

Environmental Engineering Department News

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Special Points of interest:

- August Graduates
- Student Achievements
- Dissertations / Thesis
- Undergrad Corner

Inside this Issue:

- Alumni News
- Faculty / Staff News
- ISEE News
- CREST-RESSACA News
- Dean's Corner
- Upcoming Events



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EVEN Highlights



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Student Achievements

August Commencement—Graduating with a **Doctor of Philosophy** was **Yuan Yuan** (pictured right), **Master of Science** was **Alonso Cantu**, **Daniel J. Heuston**, **Obianuju Hilda Ifesiokwu**, **Tanvir Rashid Khan**, and **Oladeji Olasimoju**. [Congratulations All!!](#)



Sagar Chitre (MS) was awarded 2nd Place for his paper titled "Quantification of Water Adsorption Capacity of Biologically Active Soil and Woodchips" at the 6th International Conference on Environmental Science and Technology 2012 held in Houston, Texas. June, 2012

Iris Facundo (BS) did an internship with the Environmental Protection Agency this summer and submitted a Spanish language blog entry on "Biochemical oxygen demand, and what you and your household can do about it". To view go to <http://blog.epa.gov/espanol/> Nice contribution and enhancement to the U.S. EPA website in Spanish! This submission was recognized by EPA.

Jose Cabezas (PhD) served as interpreter for a delegation from Paraguay that toured UEC's Uranium Mining Facilities in South Texas. The delegation from Paraguay included the Minister of Public Works and Communications, the Vice-Minister of Energy, a Legislator and two aids. September 2012.

AWMA Student Members participated in the "Adopt a Beach" program in Corpus Christi. Environmental Engineering members were (BS) **Iris Facundo**, **Ana Cardona**, (MS) **Sagar Chitre**, **Robert Salinas**, and (PhD) **Nereyda Facundo**, **Prajay Gor**, **Andy Chang**, and **Joseph Amaya**.

Dissertation / Thesis Presentations

Raul Rivas Cantu (PhD) defended his Dissertation proposal titled "Citrus Waste Biorefinery: Process Development and Modeling for Pretreatment and Enzymatic Hydrolysis of Grapefruit Processing Waste Biomass". Advisor: Dr. Kim D. Jones

Sagar Arun Chitre (MS) defended his Thesis Proposal titled "Physical Characterization and Quantification of Water Uptake Capacity of Biocover Media". Advisor: Dr. David Ramirez

Undergrad Corner

We had a total of 22 new UG students join our program this Fall semester bringing our total BS students up to 56! The Faculty and Cathey are busy gearing up for the **ABET** site visit next month. If all goes smooth, the program could be accredited as early as Fall 2013.

If you are interested in joining the **AAEE Student Organization** please contact **Theresa Perez** (BS) secretary at theresa.a.perez@gmail.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.

Go to Page 2

Alumni News

Vikrant Chavan, E.I.T. (MS EVEN Class of '08) is now Senior Environmental Specialist at [Pioneer Natural Resources Company](#) and has relocated to Dallas, TX.

Aditya Singh (MS EVEN Class of '10) is now an Air Quality Specialist at [New Tech Carr Environmental Group](#) in Houston, TX.

Goutham Amarneni (MS EVEN Class of '95) is the President and Co-founder of [Zolon Tech Inc](#) in Washington D.C.

Priyanka Painuly (MS EVEN Class of '01) is an Environmental Engineer at [Iowa DNR-Air Quality Bureau](#) in Urbandale, IA.

Amol Kulkarni, P.E. (MS EVEN Class of '02) is an Environmental Advisor/Engineer at [Chevron](#) in Houston, TX.

Daniel Heuston (MS EVEN Class of '12) is an Engineering Associate with the [City of Corpus Christi](#), Corpus Christi, TX.

Dr. Christopher Fuller (MS EVEN Class of '96) earned his Doctorate from TAMU last year and is now a Research Engineer at [Clarkson University](#), New York.

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

Faculty / Staff News

A farewell luncheon was given to **Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri** who transferred to Texas Tech to be closer to his new wife and alumni **Dr. Annette Hernandez-Uddameri**. Best Wishes to you both.

Dr.'s Alvaro Martinez and Kuo-Jen Liao, Prajay Gor (PhD) and BS students Gisela Alfaro, Procopio Herrera, Azia Hinojosa, Paige McIntyre, Ariel Ramirez, Tamara Guillen, and Juan Rios traveled to Montgomery, Alabama to visit and meet with the staff of [National Air and Radiation Environmental Laboratory \(NAREL\)](#). During the summer, the UG students performed research on the [Multidisciplinary Approach to Educate and Train Engineer & Science Students on Air Pollution Issues of the US-Mexico Border grant](#). August 12-14, 2012.



Dr.'s Clapp, Ramirez, and Martinez all directed HS students in the [YESTexas, GEMS or ESF Summer Camps](#) along with graduate students **Prajay Gor, Nima Ghahremani (PhDs), Tanvir Khan and Sagar Chitre (MS)**. July 2012

Dr. David Ramirez participated as a Judge at the [Student Presentation Competition](#) of the [Upward Bound Math & Science Program](#). July 2012.

