

ENGINEERING NOW No. 32 • 2007

College of Engineering

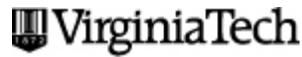


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Countless tears of grief make way for tears of emotion following so many acts of kindness — philanthropy takes on many forms

About a year ago, we decided to dedicate this issue of Engineering Now to our capital campaign efforts, and to highlight the exemplary life stories of several of our key benefactors. Their stories beautifully validate our heritage as a land grant university. The Morrill Act creating the land grant universities is one of the noblest pieces of legislation in American history. It was based on the daring 19th century belief that one's lot in life wasn't determined at birth. Even those of modest beginnings could seek a college education and a better life if they were smart and willing to work hard. Repeatedly, this philosophy shines through the biographies of our alumni. After they graduated, they used their talents and their education to become successful business leaders who gave back a hundred-fold to the community and to their alma mater. The irony of this issue is the philanthropic theme we picked. The publishing of this issue comes almost six months after the most incredible outpouring of international support the College of Engineering and this university have ever witnessed. The catastrophic events of April 16, 2007 took the lives of three beloved engineering faculty members and 11 of our accomplished students, among the overall 32 victims who died that day. The tragedy resulted in the outpouring of thousands upon thousands of people who offered prayers, condolences and, yes, donations to various funds and memorials.

We are better than we think and not quite what we want to be.



Engineering student Jason Dominiczek, who is pursuing a double major in chemical engineering and computer science, lights 14 candles at the College of Engineering's Memorial Service on April 25. Dominiczak was the 2006-07 captain of the Virginia Tech Rescue Squad and was one of the first responders on April 16. Behind him is Richard Benson, dean of the College of Engineering; Paul E. Torgersen, past president of Virginia Tech; and Patricia Burton, an employees relation counselor.

From complete strangers who felt our pain to close friends who witnessed it first-hand, our College of Engineering received poems, quilts, food, flowers, cards, letters from grade-school children, T-shirts, and support. This support represents the other half of our land grant character — we must give back to our community. It is the university's motto of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

One of the ways we all now need to give is to do a little more in our lives to help make up for the lost service of our fallen friends and to honor their memories. One of the letters we received was from Elizabeth Ryan of the Anderson School in Chicago. Her fourth grade students made cards for the families, and I read one of the cards at our memorial service.



The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets process out of the memorial service held in Cassell Coliseum.

After several e-mail exchanges, I learned that many of the students in Ms. Ryan's class had to overcome impoverishment. Ms. Ryan told us that by having her students write letters that shared their feelings and showed their care, they learned they were all part of



The fourth graders of Anderson School in Chicago display their Hokie United shirts.

the same world, and that no one is alone. The children's act of kindness was recognized worldwide as it became part of our memorial and had a dedicated place on our college website. Ms. Ryan said this was a huge lesson for her students, who felt very proud of themselves for their act of kindness. The class has since been visited by several College of Engineering alumni who live in the Chicago area. Who knows where this may lead. After Ms. Ryan's class showed their care for us, we instinctively gave something back. Philanthropy takes on many forms. It is my fervent wish that in approximately 2015 we will see a few of those students arriving in Blacksburg to begin their studies as Hokies; a new generation of students enriched by this great land grant university. In the university's convocation ceremony on April 17, professor and poet Nikki Giovanni gave a speech that brought strength to the community and the knowledge that Virginia Tech will prevail. In the

middle of her speech was a statement that hit me like a bolt of lightning. We are better than we think and not quite what we want to be. This statement remains true. As you read the following pages and learn more about the support of our students, friends, and alumni, I think you will come to realize that "we are better than we think" because of the support we have. And because of this support, we are that much closer to "what we want to be."

Thank you
Richard C. Benson
Dean of Engineering
Paul and Dorothea Torgersen Chair of Engineering

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Scholarships and Fellowships

At three, she was a paymaster; today Eleanor Davenport is Virginia Tech's leading woman benefactor



Amanda Keith, a Davenport Scholar in engineering when Durham Hall was dedicated, presents Eleanor Davenport with a bouquet of roses. Keith served as the chair of the engineering career fair, Expo, and as business manager of the yearbook, the Bugle, during her senior year. Right, Eleanor Davenport poses with her father, Fred Durham. In the background is Durham Hall.

When Eleanor Davenport was 3 years old, she got her first taste of what it was like to give people money. Picture the blue-eyed toddler, sitting on a stool, handing out the paychecks to the nearly 100 employees of her father's company. The year was 1928, just before the Great Depression. Her dad, Fred Durham, owner of C. Lee Cook, a manufacturing company, exemplified the idea of "take your daughter to work" long before the idea became popular. On Fridays, Eleanor served as the Louisville, Ky., company's paymaster.

Many years later, Durham and his daughter were still handing out money, but they were now doing it as philanthropists. Today, Eleanor is Virginia Tech's leading woman benefactor.

"My daddy worked all of the time," recalls Eleanor. "But he would also take mother and me on his business trips, and we'd often just sit in the car and wait for him," she says. Her close relationship with her father lasted until his death in 1998, the last four years of which he lived in her current home in Richmond. The Davenports had added on a room to serve as a hospice for her ailing mother, who died in 1985. That same room became her father's haven, where Eleanor, Bill, son Martin, and daughter Vicki cared for him. The devotion showed. The elder Durham was 99 when he died.

Fred Durham had been an impressive man, standing more than 6 feet tall, broad-shouldered, and trim. His work ethic shined long before he entered the business world. When he decided to study engineering at Virginia Tech in 1917, he lived at Howertones, Va., a small hamlet near the Rappahannock River. To get to Blacksburg, he would ride a horse for 10 miles to the river at Ware's Wharf, where he would embark on a steamship headed to Fredericksburg. The steam ship would stop at the plantations to pick up freight and passengers. It was an overnight trip up the Rappahannock River to Fredericksburg, where he would catch the train for Petersburg. Changing trains in Petersburg, he then rode on to Christiansburg. And then he took the Huckleberry (another train) to Blacksburg. It took the young man two days each time he made the journey in pursuit of his civil engineering degree, Eleanor says.

