

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING



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TAILGATE!

A homecoming football tailgate for electrical engineering alumni and the department will be held on Oct. 15 prior to the game with Purdue beginning at 9 a.m. We will be located at RV parking space number 3115 which is located on the grass lot west of the stadium between the paved lot and University Drive. Look for the pink and purple balloons.

Please plan to stop by. You don't have to register but it will help with planning. You can sign up on our website here: <http://www.ee.psu.edu/AlumniFriends/default.aspx> or call Cathy McClellan at 814-863-0253.



PENN STATE ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING SOCIETY IS ACTIVE AND ENERGIZED

Name Change and Officers

The Society of Penn State Electrical Engineers (the department alumni association) recently changed their name to Penn State Electrical Engineering Society (PSEES). The new name is more in line with the name of the college and other department's alumni associations. The name change was voted on during the spring meeting.

At that meeting, we also elected three new officers:

Dale Hoffman, retired, U.S. Navy civilian

Jim Blazer, vice chairman and CTO, RTD Embedded Technologies

Eric Kline, engineering manager, All Traffic Solutions



Dale Hoffman



Jim Blazer



Eric Kline

Awards

PSEES sponsors an Early Career Recognition Alumni Award. This award recognizes outstanding electrical engineering alumni at the outset of their career. This year's award winner is **Brandon Ritrovato** from Lockheed Martin. We will present Ritrovato with the award at the graduation reception on Dec. 8. For more information on Ritrovato, see page 2.

Our award got an award!

The PSEES was awarded the Young Alumni Involvement Award from the Penn State Alumni Association for the development of our Early Career Recognition Alumni Award. The award is given to an affiliate group that has developed an outstanding program or event that specifically targets, reaches, and increases recruitment and participation in the alumni association and affiliate group for our young alumni population. The award banquet will be held on Oct. 28 at the Nittany Lion Inn.



Look at all that pizza



Look at all those people

Mixer

PSEES held its first student/alumni mixer on Sep. 22. It was attended by more than 200 alumni, students, and faculty members. The mixer was held during the career fair which brings alumni in from all over the country to recruit students. Students and alumni were able to network while enjoying pizza and soda. This was also an opportunity for mentors to meet their assigned student.

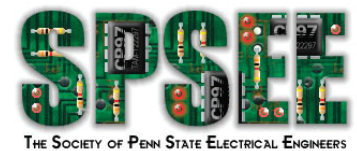


Alumni - Jerry Kolbe and Dale Hoffman

Logo Contest

New name = new logo.

PSEES is in need of a new logo to reflect our new name. The SPSEE logo (on the right) was created by a student a long time ago. We are looking for something new using the new acronym. Entries for the contest are due by Nov. 1. The winner will receive a \$75 VISA gift card. Submit entries to Cathy McClellan, CLS118@psu.edu.



Graduation Reception

The PSEES is co-hosting (with the department) the graduation reception for the graduating seniors this fall. The event will take place on Dec. 8 at 6 p.m. in Kunkle Lounge in the Hammond Building. All alumni are invited to attend. We will be awarding our Early Career Recognition Alumni Award and recognizing our hard working seniors as they complete their bachelor's degree. Please join us as we welcome them as new Penn State electrical engineering alumni.

RITROVATO WINS CAREER AWARD

Brandon Ritrovato, a senior software engineer at Lockheed Martin, is this year's recipient of the Early Career Recognition Alumni Award. This award, sponsored by the Penn State Electrical Engineering Society and the Department of Electrical Engineering recognizes outstanding electrical engineering alumni at the outset of their career. Candidates are chosen based on their career achievements, extra-curricular leadership activities, and their potential for success.



Ritrovato received his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering in 2006. He worked as an intern at Lockheed Martin in 2005 and was a finalist for the Penn State's Engineering Intern of the Year Award. Following graduation, Ritrovato accepted a position at Lockheed Martin's King of Prussia location and entered their Engineering Leadership Development Program. As part of this program, Ritrovato was also enrolled in graduate school and received his masters of engineering in systems engineering at Penn State's Great Valley campus in 2009.

Volunteering at Lockheed Martin and in his local community keeps Ritrovato busy. He has been involved in the College Hire Assimilation and Mentoring Program, Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, National Engineers Week, middle school mentoring program, and founded the round table mentoring, among others.

