

25	26	27	28	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

INSIDE VT WOOD

Reminder...

Remember to submit department news items by Friday 3 p.m. of each week to Will Pfeil at wpfeil@vt.edu for inclusion in Inside VT WOOD each Monday morning. All past issues of Inside VT Wood reside on our department website under the publications link.

News From Paul Winistorfer

- We have arrived at three candidates in our interview pool for the manufacturing systems position. Please watch for interview schedules and participate. Hiring faculty and staff is the single most important activity we can participate in.
- Work is progressing on remodeling/upgrading labs 246-248 Cheatham Hall. The labs should be finished in the coming 2 weeks and ready for occupancy. Drop by and take a look. Lab 246 will become a shared instrumentation lab. Lab 248 will be designated for Dr. Edgar and his research program.
- Our partners at the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center provided justification last week on budget items to the Tobacco Commission, in readiness for release of funds immediately and the beginning of our effort in educational programming there.
- I met last week with Aric Bopp, Executive Director of the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance and we have agreed to work together toward a NRV partnership in promoting the wood industry. We plan to engage New River Valley Community College and select high schools and other partners. My hope is that we can create 4 strategic partnerships in the state: NRV, Southside, Tidewater and Northern Virginia with a similar model of educational programming and engagement that we have been moving toward on Southside.
- Thanks to Tom Hammett for orchestrating a visit from the Tropical Forestry Foundation Executive Board. They spent several days on campus learning about VT and our capabilities as TFF considers a strategic partnership with VT.
- Please pay particular attention to the information noted below on the Sun Grant Competitive Grant Program. There are emerging opportunities with this initiative.
- Join us at 10:00 am on Tuesday in the Brooks Lobby for a department coffee. Celebrate Spring Break even if you can't go the beach!



The Southern Virginia Regional Workforce Summit

The Southern Virginia Regional Workforce Summit will be held March 7 at the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center in South Boston. The HEC invites you to join other workforce development stakeholders from throughout the Southside Region on March 7, 2007. Join us and help us identify effective strategies for a regionally prepared workforce.

We will have 2 groups of Breakout Sessions. Breakout Sessions, Group I will be Focus Groups made up of Subject Matter Experts in the areas of economic development & Chambers of Commerce; employers; training/retraining providers; local governments,

public schools, colleges, and universities; VEC, WIB/WIA, and employment agencies; local departments of Social Services, Faith-Based and Area Agencies on Aging; Hospitality, Tourism, and Service Industry agencies; and others. Breakout Sessions, Group II will be Discussion Sessions on CREED and YOUR INVOLVEMENT. Please Spread The Word about this summit and encourage the Subject Matter Experts from your locality to attend this Regional Workforce Summit.

Registration and Program information is available on-line:

<http://www.svhed.org/images/workforce%20summit%20brochure%201.pdf>

Bob Smith Spreads the Word of VT Wood in Europe

Bob Smith presented “Wood Science and Forest Products at Virginia Tech” to the faculty of the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Department of Economics and Social Sciences Institute of Marketing & Innovation in Vienna, Austria on January 26th.

Bob Smith visited the United Nations Foreign Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Rome, Italy on February 8th to discuss past research collaboration and future efforts. He spent the time with various research scientists in wood products and forestry discussing possible joint efforts.



Bob Smith is welcomed by Dr. Hikojiro Katsuhisa, Chief, Forest Products Service, Forest Products and Economics Division of the FAO, Rome, Italy.

2007 Regional Sun Grant Competitive Grant Program

The Southeastern Sun Grant Initiative is pleased to announce its 2007 Competitive Grants Program. Funds are to support research, education and outreach projects in the strategic areas of Biologically-Based Power (BioPower), Biologically-Based Fuels (BioFuels), and Biologically-Based Products (BioProducts). The Southeastern Sun Grant Initiative (SESGI) expects to award up to \$1.8 M in competitive grants in 2007 and seeks proposals from qualified institutions. Two types of applications are being sought: Integrated Lead Proposals Multi-investigator / multi-institutional / multi-disciplinary / multi-year proposals will be sought that address the SESGI priorities while integrating research, education and outreach objectives. Proposals may seek up to \$300K (total DOT dollars) with proposals of up to 3 years in duration. Seed Proposals Seed grants that address the SESGI priorities will be provided to single investigators or small teams for up to \$50K (total DOT dollars) with proposals of 1 year in duration. Single or multi-component research, education and outreach proposals are appropriate. Application Letters of intent to apply are required by March 15, 2007: Full proposals are due April 30, 2007. Letters of intent and full proposals will be submitted through an online proposal system, located at <https://webnibus.org/sungrant/southeast/>. Print a .pdf file of the Request for Proposals. (Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader)

Sixth Annual Forest Products Short Course Offered at Virginia Tech

BLACKSBURG, Va., Feb. 28, 2007 – The Department of Wood Science and Forest Products will present their sixth annual short course on “Advanced Sales Training in the Forest Products Industry,” to be held March 28-29 at the Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center. The course is designed for those who are currently selling forest products and want to understand the importance of improving their communication, time management, and negotiation skills.