At Virginia Tech, Durham, a member of the corps of cadets, was known as the "most dillbury cadet." He earned the nickname (not found in the dictionary), Eleanor says, because he was "always neat and clean." But he also had a mischievous side, she recounts. "When he became captain of his regiment, he would march his platoon to church on Sundays, but he told everyone he was a Mormon because that was the only church Blacksburg did not have. Consequently, he did not have to attend services." His adventurous qualities also became apparent during his college days when he suffered an illness his junior year in 1919. Instead of staying home the entire year because of the classes he missed, he instead traveled abroad, working as a merchant seaman on a tramp steamer to Europe and Africa. He returned to Virginia Tech, graduated in civil engineering in 1922, and went to work for Bell Telephone in Atlanta. According to Eleanor, an employee of C. Lee Cook, a manufacturer of compressor components, overheard her father in a technical discussion, and thought he was "sharp." He managed to lure Durham to the Kentucky-based firm, where he met the owner, Lee Cook, a paraplegic, and the two became great friends. Cook hired Durham, but the association was short-lived as the elder gentleman died a few years later. Durham then bought the C. Lee Cook Company from Cook's widow.

In 1955 Durham arranged for the Cook Company to be sold as one of the original businesses to comprise the Dover Corporation. Dover, started by a group of investors led by George Ohrstrom Sr., sought acquisitions that were family-held or closely-held businesses. The owners would remain part of the daily operations, but the acquisition would ensure their employees had a strong financial future. Dover also sought to acquire businesses that represented niche marketplaces. Once acquired, Dover left the company alone to continue its profitable ways.

Durham, who was one of the founders of Dover, also became its first chief executive officer. Durham further defined Dover's decentralized structure, encouraging the various talented entrepreneurs to continue to run and grow their companies individually.

"Honesty and integrity were his key words, and he drilled that into all of us. You could lie to him once, never a second time," Eleanor recalls. "He commanded respect without demanding it. And one had to be very careful not to destroy this respect."

While Durham presided over Cook and then Dover, Eleanor, her mother, and her uncle ran the 800-acre farm in Virginia that her dad bought in 1939. At that time, Durham had an undiagnosed illness that the doctors did not think he would survive. He wanted a farm back in the area where he grew up riding his horse, and so he bought the property with almost three miles of river frontage on the Rappahanock River. The river was also an important factor to Durham, who used ships to transport much of his equipment produced at Cook.

Confident like her father, Eleanor learned to drive a car at 13 while she was on the farm, and secured a license by 14. She had cattle, goats, hunting dogs, horses, chickens, and ducks to tend to, as well as an apple orchard.

"The best thing Daddy ever did for me was to give me a monthly allowance at 16. I had to put gas in my car, buy my own clothes, and pay for my school lunches. If I spent it all in a week, I had nothing left for the rest of the month. He taught me what I could do with money," says Virginia Tech's supporter of dozens of endowed scholarships and fellowships.

Eleanor and her husband, Bill, and her family presented Virginia Tech's College of Engineering with a \$5 million endowment for scholarships and fellowships in honor of her father in 2001 when the university dedicated Durham Hall. "My wish is that some of the scholarship recipients will someday be able to do the same for others," Eleanor says.

Eleanor's ties to Virginia Tech go deeper than her father's education. He also met Eleanor's mother, Victoria Bock, the daughter of Benjamin F. Bock, while attending the Blacksburg university. Bock was an instructor at Virginia Tech from 1921-1930 and again from 1940-1944, and his family lived on a property that was at the time adjacent to the university. When the Davenport family returned to Blacksburg for the dedication of Durham Hall, Eleanor realized with surprise that the land the new engineering building sat on was once her mother's family farm.

Having a farm seems to be a priority of the Durham, Bock, and Davenport families. Today, Eleanor and Bill still own the 800-acre farm her father bought. The two have now been married for 52 years and continue to recount the day that they met as if it were yesterday.

Until his retirement, Bill operated a successful aviation business and is an inductee in the Aviation Hall of Fame. Part of their home is a tribute to his flying days, with memorabilia lining the stairs down to his study, also filled with mementos. Eleanor's father encouraged Bill's love of flying, building a landing strip for him on the farm, and often flew with him.

Fred Durham's zest for life, appreciation of friendships, and philanthropy are all traits inherited by his only daughter. The 82 year-old, who still has the beautiful blue eyes, spent many years as a volunteer for the historic Retreat Hospital located in Richmond's historic Fan District. Founded in 1877 by a group of women, Eleanor served as president of its junior board and went on to its corporate board of directors. "It helped me more than I helped them," she says. "It made me feel like I was doing something worthwhile, and that was dad's philosophy — you feel better doing something."

Entrepreneurial Activities

These dot.com whiz kids survived the bust with old-fashioned brainpower, not with venture capitalism



Computer science graduate Mike Marston developed the largest image bank of posters in the world, bought the Art.com domain, and made the company the 23rd fastest-growing technology company in north America. He was still in his 20s at the time.

When Michael Marston was a teenager entering the computer science (CS) department at Virginia Tech in 1991, he started spending a considerable amount of time on the Internet, such as it was some 16 years ago. The World-Wide-Web dynamos, such as Netscape, Google, and Amazon, had yet to emerge. Like Vannevar Bush, an inspirer of the Internet, Marston was also a technological entrepreneur who was ahead of his time. He knew there had to be a successful way to enter at the ground floor of this budding technology.

So, he called the person he had the most confidence in — his childhood friend, Josh Chodniewicz who was enrolled at Rutgers University. Both natives of Chester, N.J., they met as many Jerseyites do — in a diner at 2 a.m., and sketched initial ideas on the greasy spoon's napkin.

These future dot com whiz kids trusted each other; they had been friends since first grade. Both were business oriented from the start. Josh sold eggs. Mike shoveled driveways and marketed candy. Both played sports. Marston became a respectable baseball player, holding down center field and boasting a .300 batting average. He stayed with this sport as a semi-pro until he was 24.

But the CS major says he knew his limitations, and academics and operating his own business won his time.

From the meeting in the diner, they worked their way through some 400 ideas. In the process, they came to some valuable conclusions. First, they recognized that the early users of the Internet would be college students. And what do college students like? Posters. Additionally, they reasoned, posters would be a low-risk, relatively inexpensive product.

"And more importantly, no one had consolidated the industry. Barnes and Noble had done it with books, ToysRUs with toys, and Blockbuster with videos. It may have taken Josh and me weeks to scan in thousands of posters from catalogs, but when we were done we had the largest image bank of posters in the world," Marston says. Marston remained in Blacksburg after his graduation in 1996, developing the website for the company they initially called Allwall.com. Chodniewicz worked from his parents' home in N.J., turning the basement into a poster warehouse.

"I definitely understood and appreciated the opportunity Blacksburg provided us in the mid-1990s," Marston comments. "We had good Internet connections and the Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV). Those opportunities definitely helped me become successful."

