad. They now have two sons.

Vinod Balakrishnan, E.I.T. (Class of '12) is an **Engineer I** at **Atkins North America, Inc.** in Houston, Texas.

Daniel Heuston (Class of '12) is an **Engineer** working for the *City of Corpus Christi*.

LinkedIn is a great way to stay in touch with our Alumni—please connect with Catherine Allen when you can.

Recruitment

A **Doctoral Fellowship** is available at TAMUK for research projects at the Department of Environmental Engineering starting this Fall 2013. These research projects span ten areas in environmental engineering including 1) Air Quality, 2) Water Quality, 3) Solid/Hazardous Waste, 4) Ecological Engineering, 5) Natural Resources Management, 6) Environmental Systems, 7) Environmental Informatics, 8) Environmental Biotechnology, 9) Sensing Technology and 10) Sustainable Energy Systems. If interested please contact **Dr. Jennifer Ren** via email at kfjr000@tamuk.edu or call 361-593-2290.

Dr. Hongbo Su and **Dr. Kuo-Jen Liao** represented the Environmental Engineering department when interested **Bishop H.S. Seniors** and **Santa Gertrudis 8th graders** arrived to visit the College of Engineering. Ph.D. students **Jessica Ruiz** and **Sergio Santos** gave lab research demonstrations. January 22-23, 2013.

Dr. Kuo-Jen Liao, and **Rose Rodriguez** traveled to Laredo to participate in the **STEM Careers Pathways Workshop**. While there **Dr. Liao** enjoyed informing students about Environmental Engineering. January 30, 2013.

Dr. David Ramirez presented "Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources" at the *First Annual TAMUK Dual Enrollment Day*. February 1, 2013.



Dr. Kuo-Jen Liao and Dr. Claudio Montiel (Elec. Eng.)

Faculty / Staff News

Dr. Hongbo Su and **Dr. David Ramirez** traveled to College Station and participated in the *Junior Faculty Research Collaboration Conference*. Dr. Su gave an oral and poster presentation on his remote sensing and water resources research. Dr. Ramirez was an invited speaker on Writing a CAREER grant. January 10-11, 2013.

Dr. Lee Clapp hosted the *SME South Texas Minerals Section Meeting* at TAMUK, College of Engineering where Daniel Heuston (2012 MS Graduate) presented a talk on "Comparison of Hydrogen and Acetate as Substrates for the Reductive Immobilization of Uranium under In-Situ Pressure". January 24, 2013.

Dr.'s Lee Clapp, Alvaro Martinez and **Mais Nijim** were awarded **\$35,938** for a project "**Environmental Friendly Drilling Technology Integration—Phase I**" from the *U.S. Department of Energy* (through the Houston Advanced Research Institute). **Phase II of the Environmentally Friendly Drilling-Technology Integration Program (EFD-TIP)** subproject "Wireless Sensor Network for Monitoring VOCs at Drilling Sites" was funded for **\$64,828** by the DoE's *Research Partnership to Secure Energy for America (RPSEA)* program.

Dr. Lee Clapp attended a County Commissioners' meeting in Riviera that addressed the community's problem with uranium in their drinking water supplies. February 7, 2013.

Faculty / Staff News (cont.)

Dr. Jianhong Ren and Rose Rodriguez traveled to Corpus Christi for a planning meeting on the upcoming “*Sustainable Eagle Ford Shale Community Infrastructure Challenges and Solutions Workshop*” scheduled for **April 10th** at TAMUK. Panels will be on 1) Water Supply and Municipal Wastewater Treatment, 2) Municipal Solid Waste Management and Disposable, 3) Air Quality Assessment and Controls and 4) Roads and Road Safety. February 1, 2013.

Dr. David Ramirez and Rose Rodriguez hosted a *CREST Proposal Retreat* with all Environmental faculty present at the Tio & Janelle Kleberg Wildlife Center. February 11, 2013.

Dr. Lee Clapp, Gerald Ogumerem (MS) and Nikhil Matrawadi (MS) traveled to San Antonio, TX where they passed a **12-hour PEC -SafeLand Basic Safety Awareness** course as part of the requirements for obtaining permission to enter onto oil and gas drilling sites. They also made a presentation “Operations Plan for Implementing a Wireless Sensor Network for Monitoring VOCs at Oil and Gas Drilling Sites” at the *Environmentally Friendly Drilling Technology Integration Program (EFD-TIP) Kickoff meeting*. February 20-22, 2013.

Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment (ISEE) News

Javier Guerrero, Cheryl Flores, and Augusto Sanchez presented to the *City Commission of San Juan* the action plan to keep moving forward with the *Green Roof Project* at the *Amigos Del Valle Community Center*. ISEE will coordinate efforts of researchers/engineers, graduate students, RGV local companies and USDA botanists to develop a green roof system that fits the grant requirements, the city’s needs and the project constraints. The city approved the action plan and contractual procedures are in progress and the green roof design is being finalized. January 24, 2013.

Javier Guerrero traveled to Austin to meet with the *TCEQ Water Quality Division Director*. ISEE and the LRGV Task Force are working with TCEQ and several State Representatives in submitting legislation to the State of Texas that will create a state-wide **TPDES Stormwater Professional Licensure Program**. January 30, 2013.

Dr. Kim D. Jones was awarded funding for his proposal titled “Innovative Biological Air Emissions Control for O&G Industry” in the amount of **\$150,000** sponsored by the *Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)*. February, 2013.

ISEE personnel and the *South Texas College*, McAllen, TX have agreed to formally partner in developing a **Low Impact Development** demonstration site at the STC McAllen campus. An existing LID parking lot designed by PCE, Inc. will be retrofitted with storm water monitoring equipment as part of the *Clean Water Act 319 LID Phase II* project funded by *TCEQ*. February, 2013.

ISEE finalized plans with the *Citrus Center* and the *City of Weslaco* to renovate the Rio Red Classroom (located at the Citrus Center). With the support of the *LRVG TPDES Stormwater Taskforce* the classroom will be equipped with workstations, projectors, smart boards and communications features to deliver certification courses and training on GIS and drafting and design (AutoCAD) for the regional professionals. Part of the scope of work is to make arrangements in the building to house the permanent ISEE officers in the RGV. February, 2013.

Upcoming Events

Eagle Ford Shale Center for Research, Education and Outreach Workshop will be held at the TAMU-K Kleberg Wildlife Center on **April 10, 2013**. For more information contact **Rose Rodriguez** at rose.rodriguez@tamuk.edu.

ISEE will host their *15th Annual Stormwater Management Conference* on **April 17-19, 2013 at The Pearl Resort on South Padre Island**. **Call for Papers** and **Call for Posters** were sent out in February. 1st Place prize—Graduate Poster is **\$1000**, Undergraduate Poster is **\$500**. There will be a **Fishing Tournament** on April 20th. If you would like more information you can contact **Cheryl Flores** at Cheryl.Flores@tamuk.edu.

U2013 Uranium Mining and Restoration Conference will be held in Corpus Christi on **September 29—October 3, 2013**. More information will be available later.



Go Javelina's !!!!