Some of the topics that will be addressed include trends in the industry, effective communication to improve sales, and relationship selling for wood products industry. The course is sponsored by Virginia Tech's Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management, the Virginia Forest Products Association, the Hardwood Manufacturers Association, and Virginia Tech's Continuing and Professional Education Program.

The fee for the course is \$395 or \$325 for employees of companies that are members of the Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management. Registration is due no later than March 14 and is limited to the first 30 applicants. Interested applicants can visit www.cpe.vt.edu/astfpi to complete the registration online and also contact Bob Smith at 540/231-9759 or rsmith4@vt.edu for more information.

The College of Natural Resources at Virginia Tech consistently ranks among the top five programs of its kind in the nation. Faculty members stress both the technical and human elements of natural resources and instill in students a sense of stewardship and land-use ethics. Areas of studies include environmental resource management, fisheries and wildlife sciences, forestry, geospatial and environmental analysis, natural resource recreation, urban forestry, wood science and forest products, geography, and international development.

Forest Industries Innovation Initiative: Leveraging Technical Advancements for Business Applications

A request for proposals Funding Provided by Virginia Works and the Sloan Foundation through the Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech

Please see attached documents following page 12.

Lean Manufacturing Workshop for the Wood Products Industry

Wood Education and Resource Center
Princeton, WV
May 7-9, 2007

This 3-day workshop will bring the latest in Lean Manufacturing technologies to managers in wood products businesses. Workshop activities and lessons will help you identify target opportunity areas in your business for improvement, provide a step-by-step guide for the implementation of "lean systems", and direct the organization toward a philosophy of continuous improvement needed for today's increasing competition. See how to use lean tools to improve quality and safety and to increase on-time shipments while reducing manufacturing cycle time, labor input, work in process, and required floor space. This workshop is Virginia Tech's 8th Lean Manufacturing Workshop for the wood products industry updated with new learning simulations and industry examples applied to primary and secondary wood products manufacturers. We will visit with a local wood products manufacturer that has successfully adopted the lean philosophy to improve their operations. The workshop is co-sponsored by the Virginia Tech's Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center, the USDA Forest Service's Wood Education and Resource Center, and University of Minnesota Duluth's Natural Resources Research Institute.

The 3 day workshop fee is \$625 which covers registration, instructional materials, continental breakfasts, coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner on May 8. Your registration should be received no later than April 23, 2007. Register early because registrations are limited to the first 20 applicants.

For online registration information and program details, please visit <http://www.forestindustries.vt.edu/workshop.html> or contact:

Earl Kline
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0323
540-231-8841
kline@vt.edu
www.forestindustries.vt.edu

New Postdoc Working with Chip Frazier



Please welcome James Fabiyi to our department (jsfabiya@vt.edu). James is a new postdoc who is working with Chip Frazier. James conducted his doctoral training at the University of Idaho, working with Armando McDonald. James is from Nigeria. He and his wife are celebrating the birth of their first child, their daughter, who was born in December. James will be developing new methods to study the viscoelastic response of wood.

James Fabiyi, Postdoc

VT Students Receive PACK EXPO Scholarships

The Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute (PMMI), the leading global packaging industry resource and trade association, introduced the PACK EXPO Scholarship program in August 2006 to financially support students at packaging schools throughout the United States and Canada. PMMI and PACK EXPO exhibitors raised a total of \$127,050, showing strong industry support and commitment to the next generation of packaging leaders, while recognizing the contributions of universities, technical institutes, and packaging students.

As a result of this effort, the following Virginia Tech packaging science students received scholarships this week:

Undergraduate:

Jen Dvorsky: \$5,000 BlueRidge Automation scholarship (designated funds)

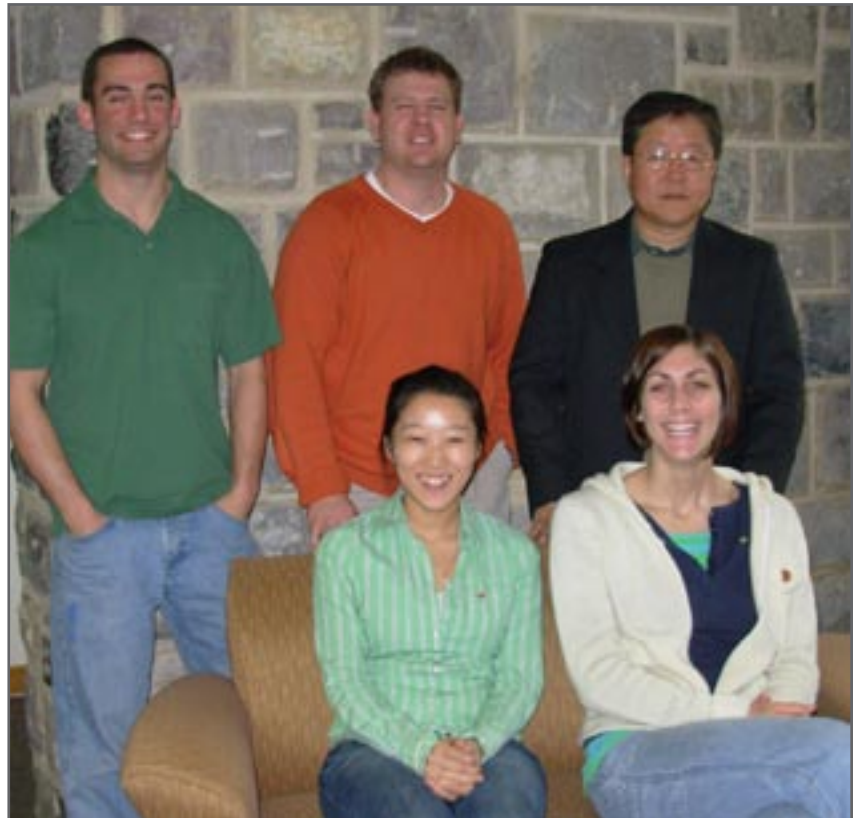
Graduate:

Alex Hagedorn: \$1,500 PACK EXPO scholarship

Jim Bisha: \$1,500 PACK EXPO scholarship

Ji Yoo: \$1,500 PACK EXPO scholarship

Congratulations to these deserving students!



Left to Right: Standing: Jim Bisha, Alex Hagedorn, Dr. Jong Ki Han; Seated: Ji Yoo, and Jen Dvorsky

China Scooping Up Recycled Newsprint

Vancouver Sun

February 15, 2007

by Gordon Hamilton

Paper collected each week from blue box programs has become the latest commodity to rocket up in price as a new player -- China -- is scooping up almost one-third of North American newsprint to recycle it in its own mills.

China collected nine million tonnes of all types of recovered paper from North America in 2006, up 15 per cent from 2005, much of that from West Coast American cities. China's entry into the recycling business is pushing up

prices, raising concerns over a supply crunch for recycled fibre in North America and prompting questions about whether a “recycled” label still means a smaller environmental footprint.

Container ships bringing manufactured goods to West Coast American ports often return to China loaded with newsprint and other recycled paper, where it is being used to supply the country’s burgeoning demand for paper products.

“People are putting paper out in their blue boxes. But 29 per cent of it is going offshore,” said Graham Kissack, director of sustainability at Vancouver-based Catalyst Paper.

It used to be case that blue box collections were used locally, but the globalization of the paper industry has changed that, according to David Ford, president of Metafore, a Portland, Ore.,-based company that works with consumers and the forest industry to develop awareness of environmental and social responsibilities.

“The reality today is that recovered paper fibre is a commodity. It is now going into a world market where before it wasn’t. There are profound implications of that on the environmental footprint.”

Ford said Chinese plants mostly use coal to provide the energy to make paper, as opposed to relatively cleaner hydro-electric power in B.C.

“Coal energy has a nasty footprint,” said Ford.

Despite controversies over whose paper is greener, China’s appetite for old paper, particularly from the huge pool of waste paper in California, has led to a significant price jump. The export price to Asia has risen from a low of \$85 US a tonne last summer to \$135 this month. Prices in Los Angeles are about \$150 a tonne, said Catalyst’s Kissack. In B.C., prices have remained lower because exports to China are not a factor, Kissack said. There is not as large a supply here as there is in L.A. to attract offshore interest. Catalyst operates the largest recycled paper plant on the West Coast. The company has an established recycling supply line stretching almost half-way across the country to produce recycled pulp at its Port Coquitlam plant for its four coastal paper mills.

Just as the Chinese are using empty containers to ship old paper back to China, Catalyst uses empty rail cars to bring its paper supply here.

Kevin Mason, industry analyst with Equity Research Associates, said demand for recycled paper from China is re-shaping the North American paper industry.

China opened four new mills in 2006 alone, he said, leading to a sharp upward spike in North American paper exports during the last two months of last year.

Newsprint from China is beginning to make its way back to North America. Ford said tests runs are taking place on presses in the U.S. However, Mason said most of the Chinese newsprint is being consumed in China, or exported to other Asian markets. Where China’s appetite is having an impact now, Mason said, is that as prices for recovered paper climb, higher-cost North American producers are forced to curtail production.

“China is the key, and figuring out what they are going to do is critical. It is becoming a very important piece [for domestic paper-makers] to make sure they have a source for all their fibre. And even if they do have a source, what are the supply contracts? Because there comes a point [at which you ask], if China is pulling really hard, can you afford to buy it yourself.”

Two of North America’s largest newsprint producers are already looking nervously at China’s role in the global paper market. Bowater Inc. president David Paterson cited China’s appetite for used newsprint as a factor that drove Bowater and rival Abitibi-Consolidated to merge operations.

“On the waste paper side, China is having a big impact on the price of old newsprint,” Paterson said Jan. 29 in a tele-conference announcing the merger. “If you look at exports of paper of all types to China, it is escalating rapidly, which changes our cost structure here in North America.”

Impact



A Report from the American Wood Council of the American Forest & Paper Association

Adopt-a-University Program



Rakesh Gupta, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Wood Science and Engineering, Oregon State University, expressed his appreciation for the TECO donation of thirty 2005 Wood Design Packages for the Wood Design course at OSU:

“Thank you very much for supporting the Wood Design class at Oregon State University again. This course is one of the most popular elective courses in Civil Engineering and TECO’s continued support shows their commitment to the success of this course. Since about 90% of all structures in the U.S. are wood frame structures, it is critical that all graduating civil engineers have some exposure to wood engineering. TECO’s generous support will help in ensuring well-qualified civil engineers with that exposure. Thanks again for your support!”