BEV, started in 1995, was an ambitious effort created by Virginia Tech to link the entire town of Blacksburg with a 21st century telecommunications infrastructure. As a result, NBC's Tom Brokaw declared Blacksburg to be "the most wired town in America" on one of his nightly newscasts in 1996. As Brokaw was giving the town national visibility, Marston and Chodniewicz were about to launch their e-business, Allwall.com. Although it took them two years to sell their first poster, by 1998 they were getting pats on their backs for their futuristic thinking. Self-funded from the start, they expanded from the N.J. basement and the Blacksburg apartment to 3,000 square feet of space in Raleigh, N.C.

A critical turning point in their journey was the acquisition in 2001 of the domain name Art.com, the largest competitor to Allwall.com. The purchase literally doubled their sales overnight, but Marston had already created the necessary software to support their 100 percent increase in a 24-hour period. They also expanded to include other artwork, such as prints and photographs.

A visit to the Art.com site allows the buyer to play with everything from the color of the wall on which the artwork would be displayed, to a style of frame, and up to three mats per picture. With all of these combinations, Art.com provides its users with literally millions of choices. The ease of using the site and its massive inventory, representing all types of artwork, made Art.com the 23rd fastest-growing technology company in North America within two years of the purchase of the domain name. Art.com grew 21,074 percent between 1998 and 2002. (Source: 2003 Deloitte & Touche Fast 500). Incredibly, at the same time, Marston and Chodniewicz, both in their mid 20s, managed to streamline the production operations by 40 percent.

In 2005 Art.com merged with Allposters.com. Marston is now living in San Francisco and serves as the company's vice president of E-commerce and product management. They have operations in four different countries, Germany, United Kingdom, Netherlands, and the U.S. Their employees now top 800. Marston now focuses his time on strategic opportunities to improve the website's service for the user. With some five to ten million users every month, "if we can capture another small percentage," it is significant, Martson says.

Chodniewicz left the company about two years ago and currently lives in Manhattan, where he is brainstorming ideas for another company. However, their friendship continues.

Marston acknowledges entrepreneurship runs in his family. His grandfather was a chemist who dabbled in the creation of dyes, ultimately finding a way to dye furniture efficiently, and his great-grandfather founded a leather goods business.

With this family history, it's not surprising that Marston has contributed \$200,000 to the CS department for entrepreneurial activities. "When I attended Virginia Tech, I was really humbled by the number of intelligent people. But I did not see people taking ideas and moving them. There is a culture that drives entrepreneurship, and it must be balanced with technology," says the man who is now about to turn 34.

"I hope that my gift will help fund ideas and opportunities," he adds.

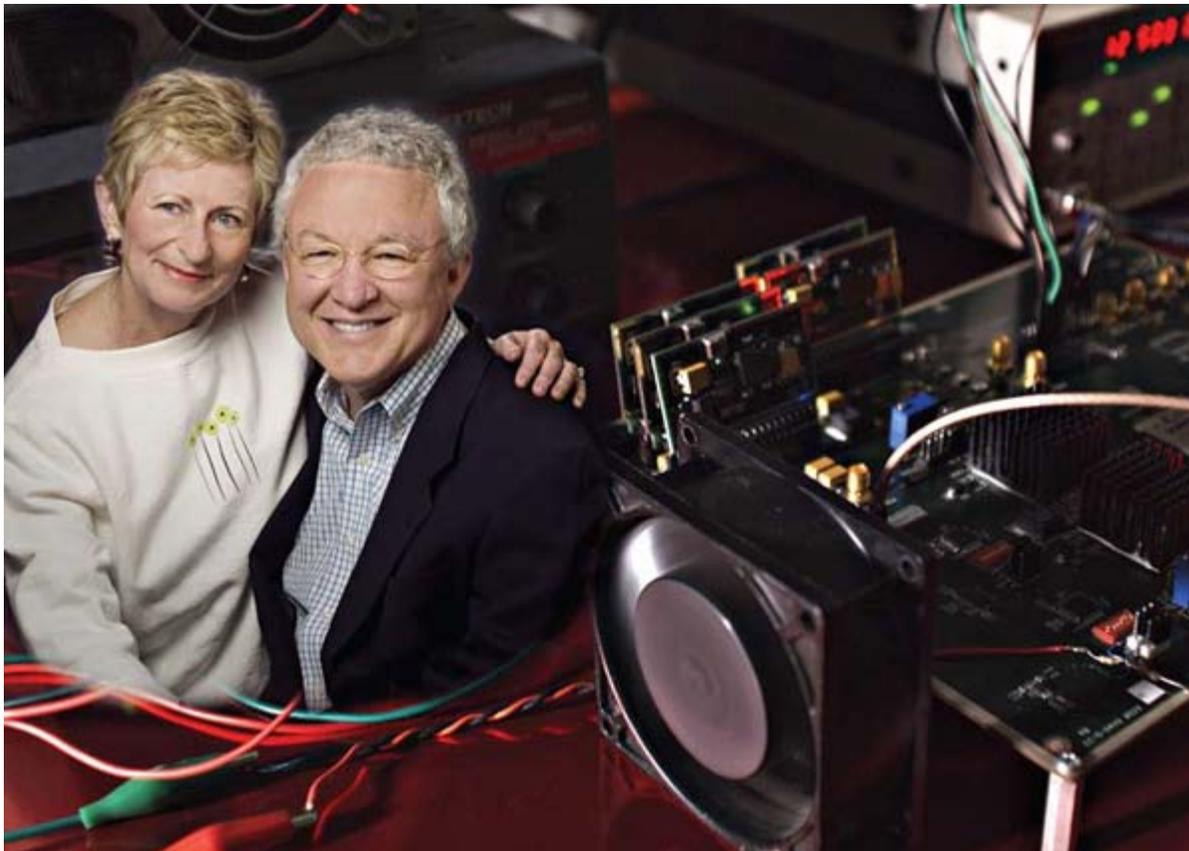
Marston now faces some major changes in his own life. He will remain at Art.com for less than a year, and in January 2008, he will marry Annie Spencer, a Tarheel who holds a master's degree in biostatistics.

Stay tuned for the next chapter.

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A Chaired Professorship for a Minority

Once an underdog told that she had a ticking "time bomb;" Diana George correctly told the doctor he was wrong — now she helps others



Jim and Diana George seek to improve diversity at Virginia Tech, establishing an endowed chaired professorship of electrical and computer engineering for a minority candidate.

In 1985 a physician informed Diana George that she had a brain tumor with only three or four months to live. "I was jolted to the core, and felt like I had a time bomb in my head," she recalls. But that was not all she experienced. She told the neurologist he was dead wrong.

Diana was 17 when she married her Princeton, W.Va., high school sweetheart, Jim George, in 1962. At the time she was enrolled in nursing classes at Roanoke Memorial School of Nursing, but it had a rule that married students were not allowed. So she dropped out and worked at a dime store while Jim finished his education at Virginia Tech's Department of Electrical Engineering.