Born and raised in Norristown, PA, Ritrovato currently lives in King of Prussia, PA, and enjoys watching baseball and playing softball.

Ritrovato will receive the award at the graduation reception on Dec. 8 in Kunkle Lounge.

MENTORING PROGRAM ENTERS 2ND YEAR

The department mentoring program had its ups and downs in the first year but overall it was a successful program beneficial to both the student and the alumni mentor.

This year we have 65 alumni-student mentoring pairs. They were matched based on their areas of interest and technical expertise. The program was designed to provide leadership and direction to our students from a real-world perspective.

Every mentor-student pair decides how they plan to communicate. There is no right or wrong way to establish a basis for the mentor relationship. For some alumni who live or work in the area, it is not uncommon for the pair to meet for coffee or lunch. However, our mentors are all over the country and most communicate via email. There were several mentoring pairs who were also able to meet when the alumnus was in town for a football game or a recruitment activity.

Steve Hughes graduated with a bachelor's degree in the spring. Last year, Hughes was a mentee; this year he signed up to be a mentor. Hughes comments on the program, "The foremost important thing about this program is the exposure it creates for students. You can truly gain a better feel for what you may be interested in doing in the future. It is crucial to take advantage of programs like this because it will enable you to test the water before you are stuck for a year in a job you won't like. Through the mentor program, you can really gain a feeling of either "yes" I may be interested in what the mentee is talking about, or "absolutely not" I will never go into what he/she is doing as a job."

The success of the program is an indication of the dedication and enthusiasm of our alumni. We had more alumni volunteer for the program this year and not all of them have been assigned a student yet. We will assign more students at the beginning of the spring semester in January.

Thank you to all our mentor volunteers!



INTERIM DEPARTMENT HEAD APPOINTED

Kultegin Aydin, professor of electrical engineering and graduate program coordinator, has been named interim head of the Department of Electrical Engineering effective July 15. Aydin will replace **Kenneth Jenkins** who is stepped down on Aug. 15.

Aydin received his Ph. D. in electrical engineering from METU in Turkey. He joined Penn State in 1985 and has served as director of the Communications and Space Sciences Laboratory since 2008. He is a fellow of IEEE and a member of the American Meteorological Society, American Geophysical Union, and the International Union of Radio Science Commission F. He serves as an associate editor of the IEEE Transactions on Geoscience and Remote Sensing.

Jenkins will remain in the department as professor of electrical engineering teaching and pursuing his research in signal and image processing.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Congratulations

Kultegin Aydin was recently honored for 25 years of service at Penn State. Aydin, professor and interim department head, began his career at Penn State in 1985. He is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and a member of the American Meteorological Society, American Geophysical Union, and the International Union of Radio Science Commission F. He serves as an associate editor of the IEEE Transactions on Geoscience and Remote Sensing. Aydin received his 25-year chair at a ceremony on Sep. 22.

Keegan McCoy, a student majoring in electrical engineering and astronomy, has been named a winner of a 2011 Universities Space Research Association (USRA) Scholarship. The USRA Scholarship Program provides college scholarships to students who have shown a career interest in the physical sciences or engineering with an emphasis on space research or space science education.

Congratulations to the following electrical engineering faculty/staff members for their years of service at Penn State:

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| John Metzner | 25 years |
| Jeff Mayer | 20 years |
| Kenji Uchino | 20 years |
| Qiming Zhang | 20 years |
| Gabi Rhinehart | 10 years |
| Yanxi Liu | 5 years |
| Julio Urbina | 5 years |

Summer Research Program

Twelve students from universities across the country and Puerto Rico participated in the summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program. This summer marked the 9th year for the electrical engineering REU program which is funded by the National Science Foundation. The program, at Penn State, which is co-directed by professors **Ken Jenkins** and **Sven Bilén**, is a nine-week summer program open to undergraduate students who are citizens or permanent residents of the United States. The goal of the program is to provide individually challenging experiences in research and well-organized integrative team activities in ethics, entrepreneurship, and professional development to accomplish its objective of attracting talented undergraduate students and providing a program of unique, high quality, and balanced research activities that positively impact the participant's lifelong career choices in engineering research.