Similarly, Boise Wood Products donated 50 copies of the 2005 Wood Design Package to students in the Design of Wood Structures course at Virginia Tech this winter. Assistant Professor Daniel Hindman and his students are very appreciative of the donation as it helps to reduce some of the rising costs of textbooks and tuition. Senior civil engineering

student, Andrew Peterson, wrote “I would like to thank everyone at Boise for their generous donation of the NDS books for our use. Anyone who experiences college understands how expensive books are and how fast the cost of books adds up. It speaks volumes about Boise’s character and reputation when they actually offer to pay for books to help expand students’ education. In return, I made the most of out of the class and NDS by putting extra effort in my work. Your help and extra efforts paid off because I received a well rounded education of wood structures and produced high grades in the class. Thanks again, Boise, for your contribution and help.”



Amanda Rader, also a Civil Engineering senior, wrote “This class has opened my eyes to all of the engineering involved in designing wood connections and I look at all wood structures around me with a new light now. I had never before considered a wood building to require as much engineering as a steel structure. It always just seemed so simple to put together a couple of 2x4’s

with some nails. Now I realize there is so much more to a wood structure than that. The use of the manuals and supplement can really make an engineer’s life so much easier. This class has really opened my eyes to the career possibilities involved in working with wood. Your donation was a nice relief. I only wish more companies would be willing to donate more of our text books.”

For more information on how your company can sponsor AF&PA publications for students, contact Buddy Showalter at 202/463-2769 or at buddy_showalter@afandpa.org.

Bills Introduced in House and Senate Intend to Expand Use of Biofuels

by Christopher Lawrence, BCS, Incorporated

A major topic of discussion in Congress has been how renewable alternative fuels, such as biofuels, can help wean the Country off oil. Below are some key bills that have been introduced in Congress which could foster the development of biofuels and other renewable fuel alternatives.



The Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act- H.R. 547- This bill, which passed in the House on February 9th by a margin of 400-3, directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in consultation with the National Institute of Standards Technology (NIST) to establish a program of research and development of additives that will make biofuels more compatible with existing fuel infrastructure. The bill specifies that these materials should “prevent or mitigate” problems associated with biofuels and current infrastructure such as: corrosion of materials used in pipes and storage tanks such as rubber, plastic or metal; dissolving of storage tank sediments; microbial contamination and problems associated with electrical conductivity. The bill authorizes the EPA to use ten million dollars to carry out this act from existing money that has already been appropriated to the agency for energy research, development and demonstration activities.

The Cellulosic Development and Implementation Act of 2007- S.167 and H.R. 395- This bill, introduced concurrently by Senator Boxer and Representative Salazar in their respective chambers was referred to the Senate Committee on Public Works and to the House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, respectively. The bill seeks to amend the Clean Air Act, section 212, to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a “Cellulosic Ethanol Fuel Grant Program”. The program will award grants to an ‘eligible entity’, which can be a Federal or State research agency, a National Laboratory, private sector entity, a college or university or a nonprofit organization, for research, development and demonstration projects related to cellulosic fuels in vehicles. The grant review committee shall consist of an equal number of representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), EPA. The representatives will all be appointed by their respective agency secretaries or administrators. The review committee will also consist of experts appointed by the President that are not federal employees. Priority will be given to projects that “use alternative or renewable energy sources in the production of cellulosic ethanol fuel and demonstration projects”. The grantee must be able to provide matching funds totaling 20 percent of the grant. The bill also directs the Secretary of Energy to establish a pilot program to provide “grants to eligible entities for use in installing infrastructure (such as pumps) that would enable retail gasoline stations to sell and dispense ethanol fuel”. The bill authorizes one billion dollars for each program for fiscal year 2007 through 2013.

The Renewable Fuels and Energy Independence Promotion Act of 2007- H.R. 196- This bill, introduced by Congressmen Pomeroy and Hulshof, was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. The bill amends the Internal Revenue Code at Section 40, relating to alcohol used as fuel and section 40A relating to biodiesel to make both income tax credits permanent. It also amends the excise tax portions of the Internal Revenue Code relation to alcohol mixture used as a fuel and biodiesel mixture used as fuel, sections 6426 (b) and 6426 (c), respectfully to make both excise tax credits permanent as it relates to these fuels. The bill also amends the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to move the effective date for tariff duties on ethyl alcohol and ethyl tertiary-butyl ether (ethanol) to the effective date of this Act.

The Biofuels Security Act of 2007- S. 23, H.R. 559- This bill, introduced concurrently by Senator Harkin and Representative Delahunt in their respective chambers seeks to amend Section 211 of the Clean Air Act by prescribing the volume of renewable fuel that gasoline sold in the United States must contain with provisions that require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to determine the applicable volume for 2010 and beyond. The bill also directs the Secretary of Energy to promulgate regulations that ensure each major oil company that sells gasoline in the United States installs at least one pump that dispenses E85 fuel. The bill also amends the Energy Policy Act of 1992 “to increase to 100% the proportion of vehicles acquired by a federal fleet in and after 2008 that must be light duty alternative fueled vehicles.” The bill also requires “makers of new automobiles capable of operating on gasoline or diesel fuel to ensure that a specified percentage of automobiles manufactured in any model year after 2007 for sale in the United States (increasing from 10% in 2008 to 100% in 2017) are dual fueled automobiles”. The bill also offers manufacturing incentives to these manufacturing companies.