It would be some 26 years before Diana would re-enroll to complete her education, only this time she would study a subject passionate to her heart, social work. "My parents had always ministered to other people in our neighborhood, buying groceries for those without food, providing care for children, and taking people to their doctor's visits. And Jim and I had some challenges with some of our children, and I was trying to find the answers," she explains.

Diana earned her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Texas at Austin in 1992, seven years after the diagnosis of her impending death. She immediately pursued her master's in social work degree in order to become a licensed therapeutic counselor. She became a family counselor, specializing in chemical dependencies and grief and loss for Austin's Child and Family Service.

"I felt fulfilled and like I was contributing. Jim was always a successful businessman and I was a good corporate wife and raised a family. But I needed to do something to make a difference and I knew the best way was to get an education," Diana said.

"I focused a lot on diversity in my social service work," she adds.

Diana's twists and turns in life had a large impact on the couple's choices today with their philanthropic efforts. At Virginia Tech, their bequest of \$1.5 million for a chaired professorship in the Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering is contingent upon the position being filled by a woman or a minority.

"I've always felt like I lived in a man's world where women are treated as less and Hispanics and African Americans even worse. With social work, we really try to raise people's consciousness and awareness that people are different, not lesser persons. If Virginia Tech wants to be a first-class university, it needs to be more embracing of a society that is really a melting pot," Diana says.

Jim agrees, adding that when he was at Motorola and he looked up the management chain, he "was always looking at someone who looked like me," a white male. He always had the role models he needed during his 38 years with the semiconductor industry, spending his last 15 years as a corporate vice president until he retired in 2002. From this experience, he now understands the need for a woman or a minority to have a role model.

"Both Diana and I came from a segregated society and desegregation occurred when we were in high school. It is a complicated subject, but we are now very interested in people having a chance to fulfill their dreams," Jim says.

Diana's dreams were almost shattered that day in 1985 when her physician told her she had a brain tumor. With her refusal to believe him, she and Jim traveled to Baylor Medical Center the next day, where she had her first MRI procedure. The radiologists confirmed the original diagnosis, and she entered a battery of tests that could not locate a primary cancer that allegedly produced this brain tumor. So her new doctor agreed with Diana's assessment, and predicted that her lesion would get smaller.

Eventually, they learned that it was actually the result of some malformed blood vessels that are called arterial-venous malformations (AVM). If these vessels start bleeding they can place pressure on different centers of the brain, causing stroke-like symptoms.

Diana recovered from this initial scare, earned her degrees and practiced for eight years before a relapse caused her to undergo successful brain surgery to remove an active cavernous angioma attached to an AVM. She retired permanently.

Diana, always a fitness buff and a one-time Jackie Sorenson certified aerobic dancing instructor, and Jim consider walking and hiking to be some of their favorite pastimes as they enjoy retirement today. They spent many nights on the Appalachian Trail and Jim says one of their future goals is to hike sample segments of it from the south to Maine. If not hiking, they can be found running happily after their five grandchildren.

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The Bequest

In life, competition for the dollar is great; in death, the agenda will be clear

"When I talk to potential donors, my first question is, 'Do you believe your success would have been achievable without the education and opportunities that came to you while you were at Virginia Tech,' " says Pat Artis



Pat and Nancy Artis fund the Engineering Excellence in the 21st Century series, bringing internationally recognized figures in the space industry to campus.

Artis is in a good position to ask this question as both he and his wife Nancy financed their own college educations, and now, some 35 years later, have committed approximately \$10 million in bequests to the engineering science and mechanics (ESM) and aerospace and ocean engineering (AOE) departments at Virginia Tech. Artis, a 1971 ESM graduate, now serves on the College of Engineering's Campaign Steering Committee, and he is on the College Advisory Board. Nancy is a newly appointed member of Radford University's Board of Visitors, and the couple has also made a substantial gift to its College of Information Science and Technology. They live full time in Pagosa, Colo., but have managed to spend about a month out of every year of late in Blacksburg.

When Pat and Nancy met in the early 1970s, he was paying his way through school by co-oping with Ashland Oil. He also held a job at Virginia Tech's Computer Center. Nancy worked as much as she could as a stenographer for the housing and urban development office and the Federal Housing Authority. Both knew what it meant to pinch pennies. In fact, when Pat graduated one semester ahead of Nancy, he sent her \$100 from one of his first paychecks, with the provision she "spend it on herself, and none of the purchases could be practical."

Married in December 1972, they changed jobs a few times before they settled in on founding their own company, Performance Associates, Inc., (PAI) in 1986. PAI covers a huge niche in the complex world of information technology. In the past 21 years, they have grown their company to include a number of Fortune 500 clients and they offer consulting and seminars on a regular basis. They travel internationally, to places including Japan, Australia, South Africa, and Europe.

PAI focuses on software products, education, and consulting related to the performance, sizing, and management of rotating magnetic storage. "We help our clients develop infrastructure strategies that allows them to maximize the performance of their existing information systems investments and select technology to meet their future requirements," Pat says.

As their company grew, so did their philanthropy. "The generosity of Pat and Nancy Artis is overwhelming," says Richard Benson, dean of the College of Engineering and a member of the ESM faculty. "In the future, this bequest will assist the ESM and AOE departments in funding scholarships and fellowships, and provide it with opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable."

Pat, who also assists his church in development efforts, is very familiar with strategies and tactics for asking for different types of philanthropic gifts. He has a rather simplistic but humorous philosophy about the giving of bequests. "My view is it is easier to talk to someone about bequest gifts than giving a dollar amount today. For every dollar in my life currently, there are 38 competing ways to spend it. In my death, my agenda will be clear," he smiles.

Slightly more seriously, he adds, "One needs to look at the backside of your life and what you want to do with the assets you have garnered. We viewed the bequest opportunity as a way of making a statement about what things in retrospect were important to us."

The funding model for the university is changing "as the state's level of contributions will never rise again. Consequently we need to start building a viable funding initiative. Legacy gifts that add to the university's overall endowment will allow Virginia Tech to be more nimble in its response to opportunities. Engaging the entire alumni population to support Virginia Tech is the key to becoming a top 30 research school. If we can't, then we need another objective," Pat says. "We also need to spend more time lobbying on beneficial tax changes for gifts to higher education through the enormous assets that potential donors have in tax-deferred retirement programs," he adds.

Higher education and the opportunity to work with students is particularly appealing to the couple who say it helps to keep a person young. "I have a wonderful friend, Herb Browne, who is a retired vice-admiral of the U.S. Navy, and when he retired after 30 years, he told me he was finally feeling old because he no longer worked with 20 year olds."

