

May 2006						
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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	1	2	3

INSIDE VT WOOD

Reminder...

Remember to submit department news items by Friday 3 pm 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

- I had meetings last week in South Boston at the Higher Education Center and also at Southside Community College. Discussions centered around creating opportunities for students there to come to VT in our department. We also discussed establishing WoodLINKS sites somewhere on the Southside. The discussion was so very encouraging that I am going back within the coming weeks for another round of discussion. I have been invited to make a presentation about our program to the Region VIII Superintendent's Study Group. Mr. Larry Massie is the chairman of the Region VIII group and is eager to talk about the possibility of a WoodLINKS partnership. In addition, this group of superintendents is also the way to make sure each of their school divisions is aware of our department's programs and scholarship opportunities. This group of superintendents can put us in touch with the students in the high schools who may qualify for this type of integrated science and technology program. I am very optimistic about building a unique partnership with programs like this in the Southside.
- We had a good group of department colleagues in Richmond for the Expo last week (Brian Bond, Bob Smith, Mark White, Audrey Zink-Sharp, Jon Sharp, Ralph Rupert, Bonnie Maccubbin, Braden White, Omid Parhizkar, Brian Perkins, Victor Cussio, and Jim Bisha). We visited with many alumni and industry friends. Thanks for VFPA for booth space for Wood Magic, the department, and the Center for Unit Load Design.
- Our interviews for the cluster hire are now over. We are moving quickly with decisions. If you have any input, please forward to Audrey Zink-Sharp today. The search committee meets this afternoon and negotiations will begin immediately. I will keep you informed as we move along. Thanks for your support of the process.
- We will go to the printer on July 1 with Creative Achievements. Be sure to have all of your personal entries in the database as soon as possible. Don't forget to reach back to Jan 2005 since we did not publish an annual report for the 2005 calendar year. Creative Achievements will cover the period for January 1, 2005 – June 30 2006. Angie, Debbie and Will can assist you with the interface, or in making entries. Don't let your contribution be missed.
- The department retreat is June 13-14 at Pipestem State Park. A complete retreat agenda and meeting materials will be available approximately one week before we meet. Please confirm with Angie your lodging preferences.
- I will be out of the office the entire week. Audrey will be happy to help you with any issues or signatures.

WBC Short Course This Week at the Inn at VT

A Practical Approach to Understanding Wood

May 23-26, 2006

The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center

Blacksburg, Virginia

Contact: Linda Caudill

(540) 231-7092

lcaudill@vt.edu

What You Will Learn:

Wood is the greatest material cost in the manufacture of wood-based composites. Understanding wood, therefore, is a critical skill; but finding a practical, easy-to-understand way to learn about wood is difficult. This course will give you just that - a common-sense approach to understanding the structure and properties of wood, through lecture and hands-on activities. The course will focus on wood species commonly used in the manufacture of wood-based composites.

During the course, you will learn:

- Basic wood anatomy,
- A systematic approach to identifying various wood species using simple tools and techniques,
- How to use both a hand lens and microscope to identify wood,
- How basic material properties of wood are measured and why they are important,
- Why specific gravity and moisture content are two of the most important attributes of wood,
- How wood is processed into furnish for composites,
- How to understand moisture-related problems and solutions,
- About juvenile wood and reaction wood and how they affect properties, and
- About wood as an adherend, and wood-related factors that affect bonding.



Focus will be placed on understanding the relationship between the behavior of solid wood and several wood-based composite products, including glulam, LVL, plywood, OSB, particleboard and fiber-based composites. This course will take away the mystery surrounding wood and replace it with skills and knowledge that will aid you in adhesive development efforts, and product design and manufacture.

Each participant will receive a 10x powered hand lens and the textbook *Understanding Wood* by R. Bruce Hoadley. This book will serve as an excellent reference for participants as they return to their professional responsibilities with newly acquired wood technology skills.