REU Students and Ken Jenkins outside the Accuweather facility

Meet our Newest Staff Members

Lisa Timko joined the department this summer as a graduate admissions administrative support assistant. Timko, who is originally from State College, attended Penn State and graduated in 2002 with a B.S. in human development and family studies. She was employed as a teacher at the Bennett Family Center on the Penn State campus for nine years. She and her husband, Dan, have two girls - ages one and six. Lisa enjoys scrapbooking and spending time with her family.

Dave DeCapria is our new engineering lab manager. DeCapria, originally from Jersey Shore, grew up in Corning, NY. He has been employed by Penn State for 23 years; most recently he was the facility manager, safety officer, and undergraduate lab technician in the Department of Chemical Engineering. He also held positions in the meteorology department and mineral engineering department. DeCapria is an assistant chief on the Penn State Hazardous Materials Response Team. He is pro-board certified in incident command and is certified pro-board as a hazardous materials technician. In addition, DeCapria is a Department of Health safety officer with the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region III Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team and a radiological response officer with Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. DeCapria and his wife, Patty, live in Houserville and have three daughters.

Dawn Nelson joined the department in August as department head administrative support assistant. She has more than 22 years of experience at Penn State including six years as a staff assistant in the office of the president and seven years as an assistant to the associate dean of the graduate school. Nelson was also the assistant to the department head in the engineering science and mechanics department, and the assistant to the department head in agricultural and extension education. Nelson's responsibilities include providing administrative support to the department head. She resides in Boalsburg with her husband, John, and three sons, Philip and twins Alec and Ian.

Retirements

Anna Kennedy, graduate admissions administrative support assistant, and **Mona Shaw**, department head administrative support assistant, both retired at the end of June.



Kennedy started her 25-year Penn State career in the data processing department in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. She held several positions within that department for the next 18 years. Kennedy joined the Department of Electrical Engineering in 2002.



Shaw joined Penn State in 1987. After working as a staff assistant in several departments, Shaw joined the Department of Electrical Engineering in 2003 and worked as Ken Jenkins' administrative support assistant for eight years.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

In August, **Ken Jenkins**, professor of electrical engineering, participated as a track chair, a steering committee member, and a presenting author at the "54th International Symposium on Circuits and Systems" held at Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea.

On Oct. 28, Jenkins will participate as an invited panel member in the 60th anniversary celebration of the Coordinated Science Laboratory at the University of Illinois.

Vishal Monga, assistant professor of electrical engineering, has been officially awarded the Monkowski Career Development Professorship for early faculty career development.

As a scientific advisory board member, **Mohsen Kavehrad**, W. L. Weiss Chair Professor of Electrical Engineering, attended the 3rd Annual Review of the Smart Lighting Center NSF Engineering Research Center held at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (<http://smartlighting.rpi.edu/index.shtml>) in June.

Kavehrad was an invited speaker at the 2011 Application of Lasers for Sensing & Free Space Communication topical meeting held in July in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Srinivas Tadigadapa, professor of electrical engineering, and his research were highlighted in an article in Chemistry World this summer. You can access the article here which includes a direct link to his research. <http://www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/News/2011/June/09061102.asp>

Qiming Zhang, distinguished professor of electrical engineering, presented the Zhonshan Distinguished Lecture at Nanjing University of China. It was titled "Giant electrocaloric effect in ferroelectrics – a new frontier in ferroelectrics with great impact in energy and environment."

Suman Datta, professor of electrical engineering, has been selected as a distinguished lecturer for the IEEE Electron Devices Society.

Congratulations to our summer advanced-degree graduates:

M.S.

Rachana Reddy Agumamidi
Dharan Dantara
Iyer Ganesh
Rajaram Narayanan
Madan Parameswaran
Bharath Rengarajan
Clinton Scarborough
Mahadevan Srinivasan
Tom Tyson

Ph.D.

Okhtay Azarmanesh
Junbin Huang
Thomas Latempa
Chu-Fang Lin
Ming-Wei Liu
Valerie Mistoco
Aria Pezeshk
Arnab Roy
Yuan Zhuang

First-year seminar student, **James Zellhart**, launches a rocket on campus near the stadium.



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Please submit news items to: Cathy McClellan at cls118@psu.edu

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is committed to the affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its workforce.

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