Pat must have taken that statement to heart because he and Nancy find numerous ways to interact with the engineering students. Primarily, they fund the Engineering Excellence in the 21st Century series, sponsored by Virginia Tech's College of Engineering and the ESM department. They have brought internationally recognized figures in the space industry to campus for this series: former Space Shuttle astronaut and author Mike Mullane; Brian Binnie, who flew the history-making civilian spacecraft SpaceShipOne; and Elon Musk, founder and CEO of Space Exploration Technologies Co. (SpaceX).

Pat and Nancy have also funded the activities of the space elevator student design team in a competition to design a structure to transport material from the earth's surface into space. Many different types of space elevators have been suggested. The hope is to replace rocket propulsion as the means of getting certain objects into space. They also support two engineering students annually at the National Test Pilot School.

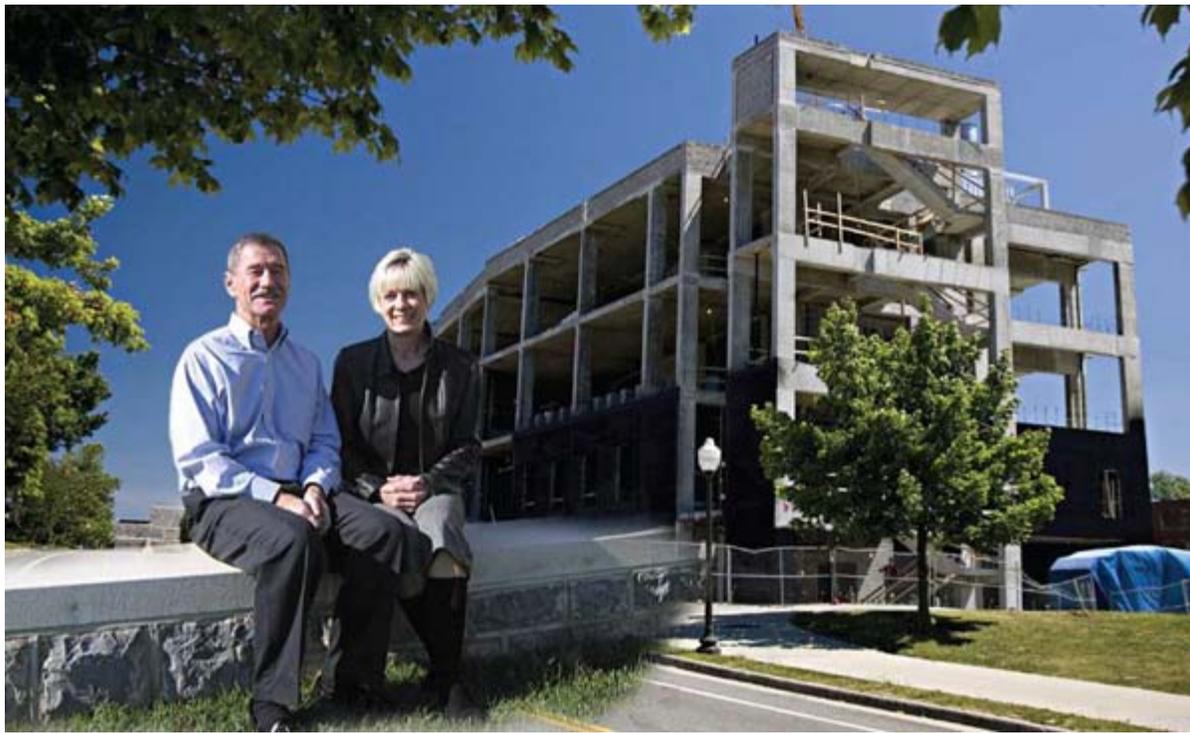
As they enjoy life more, they are able to increase their involvement with Virginia Tech and Radford. "We were given a chance and we worked hard. We still have many close friends in the College of Engineering and our gift embodies our belief in the value of the education that it provides. Everything else in life is embroidery," Pat explains simply when speaking of their generosity.

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Supporting the Infrastructure

Every day after Mike's birth was a gift; retrofitting this philosophy was easy for the Quillens

When Mike Quillen was born in 1948, he weighed 7-1/2 lbs. Within days, he went down to 32 ounces. "I had intestinal problems and was not expected to live. So today I look at every day as a gift," Mike says simply. Mike's medical problems weren't over. As a sophomore on the Gate City High School football team he broke his neck. After he recovered, he craftily forged a permission slip to get back on the team. But in a small community, it didn't take his mom long to discover his ingenuity. After some serious discussions, he was able to persuade her to let him play again, only to have his face stepped on and his nose crushed. "It took me awhile to accept that football should not be my life's pursuit," Mike grins.



Sherry and Mike Quillen, both graduates of Virginia Tech, once grossed \$300 a month; today they are supporting the construction of the Virginia Tech Institute of Critical Technology and Applied Science building projects.

Undaunted, he still had aspirations to enter the military when he came to Virginia Tech in 1967, but he could not meet the physical requirements for a future commission due to the vertebrae injury. He had never really paid any attention to any impairment from the neck injury, spending his summer months since he was 13 digging graves or clipping weeds on his hands and knees at a cemetery where his grandfather had part ownership. "Work is just what you did when you weren't playing some type of ball," he explains.

Mike's wife of 37 years, Sherry, worked equally as hard as a teenager. She grew up in the Tidewater area of Virginia. After school, she pushed a juice cart for two-and-a-half hours each evening at Maryview Hospital in Portsmouth, Va., and volunteered as a candy striper during the summers.

Mike and Sherry both came to Virginia Tech on scholarship. Mike received a partial scholarship targeted for Appalachian students under a program created by President Lyndon Johnson. Sherry attended a private college in Portsmouth that was sold after her first year. Instead of having a catastrophic effect, the sale was fortuitous. The Beasley Foundation in Tidewater gave all of the students at the now defunct Frederick College an annual stipend to finish their education. Encouraged by her grandfather, Sherry continued her education at Virginia Tech, graduating in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in health and physical education with a minor in science.

Both Mike and Sherry found the college-level academics a bit challenging, and Mike credits Paul Torgersen for helping him stay the course as an engineering student. "I got straight A's in high school and I came to Virginia Tech and got a 40 on a test. I felt like the dumbest kid in the class, so I went by Randolph Hall to see about leaving engineering. They sent me in to see a new professor — Dr. Torgersen — who asked me, 'What was your grade on the curve?' and I had no idea what he was talking about." Turns out Mike's score of 40 was really a B-, when compared to his fellow students' scores.

So after Mike learned what an academic curve was, he stayed on to graduate with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1970, and a master's in engineering in 1971.