These are just a few of the bills that have been introduced in Congress that seek to promote the use of biofuels through research, development and deployment grants and incentives as well as through incentives to manufacturers and producers of biofuels related equipment. For more information on these bills and others, refer to Thomas at the the Library of Congress online at <http://thomas.loc.gov> as well as the “On the Hill” section of the Biomass Research and Development Initiative website and newsletter.

Ga. Plant to Turn Pine Waste Into Ethanol

A California dot-com billionaire announced he'll build the nation's first wood-to-ethanol factory in the east-central Georgia town of Soperton, cementing the state's position in the booming alternative-fuel universe. Gov. Sonny Perdue pegged the investment at \$225 million. Groundbreaking is expected this spring. But corralling Range Fuels Inc., the cellulosic ethanol company founded by Sun Microsystems co-founder Khosla, wasn't cheap. Treutlen County offered tax abatements and a 97-acre tract in its industrial park worth \$350,000. The state's OneGeorgia Authority, which uses tobacco settlement money for rural economic development, will likely approve a \$6 million grant for Treutlen County to help Range Fuels buy production equipment.

<http://www.ajc.com>

Diversified Energy and North Carolina State University Sign Agreement (2/13)

Diversified Energy announced they agreed to the terms of an exclusive worldwide license with North Carolina State University for an innovative and breakthrough biofuels technology. The patent-pending process, termed Centia™ provides several key advantages when compared with other biofuel processes like biodiesel, ethanol and others. Centia™ can utilize feedstock oils from edible and inedible animal fats, waste oils, agriculture crops like soybean, algae, newly proposed energy crops, or any other lipid-based feedstock. This provides the owner of a Centia™ biofuels plant the flexibility to use the most attractive feedstock at any given time or location. Centia™ is initially being positioned to produce commercial and military jet fuel and a cold-weather biodiesel additive -- both of which are challenging and complex hydrocarbon fuels and heretofore have received little attention by the biofuels industry. The overall process flexibility will allow for broad marketplace acceptance and unprecedented options for Centia™ biofuel plants to adapt to the ever-changing feedstock and fuels market.

<http://www.grainnet.com>

General Announcements

End-of-Fiscal-Year Procurements

by Tom Kaloupek (kals@vt.edu), Director, Materials Management (by way of Sherry Crunkilton, scrunkil@vt.edu)

Please distribute this memo to all employees in your department who have responsibility for supply and fiscal activities.

We are approaching the final quarter of our business year and it is time to plan for purchases and needs to be accomplished with current fiscal year funds. In order to allow for sufficient time to complete the procurement, receipt and payment cycle, requisitions should be received in Purchasing and IT Acquisitions by the following dates:

March 20: Requisitions citing Equipment Trust Funds (ETF).

April 6: All purchases valued over \$50,000 except computer hardware. All purchases of furniture and vehicles of any value.

April 27: All purchases valued under \$50,000 and all computer hardware of any value.

Purchasing and IT Acquisitions will continue to accept and act upon requisitions received after these dates. However, no assurance can be offered that the business cycle will be completed before the end of the fiscal year.

Other Important Dates

June 2: All incoming requisitions will be encumbered against FY 2008 funds unless an exception is requested.

June 18: Anticipated final date for processing of invoices against FY 2007 funds.

Tom Kaloupek
Virginia Tech Director of Materials Management
Ph: 540-231-6221
Fx: 540-231-9628

Virginia Cooperative Extension 2007 Graduate Education Partnerships

In an effort to increase research and development projects to address Extension's role with critical issues in the Commonwealth, a cooperative graduate education program between Virginia Cooperative Extension and participating Virginia Tech departments is being initiated. Additional benefits of these partnerships will be to introduce graduate students to the mission of extension and involve them in extension education. It is hoped that these extension experiences will also serve as a valuable recruiting tool for future VCE agents. Four partial assistantships are budgeted for allocation in the upcoming fiscal year. These assistantships are for new students (Fall 2007).

- VCE will provide matching funds for assistantship and in-state tuition remission to selected departments on a 50:50 basis, up to \$15,000 per year per student starting their program fall 2007. This applies to master's students only.
- Funding is provided on an annual basis and is renewable for a second year based on satisfactory performance of the student that is, maintaining a 3.0 GPA and satisfying all department, college, and university requirements. An annual report of progress is expected which should include progress on degree and extension experiences.
- Proposals can be developed by any VCE specialist; however, only one per department will be accepted into the competition. Therefore, a pre-screening at the department level may be necessary.
- Students supported on these assistantships must incorporate AEE 5074 and AEE 5044 or EDCT 6614 into their program of study.
- Proposal elements include the following:
 - Title
 - Principal investigators
 - Home department
 - Background/Statement of problem
 - Objectives of project
 - Methods
 - Description of how the project relates to Extension
 - Expected outcomes and Extension experiences
 - Timeline
 - Brief budget (including external funds)
 - Statement of support by department head and commitment to providing matching funding

Note: Proposals should be no more than 5 pages.

- Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of 5 project leaders / specialists, and ranked, with the rankings provided to the VCE Director. The VCE Director will make the final award selections.

Proposals should be submitted by March 21, 2007 with the announcement of the successful departments on April 10, 2007.

Virginia Tech's Employees' Spouse and Dependent Scholarship Program

Faculty and staff who have dependents or spouses who are applying to college may find this note of particular interest. Virginia Tech's Employees' Spouse and Dependent Scholarship Program provides scholarships to dependents and spouses of full- and part-time salaried faculty and staff and certain wage employees of the university. To be eligible, the dependent or spouse must be a new student enrolling full time as a freshman or an entering transfer student into an undergraduate degree program at Virginia Tech. The number of awards in any given year are determined by available funds and distributed to recipients based on need and non-need criteria. Since the program's inception in 2000, more than 60 scholarships have been awarded.

If you have a dependent or spouse who has applied to Virginia Tech as a freshman or undergraduate transfer student for the fall of 2007 and you are interested in the scholarship, the time to act is NOW. The following two forms are required, and both must be submitted by the student by March 11, 2007.

1. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed on-line. The website is <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

2. Virginia Tech's General Scholarship Application for 2007-08.

Detailed instructions are available in the General Scholarship Program and Application Guide at http://www.finaid.vt.edu/types_of_aid/scholarships/GSAGuide.php. On the General Scholarship Application, students should be sure to check the box that identifies them as a spouse or dependent of a Virginia Tech employee.

Questions about eligibility or the application process should be directed to Virginia Tech's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid by calling (540) 231-5179 or sending an e-mail note to finaid@vt.edu.

As I noted earlier, the program was begun in 2000 and has been very successful. Funds for the scholarship come from two main sources: (1) income from an endowment created by the five most recent (current and past) presidents of the university, and (2) contributions by faculty and staff of the university. If you wish to support the program, you may do so through donations to the upcoming annual faculty/staff fundraising campaign, or by calling University Development's Annual Giving Office at (540) 231-3171.

I encourage all eligible new students to apply!

Charles W. Steger
President

Diversity Accomplishment Reporting Required in Annual Reports

by Patricia Hyer (hyerp@vt.edu), Associate Provost for Academic Administration

In April 2006, University Council approved a resolution from the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity that requires all faculty members, of all types, to report on diversity accomplishments as part of their annual activity reports. The resolution describes the reasons for this, including the priority we place as an institution on the Principles of Community and on strategic goals related to diversity. The full resolution is available at:

<http://www.governance.vt.edu/uc0506/CEOD%20Resolution%202005-06A.pdf>

The Commission has developed guidelines that should be helpful to faculty members in determining what they might report and how it might be reported on their annual Faculty Activity Report, and also as part of their promotion and tenure dossiers. Colleges and other VP areas should be modifying any common format used for the faculty activity report to include diversity accomplishments, and the reporting by categories if possible. (The categories will be very helpful in aggregating efforts within colleges and vp areas, and then across the university.)

Diversity reporting guidelines are available at the following site:

http://www.provost.vt.edu/diversity_accomplishments.php

Diversity accomplishments should be included as a category for reporting and reflection for all annual evaluations conducted in the coming months for activity during 2006-07.

Please forward this note to committees responsible for college or vp area activity report formats, and to individual faculty members so they can be documenting their involvement and accomplishments related to diversity.

Thanks!

Patricia B. Hyer
Associate Provost for Academic Administration
330 Burruss Hall, 0132
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-2350 (O) hyerp@vt.edu

Vanpooling is coming to Virginia Tech!

Beginning March 19, Virginia Tech full time, permanent faculty and staff are eligible to participate Vanpooling. The one-year pilot program allows employees to not only share the cost and the ride, but also to payroll deduct the monthly cost of Vanpooling using pre-tax dollars.

If you are interested in sharing the ride with other full-time employees, you can learn more about the VT Vanpool Program at www.facilities.vt.edu/vanpool or call or email Debby Freed, Alternative Transportation Manager, at 231-1737, dfreed@vt.edu

Daylight Savings Time Update

This year Daylight Savings Time will be starting 3 weeks earlier – on March 11th. It will also end later on November 4th.

Affect on Outlook:

Any reoccurring appointments that span these weeks will be off by one hour. In the spring the meetings will appear to one hour later than they should be. Any one-time appointments that you have added during these 3 weeks should be listed correctly.

So any reoccurring meeting that occurs between March 11th and April 1st will be listed as occurring one hour later than it should be. Please check on any meetings occurring during that time. To eliminate confusion, list the start time in the title of the appointment.

Monthly Memo from the Graduate School

February 2007

Announcements/Deadlines

- Graduate Education Week in Blacksburg: March 26-30, 2007
- Graduate Education Week at NCR: March 26-30, 26 – 30, 2007
- VT NCR Graduation, GMU Center for the Arts, May 13, 2007 at 2:30
- Application for Degree submission deadline : March 1, 2007

Please note: The system will still accept submissions after this deadline. However, an AFD must be submitted by the deadline for the student's name to appear in the Commencement Bulletin.