Who Should Attend:

This course is designed for individuals working in the wood products industry who wish to learn more about wood as a material, including those working in:

- Quality assurance and technical support
- Machine-center operations affecting product quality and performance
- Adhesive development or technical service
- Manufacturing management
- Raw material procurement

Industry leaders with backgrounds in areas other than wood are encouraged to attend. There are no prerequisites for participation.

Colloquium: Assessment of Professional Competencies – Academic Assessment (the department will have a representative there).

Thursday, May 25, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Hillcrest Dining Room

Join Jonathan Gordon, Associate Director at the Office of Assessment at the Georgia Institute of Technology, for a colloquium on the assessment of professional competencies across the curriculum. Dr. Gordon will describe examples of authentic assessment of general education, discipline specific outcomes, and co-curricular activities at Georgia Tech. Participants will discuss some of the challenges and possible solutions to implementing assessment procedures both within academic units and across the institution.

If you plan to attend, your registration will be appreciated. Email: jvangle@vt.edu

Federal Work Study Program Information and Hiring Information

To: Deans, Department Heads, and University Center Directors

From: Tony Sutphin sutphint@vt.edu, Office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid (by way of Lisa Shires, lshires@vt.edu)

The Office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid will be offering Federal Work Study awards for the summer of 2006. We are currently building a wait list for all possible FWS eligible students from university colleges and departments. The Federal Work-Study Program provides jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to each student's course of study and is being made available this summer 2006 to enrolled and non-enrolled students Virginia Tech students.

Priority will be given to student service areas and students who are able to work prior to June 30, 2006. Limited funding will be available for the remainder of the summer 2006. Please note: students must qualify under United States Department of Education guidelines in order to receive summer 2006 funds and be Virginia Tech students. The Office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid will evaluate each applicant in accordance with these requirements. List your possible work study positions on our website at <http://128.173.142.2/jobform.lasso> as soon as possible. Remember, that you must have funds available to support your department in hiring of these work study positions. If you have specific students that you are interested in hiring, please send an email with student name, VT id to the coordinator below and they will be added for review for Federal work study for 2006. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tony Sutphin, Coordinator at 231 9555 or email at sutphint@vt.edu

Center for Housing Research Receives \$50 Million Contract Extension

Virginia Tech's Center for Housing Research, in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, has been awarded a two-year extension on its second indefinite quantity contract (IQC) with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The IQC has an umbrella value of up to \$50 million.

The Center for Housing Research is one of a select few contractors nationwide that performs research for HUD on residential building technology and affordable housing.

The extension is attributed to the Center for Housing Research's sound national reputation in the area of residential technology research and the excellent relationship the center has established with HUD. The government chose to extend the contract through April 2008 and praised the Center for Housing Research for a job well done.

To date, the Center for Housing Research has secured task orders for more than \$1.6 million under the umbrella contract, in addition to completing more than \$1.3 million in work under the first IQC awarded by HUD.

In conducting research under the IQC, the Center for Housing Research draws on experts both from within and outside of the university. Faculty members currently serving as principal investigators on individual task orders are all within the College of Architecture and Urban Studies: Michael O'Brien, the Jamerson Professor of Building Construction and the Center's associate director for housing technology research; Thom Mills, associate professor

of building construction; Ted Koebel, urban affairs and planning chair and the Center's senior associate; Casey Dawkins, urban affairs and planning assistant professor and the Center's director; John Randolph, School of Public and International Affairs director and urban affairs and planning professor; and Chris Nelson, urban affairs and planning graduate program director and professor in Alexandria, Va. These key personnel are joined by other faculty in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies and by faculty from other colleges at Virginia Tech.

As the IQC places a strong emphasis on partnerships with small or small disadvantaged businesses, the Center for Housing Research teams with a variety of subcontractors who have expertise in building technology. One key subcontractor is G3 Systems, Inc., located in the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center. G3 Systems contributes expertise in 3D modeling and information systems integration.