He met Sherry, then a Virginia Tech cheerleader, in the fall of 1969. They became engaged in 1970 at his graduation and married in August of that year. Mike secured a job with Southern Railroad in Winston Salem, N.C., but he left it almost as quickly as he found it, an action that worried Mike's mother because she felt that the railroad job was like "finding gold" in 1970.

Mike's change in plans resulted from a phone call from one of his civil engineering professors, Dr. Yu. "He offered me a graduate assistantship. I spoke with him when I took Sherry back to Blacksburg on a Saturday for her final year. So I quit my job, got an apartment the same day, and on Monday I was making \$300 a month as a teaching assistant." Sherry's \$900 annual check for her scholarship helped to pay for their additional expenses.

"We had a basement apartment for \$80 a month," they recall. Nothing about it was luxurious for the honeymooners but certainly adequate and they say it was "fun." But Mike made sure he earned his master's in nine months, timing it to graduate when Sherry earned her bachelor's degree in health and physical education with a minor in general science.

They spent their first three years in Richmond — he as a transportation planning engineer with the Virginia Department of Highways, and she as a teacher in the Hanover County School system. Their lives took an eventful turn in 1974 when Mike's father ('40 Business) asked him to return to Gate City, Va., and the coalfields, to run a surface mining company in which his dad had just made an investment. He offered him a starting monthly salary of \$1,000, causing Mike to "feel like I could live forever on that amount." But Mike soon realized his ambitions were even greater.

Throughout the 1970s, he worked two to three jobs simultaneously. He was a mine superintendent during the day and chief engineer

for another company at night. He was also refereeing basketball and football, plus he was surveying in his minimal spare time with a startup engineering company he formed with a Virginia Tech classmate. By the age of 31, he was named president of Paramount Coal Company in Wise, Va. His responsibilities grew and he became president of WR Grace's Eastern Coal Group, managing three different coal companies.

In the 1980s he returned to a more normal schedule, working only one demanding job at a time, as he and Sherry had become parents to three children, Hunter, Matt and Chris. "Our children became our hobbies, especially since they were all athletic and involved in everything," says Mike.

In fact, Sherry, a 25-year veteran of the classroom, taught and coached her daughter, Hunter, in track, where she won the region in the hurdles her senior year. In Sherry's last year as coach with the Twin Springs High School team, the team won its first regional track championship.

Chris ('97 Business) was a three-year letterman in track at Virginia Tech and Matt ('05) was the HokieBird for three years while earning his degree in horticulture. As Sherry says, "We have a lot of orange and maroon in our bloodlines."

In 1994, Mike became president of six of Pittston Coal Company's operating subsidiaries in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio, representing 15 million tons of production. A year later, Pittston promoted him to executive vice president of sales and marketing and president of Pittston Coal Sales for the Pittston Coal Co., of Lebanon, Va. There, he gained a lot of experience in international business, especially in the Far East.

Mike continued his work with various coal companies, including a four-year stint with responsibility for AMCI's U.S. and international operations. His work included travel to Australia every other month for the four years.

After that experience, he along with others created Alpha Natural Resources (ANR), Inc. of Abingdon, Va., by acquiring Coastal Coal's operations in Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia; the Virginia operations of Pittston Coal Company; and the merged operations of American Metals and Coal International in North America. With Mike as its president and chief executive officer, ANR became the Commonwealth's largest coal producer with revenues in excess of \$1.6 billion annually, and is now one of only two NYSE listed companies headquartered in western Virginia.

Now in his late 50s, Mike's original childhood philosophy of looking at "everyday as a gift" can be retrofitted to the gifts he and Sherry continually make to their community and to their alma mater.

Most recently, the Quillens confirmed a \$1 million donation to assist with the construction of the first on-campus building for the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science (ICTAS). Mike easily explains this gift, saying: "Everyone has to make a personal decision on giving. A lot of people, even professors, think it is the state's job to provide the infrastructure at the university. Well, that is simply not going to happen. If we want to keep up with the standards and move to the top 10 of engineering colleges, we are going to need to step up and help fund it ourselves.

"Most of the negative marks the college gets relate to buildings and facilities. When I return to campus, many of the engineering buildings are the same ones where I sat in classes. We recognize that a college is made up of a variety of things. Obviously academics is the top priority. However, we cannot be a top program without strong research, particularly things like computer technology and nanotechnology. We think helping ICTAS is the right thing to do.

"Virginia Tech is at somewhat of a disadvantage in fundraising to other institutions. A lot of universities with a first class engineering school also have good medical and law schools. My impression is they get their donations from the lawyers and the medical community long before us engineers, business graduates, and farmers are in a position to contribute."

In the past the Quillens have contributed to both the civil and environmental engineering and the mining and minerals engineering departments, as well as the Athletic Association and the Alumni Association. They have also supported the construction of the new Inn at Virginia Tech. They are members of the Ut Prosim President's Circle. In 2006, Mike was named the College of Engineering's Distinguished Alumnus.