Personnel announcements

David Trauger, Interim Associate Dean for National Capital Region (NCR) effective February 1, 2007

James Turner, Interim Associate Provost for Graduate Student Diversity

Initiatives effective July 1, 2006

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policy (CGS&P)/University Council

The Graduate School posts the progress of course review at http://grads.vt.edu/graduate_school/gcc/index.html

The following degree proposals were reviewed by CGS&P in February:

Virginia Tech – Georgetown University Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Technology Development and Management (approved February 7)

PhD in Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought (first reading, February 21)

Graduate Catalog changes

Graduate Policies and Procedures:

The Policies and Procedures section of the Graduate Catalog has been revised and posted. The links from the contents to sections of the policies have not been established, but will be active shortly. The ability for academic programs to update their respective sections in the catalog will be forthcoming. The policies have been reorganized and updated and there is now a Table of Contents at the front of the document. If you find apparent errors or things that need clarification, please send an email to Anne McNabb (happy@vt.edu) for the next revision in the fall.

Revised Course Justification Request

The Graduate School has revised the Course Justification (Revalidation) form and process used to determine that a graduate student has remained current in the body of knowledge represented by all classes older than 5 years when filing a Plan of Study. Please submit the revised form as out of date forms will not be acceptable for processing. The new form, "Course Justification Request" can be found at the following Graduate School web address: <http://www.grads.vt.edu/forms/academics/Revalidation.pdf>

Graduate Education Week Details

Virginia Tech will celebrate its seventh annual Graduate Education Week March 26-30.

GEW is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of graduate students, bring attention to graduate education, and build graduate community. The Graduate School is scheduling programs and events to mark this occasion, but your participation will make Graduate Education Week a campus-wide recognition of graduate students. Please help us promote GEW events, encourage participation, and consider coordinating a special event or gesture for your students during this week. Several ideas are listed below. If you notify us of your event (by email to grads@vt.edu), we will be happy to list details with the rest of the Graduate Education Week itinerary on our website. We appreciate your assistance in honoring our graduate community.

Ideas:

- Encourage faculty members to take their students to the Student Appreciation Luncheon on Monday, March 26 at the GLC. (Details and reservation requirements to be posted soon on our website).
- Stop by the GSA Graduate Research Symposium in the GLC Multipurpose Room on Wednesday, March 28.
- Visit and vote on your favorites of the graduate student art work and photos that will be on display in the GLC during GEW.
- Create a listing of student achievements (publications, conference presentations, awards, etc.) and post it on departmental bulletin board and website, or create small brochure if there are a lot of listings • circulate these in the department and share with the Graduate School.
- Take pictures of graduate students in academic action (in lab, teaching, writing, etc.) and post them on departmental bulletin board, along with an action photo of their life outside the university (if the students are willing). If you share these photos with the Graduate School, we can include them in the slide show presented during commencement.

Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees

The Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees has been reviewed and approved for '07-'08. A copy of the plan is attached for your information.



FOREST INDUSTRIES CENTER
AT VIRGINIA TECH
A Sloan Foundation Industry Center

**Forest Industries Innovation Initiative: Leveraging Technical
Advancements for Business Applications**

A request for proposals

Funding Provided by Virginia Works and the Sloan Foundation
through the
Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center
at Virginia Tech





Abstract:

In December 2005, “Senators John Ensign (R-NV) and Joe Lieberman (D-CT)...introduced comprehensive bipartisan legislation...[to] ensure the United States remains the leader in innovation, research and development, and the training of scientists and engineers. The National Innovation Act focuses on three primary areas of importance to maintain and improve United States' innovation in the 21st Century: research investment, increasing science and technology talent and developing an innovation infrastructure.

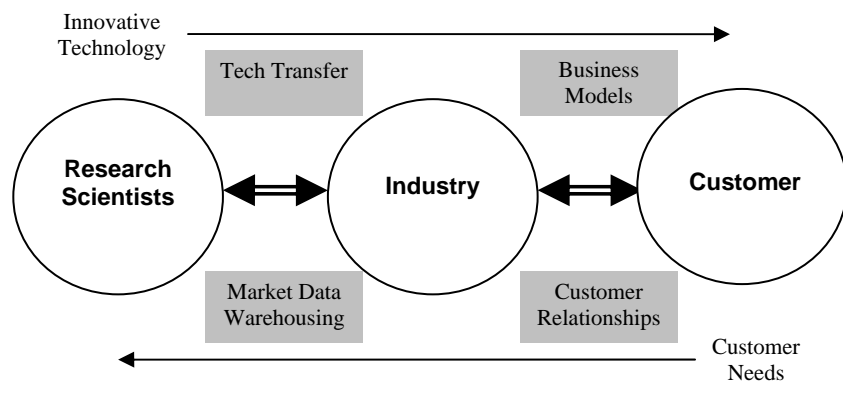
Today’s forest industry faces ever-growing global competition with respect to employment and production costs. Competitive advantage must be sought in educational innovations and technical training and the development and implementation of innovative technology and business models. The Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center will support a small number of research projects for scholars and industry leaders to develop and deploy innovations that are relevant to the types of forest industry companies in Virginia and benefit Virginia-based forest industry companies.