Dr. Kim Jones traveled to Columbus, OH to participate in the [Environmental Engineering Department and Program Chairs Conference](#) at the [Ohio State University](#) sponsored by the [American Academy of Environmental Engineers](#). July, 2012.

Dr. Lee Clapp made a technical presentation "[Nutrient and Bacterial Monitoring Studies for the Arroyo Colorado](#)" at the [Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership Steering Committee Meeting](#) in Weslaco, TX and another presentation "[Air Quality Monitoring of Drilling Operations in the Eagle Ford Shale](#)" at an [Environmental Friendly Drilling Workshop](#) in San Antonio, TX. August 2012

Dr. Ghanbarnezhad-Moghanloo (NGEN) and Dr. Lee Clapp were awarded a **\$15,000 University Research Award** for a project entitled "[Assessment of Potential CO2 Sequestration and RO Brine Utilization in Eagle Ford Shale Hydraulic Fracturing Operations](#)". August, 2012.

Dr. Lee Clapp gave two short presentations to the [TAMU-Chief Research Officer](#) (1) "[Wireless Sensor Network for Characterizing VOC Emissions from Hydraulic Fracturing Sites](#)", and (2) "[Enhanced Uranium Mining and Restoration](#)". **Dr. David Ramirez** gave a presentation on "[Research on Nanomaterials](#)" and **Raul Rivas (PhD)** gave a presentation on "[Citrus Waste Biorefinery](#)" all held at the TAMU-K campus. September 2012.

Dr. Lee Clapp organized a hands-on-lab activity "[Coagulation and Flocculation](#)" for seven visiting HS Counselor's and **Dr. David Ramirez** participated at the **High School Counselors Luncheon** held on the TAMU-K campus. September 2012.

Dr. Kim Jones and Dr. Lee Clapp organized the [American Academy of Environmental Engineers Webinar](#) on "[U.S. Clean Energy Challenges Focus on Hydraulic Fracturing](#)". Many engineering students took part in the informative session. September 2012.

Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment (ISEE) News

A farewell luncheon was given to **Abel Garza** who retired in August and a warm welcome to **Cheryl Flores** the new Communications Officer who joined the ISEE in September.

Dr. Kim Jones traveled to Macedonia, Skopje to present a paper on “Citrus Waste Biorefinery” at the *7th SDEWES Conference on Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environmental Systems*. July 2012

Javier Guerrero, **Augusto Sanchez**, and **Monica Hernandez** organized and assisted in delivering a short course entitled “Developing & Implementing a Soil Erosion Management Plan at Construction Site” in San Benito, TX where SWTF Representatives and EVEN students attended. July 2012.

Dr. Kim Jones had a grant awarded titled “US/Mexico Border Environmental Program Waste Tire Reuse” sponsored by **EPA/Border Environment Cooperation Commission** for **\$15,000**. August 2012.

Augusto Sanchez and EVEN students **Jingyi Zhang (PhD)**, **Vinod Balakrishnan** and **Ayokunle Falade (MS)** traveled to Denver, CO to participate at the *STORMCON North American Surface Water Quality Conference & Exposition*. August 2012.

Dr. Kim Jones, **Javier Guerrero**, **Augusto Sanchez**, **Cheryl Flores**, **Jingyi Zhang (PhD)** and **Vinod Balakrishnan (MS)** traveled to Austin, TX to participate in the project kick off meeting with **TCEQ** for the *Phase III Program for Low Impact Development for the Rio Grande Valley* funded at \$833,192 and attend training at the *TCEQ Water Quality/Storm Water Seminar*. September 2012.

CREST-RESSACA News

A fond farewell was given to **Kartik Venkataraman** who accepted a faculty position with Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX in August, 2012.

Publication by **Kartik Venkataraman** and **Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri** titled Modeling simultaneous exceedance of drinking-water standards of arsenic and nitrate in the Southern Ogallala aquifer using Multinomial logistic regression. *Journal of Hydrology*, available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2012.06.028>.

CREST-RESSACA is in it's 11th year and we have had a few changes! We said good-bye to **Dr. Venki Uddameri** who was the PI and the reigns have been passed to **Dr. David Ramirez** who is the new PI of **CREST-RESSACA** beginning September, 2012. **CREST** is supporting three PhD's **Josepha Amaya**, **Yaneth Gamboa** and **Jessica Ruiz**, six Master's **Gehan Flanders**, **Avery Goldsmith**, **Lewis Haynes**, **Justin Long**, **Natalie Rocha**, and **Carmen Thomas**, and six Bachelor's **Gerardo Carmona**, **Iris Facundo**, **Jesus Prado**, **Andrea Meyer**, **Natalia Rojas**, and **Raul Rivas Villarreal**. It is a full compliment of students/research and we are looking forward to the rest of this year!

Dean's Corner

The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** visited with department heads to discuss action items on **EPA/TAMUK Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** and how various departments across campus can be involved. EPA also attended the **Engineering Career Fair** held on campus in September 2012.

Educational Service Center 2: counselors visited the College of Engineering in August. They participated in various hands-on engineering projects and received information on student related resources on campus as well as information the other colleges offer at TAMUK.

Upcoming Events

2012 Football Season: **TAMU-K Homecoming** is **October 27th!!** TAMUK vs Angelo State! Be sure to stop by the **Javelina Alumni RGV Engineers** tailgate table for some barbeque!



Go Javelina's !!!!