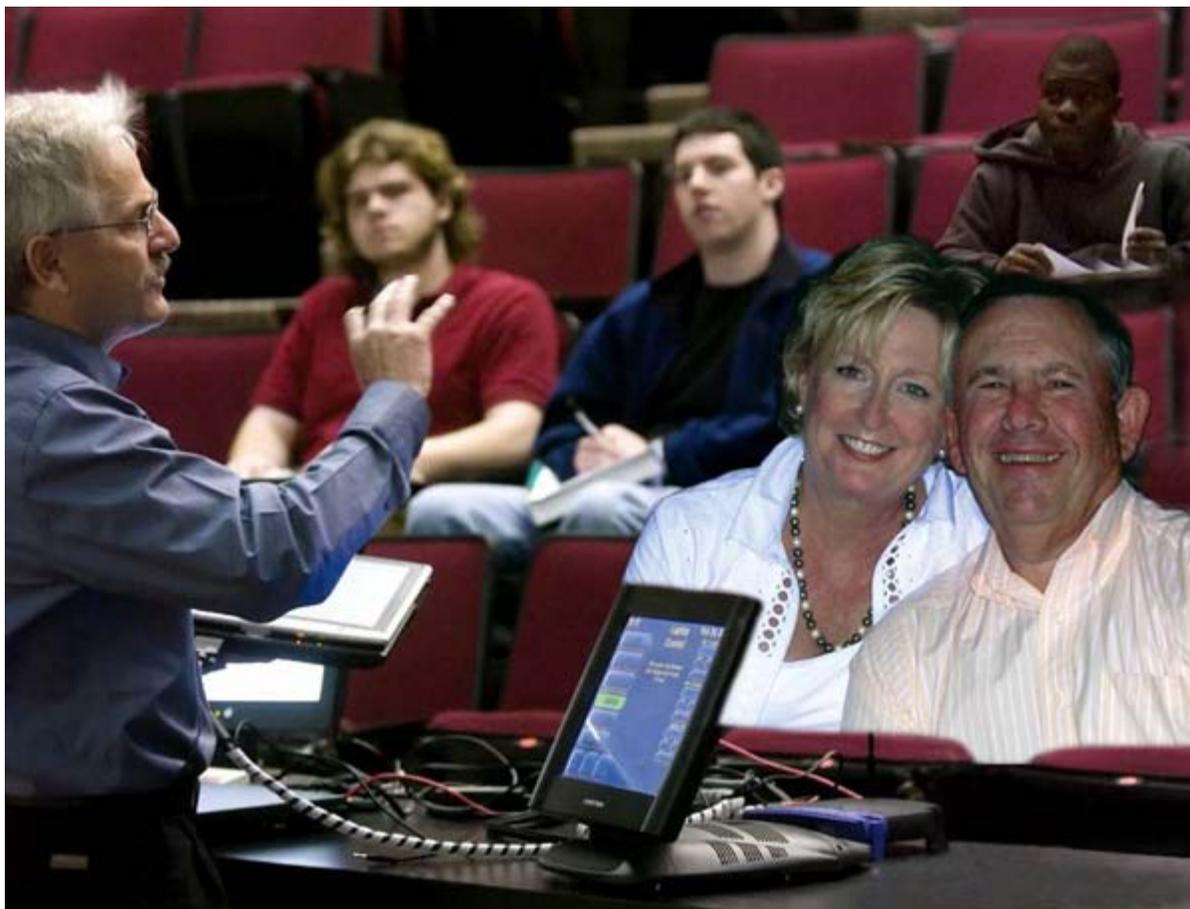
Both lost parents to cancer and support research dedicated to curing the disease.

"Sherry and I were both fortunate to be able to come to Virginia Tech and to be subsidized when we did. Since then, things have worked out well, and we started contributing back to the campus in 1974, but always within our means," Mike says. "Hopefully we can continue to help."

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Engineering's Signature Building

A \$500 scholarship in 1957 is repaid thousands of times over



Sue Ann and David D'Antoni say life is "all about people" and their support of the college's proposed signature building will enhance the classroom learning experience for students.

When Sue Ann D'Antoni was a volunteer with Ohio's Adventures for Wish Kids, an organization designed to enhance the lives of children with serious, life-threatening illnesses by providing group activities and destination events for the patients and their families, she helped organize parties and special activities. She was part of a dynamic team that raised some \$300,000 annually to help fulfill the lives of the ailing children and their families.

"I had two healthy children, yet I watched other people struggling. It would tug at my heartstrings," Sue Ann says, explaining why she became involved with the philanthropic efforts. In addition, with the support of the Columbus, Ohio, community, including such major industries as American Electric Power, Chase Bank, Nationwide Insurance, as well as her husband's company, Ashland Inc., the Babe Zaharis Golf and Tennis Classic to raise funds for cancer research became "one of the premier charity ladies golf and tennis events in the U.S.," she adds.

And if children weren't tugging at her heartstrings, animals were. Sue Ann and her husband, Dave D'Antoni, were neighbors to Jack Hanna, the director of the Columbus Zoo, central Ohio's number one cultural attraction. His enthusiasm was contagious, giving the D'Antonis many reasons to get involved, including Dave joining the zoo board.

The D'Antonis also developed a long association with Franklin University, located in Columbus, Ohio. After an introduction to the university's president, Dave spent 15 years on its board of directors, including a stint as chair. During that time the school went from a \$3 million endowment to one that exceeds \$50 million. The declining enrollment, which dipped below 4,000, turned around due to a very aggressive online adult education program and now tops 7,000. "This school is run like a business," Dave explains. But he is quick to credit the president with the success. "I really just supported his ideas," he adds.

Dave was equally successful in his United Way endeavors. In 1997 he led his community campaign that raised a generous \$43 million. "Franklin County (home of Ashland's chemical headquarters) always has one of the highest per-capita United Way campaigns of anywhere in the country."

The D'Antonis' close ties to Virginia Tech provided them with yet one more area in which they wanted to make a difference. "In 1966, I was given a \$500 scholarship," Dave says, "and that was a lot of money for a co-op student in those days. Ever since, I have been paying back that \$500 in the form of contributions to the university. In fact, I believe that I have made some type of contribution to Virginia Tech every year since I graduated in 1967."

This year, the couple enhanced their support of the university, making a significant pledge to the Virginia Tech College of Engineering's proposed signature building, a modern engineering facility that will serve multiple functions with teaching labs and classrooms at the core of the building. Surrounding the instructional core will be office clusters and research labs. It will support wireless communications, and several of the classrooms will be outfitted with the most modern communications equipment. Cameras, microphones and computers with high bandwidth Web access will foster distance and asynchronous learning. Desks will be reconfigurable to serve multiple uses.

Whether it is the children's adventure fund, the zoo, United Way, Franklin University, or Virginia Tech, the D'Antonis' generous support

of their key projects continually makes a difference. "Life is all about people, and it means a lot to help others," Dave says. Sue Ann agrees, saying with a laugh, "I support my husband and allow him to give the money away."

Dave is a man who is used to dealing with large amounts of dollars, accustomed to using the "B" word — for billions, that is. From 1988 until his 2004 retirement from the giant Ashland Inc. — a transportation, construction, chemical, and petroleum company — each position he managed represented an area that had annual revenues in the billions.

Like so many Hokies, Dave developed a strong work ethic early in his life. He grew up in the 1960s in Huntington, W.Va., as the son of a World War II fighter pilot. At that time, college tuition costs were a concern to the D'Antoni family so the teenager searched for an affordable school that would provide him with a good engineering education.

"I applied to Cincinnati, Georgia Tech, Michigan, and Virginia Tech, all of which had co-operative education. I wanted the added value of practical experience," Dave recalls. "I was accepted at all of them and I went to my dad to ask how I should make my decision." His father's answer was immediate: Virginia Tech. At half the price of the others, "it was a cost-based decision," he adds today, "and a great one."

As a college freshman majoring in chemical engineering, the high school overachiever found he lacked some necessary self-discipline, despite starting out as a member of the corps of cadets. His first quarter ended rather dismally grade-wise, but a serious talk with his grandfather, a mechanical engineer, helped him realign his priorities. In fact, by the time he graduated, he was a member of three honorary societies: Tau Beta Pi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Lambda Upsilon.