Background

Global competition is forcing fundamental change on forest industries in the United States. Many business people in struggling industry sectors recite a litany of problems responsible for their plight— foreign competition, lack of capital investment, limited availability and high cost of raw materials (particularly due to environmental regulation), and workforce limitations. These concerns are real but also point to a deeper malaise—an allegiance to traditional but antiquated technologies and business models. Facing such fundamental challenges, it is critical to leverage technology and business acumen *together* to redevelop, even reinvent, existing industries along with appropriate support systems and infrastructure.

Figure 1 summarizes our view of the information flows needed to close both of these gaps. The shaded activities in the figure illustrate the bridging activities critical to closing the gaps.

Figure 1. Industry Information Flows



Technology Transfer: There is a need for *translation* and communication of technological advances into commercial application. The adoption of new technologies (whether related to manufacturing, new product development, or business processes) by companies requires the *integration* of educational, technical and business expertise; that is, the proper execution of promotional efforts, reducing barriers to the adoption of the new technology, facilitating the distribution of this technology, and creating an educated workforce that can work effectively with changing technology.

Business Models: There is a need for new business models that enable companies to develop new bases for sustainable competitive advantage in the global marketplace. In particular, integrated approaches to supply chain management and market-oriented approaches to quality enhancement and new product development may benefit many firms.



In essence, new business models would pursue revenue enhancement and a better understanding of the demand side rather than focusing solely on cost reductions.

Customer Relationships: There is a need for better understanding of customers (particularly end users) to direct company investment in new products, new services, and improved customer relationship management. For example, demand for hardwood species is tracked regularly, but this tracking provides only demand data after the fact. Market intelligence regarding future demand—at both the manufacturer (architect, designer, etc.) and end consumer-levels—would allow the entire supply chain from forest manager to processor to manufacturer to retailer to take proactive steps to adapt to and even manage the demand structure.

Market Data Warehousing: These data warehousing activities close the feedback loop, directing research efforts to gather market data and forecast market demand, and to guide the development of market relevant technological innovations. They make salient to the industry the importance of looking beyond the immediate customer to understand and influence the end user. These databases take on several characteristics: they provide the industry with timely data to inform business decisions; they portray information about all components of the supply chain, e.g., forest inventory, timber output, international availability of different species, consumer panel data to track perceptions and preferences; and they are readily accessible in visible and meaningful ways to the industry.

Request for Proposal

The Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center will manage a request for proposals to faculty at leading Schools of Business and Colleges of Natural Resources, allied Sloan industry centers, USDA Forest Service Research Scientists, and forest industries. Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposed technological, educational, and business innovation and the feasibility of the integration between the business model and the innovative technologies. The industry center is especially interested in proposals that offer innovation for forest-related industries in the areas of:

- Manufacturing innovations to improve business capability to meet changing consumer demand
- Customer Relationship Management
- Data-base management
- Use of GIS to better identify markets that are matched with production/supply-chain capabilities
- Eco-tourism and non-traditional forest products to grow landowner revenue generating capability
- New education and technology transfer methods focusing on industry problem solving rather than traditional disciplinary applications

We anticipate awarding 3 – 5 grants at a value of \$30,000 – \$50,000 per grant. The following requirements need to be met for a grant proposal to be considered:

- There must be at least one member with expertise in business, one member with expertise in forestry, wood science, and forest products, one senior manager from industry, and one faculty affiliate from a Sloan Foundation industry center on the project team; that is, the project team requires at least four team members
- There must be matching dollars from industry. We will use a 5 – 1 formula for matching; that is, for a \$20,000 grant, industry must provide \$4,000.

A review panel for the grants will be composed of members of the Sloan Forest Industry Center and technological experts from the industry.

Proposal Submission Format and Timetable

Your proposal should contain 6 sections:

- *Introduction and Problem Statement:*
- *Objectives:*
- *Research Method*
- *Application and relevance of the Research Result forest industry businesses.*
- *Project Timeline*
- *Proposed Budget, cost sharing, and budget justification*
- *Relevant Experiences of PI and co-PIs.*

Briefly highlight the past activities that the applicant(s) has been engaged in that are relevant to the proposed research project. Please include an abbreviated curriculum vita of the Principal Investigator(s).

A maximum of six pages (single spaced, 12 point font) for the proposal will be accepted (excluding relevant experiences of the PI).

Proposals should be submitted electronically to David Brinberg (brinberg@vt.edu) no later than **April 1st 2007**. Applicants will be notified about funding decisions by May 15th. Please address any questions to David Brinberg (brinberg@vt.edu) or Earl Kline (kline@vt.edu).

Review Criteria

The Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center will review each proposal using the following criteria:

- The scientific merit of the proposed research in terms of bridging activities critical to closing the gap between technology innovation and its deployment in industry (40%)
- The likely success of the proposed innovation and its relevance to the types of forest industry companies in Virginia (40%)
- The qualifications of the research team and its inclusion of business and forest-related researchers, industry representatives, and Sloan industry center affiliates (20%)