During his college education, he also found a lifelong friend, a mentor, and at times, a boss in J.A. "Fred" Brothers, who today is a retired executive vice president of Ashland Inc. As a ChE doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech, Brothers taught Dave, and Brothers says the younger man made "a lasting impression" on him. His intuition would prove to be correct.

When Dave graduated in 1967, he selected Exxon for his first job. "I left Roanoke on Dec. 22, 1966, on a blowing, cold 38 degree day, and arrived in Baton Rouge where it was 78 degrees.... I stayed for six years," he smiles. He quickly gained responsibility, moving from a process engineer to a process engineering supervisor to a plant superintendent with Exxon Chemical.

But Brothers never forgot Dave and successfully recruited him away from Exxon, sealing the friendship for their lifetimes. "Fred gave me opportunities early in my career that allowed me to advance rapidly. He always took time to talk to me, to keep track of me. As a result, I was able to move up the ladder," Dave recalls. He held 10 different jobs in 15 years before he landed one of the top management positions. Along the way, he also completed the Harvard Business Advanced Management Program in 1985.

In 1988, D'Antoni was named senior vice president of Ashland Inc., and the president of Ashland Chemical Co., with annual revenues of \$3 billion. In 1999 Ashland Inc. named him its senior vice president and group officer and a member of its executive committee. In 2001, Ashland added two companies to his portfolio. From then until his retirement in 2004, D'Antoni also headed Valvoline Oil with revenues exceeding \$1 billion annually and Ashland Paving and Construction Co., the largest highway paver in the U.S. with revenues at \$3 billion.

Today, officially retired, Dave remains professionally active serving on the board of directors of three companies--Compass Minerals, Omnova Solutions, and State Auto Insurance. "I spend a few weeks each quarter with these boards, but I primarily now play golf for a living," D'Antoni laughs. With a handicap of four, his competitiveness still shows. And in the past year, he has traveled to Cabo San Lucas, Sarasota, Phoenix, Ireland, and Tampa to play with friends.

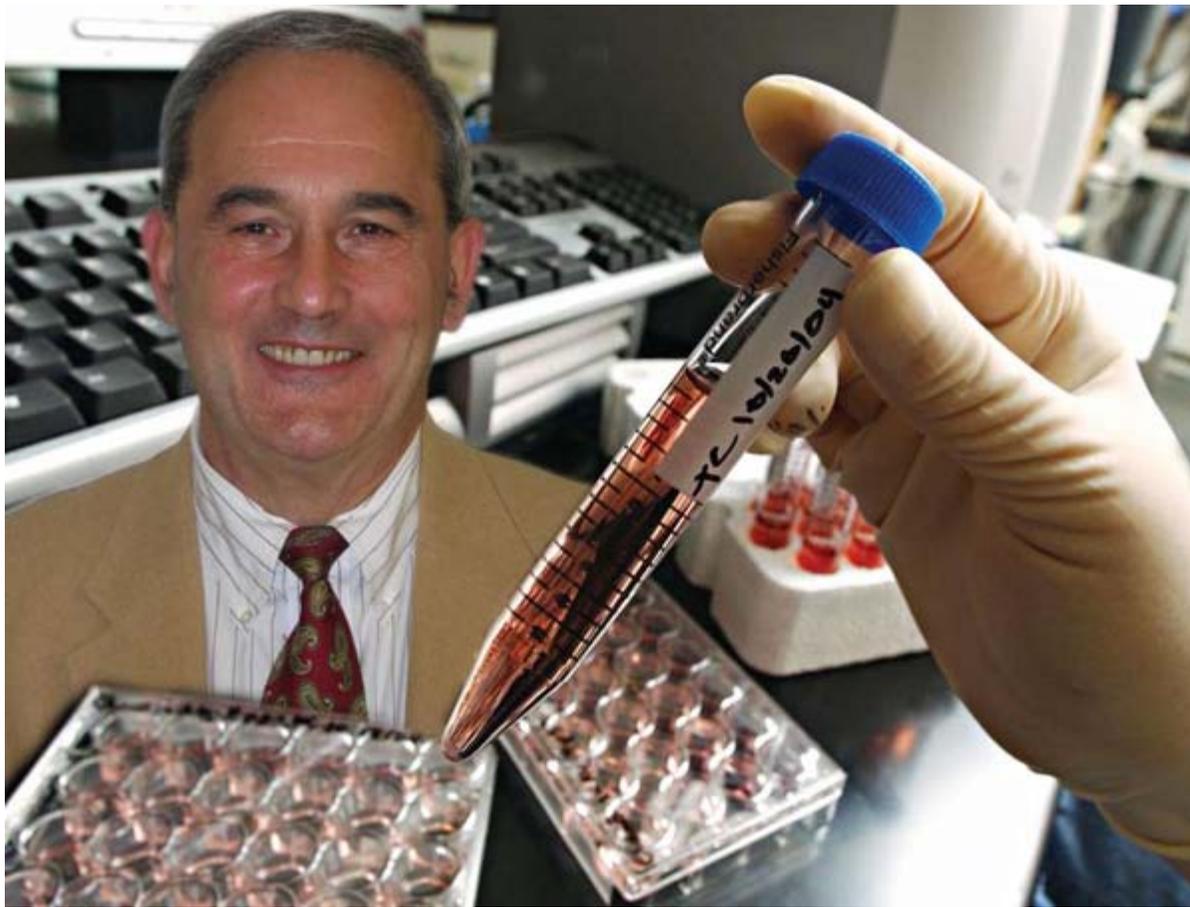
Dave and Sue Ann, who he met on a blind date 40 years ago, now divide their time between their primary home in Naples, Fla., and their long-time location of Columbus. Not coincidentally, the Brothers, also philanthropists, do the same. And as a final twist to the D'Antoni-Brothers relationships, Dave successfully nominated Fred for membership in Virginia Tech's Academy of Engineering Excellence in 2003; in 2007, Fred returned the favor and nominated David into the academy.

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A Boost for Junior Faculty

The grandson of an Italian immigrant, John Jones beat the odds for his success and now invests in others

"At Virginia Tech we have some world-class people. They have a passion for innovation. I see some of our newer mechanical engineering (ME) faculty blossoming and exhibiting leadership that will be recognized and rewarded. And this enthusiasm and passion is contagious," says John R. Jones III, a 1967 graduate of the ME department and a member of its advisory board since 1997.



John Jones is perpetuating an innovative, internally funded Faculty Fellows program designed to acknowledge and reward faculty in the junior ranks who show exceptional merit.

So with his insider's view of the ME faculty, when the time came for Jones to consider an investment in his alma mater, he chose to place his resources in the ME people. He created an endowment with a gift of \$600,000 that ensures the ME Department will continue to reward junior faculty for their outstanding efforts.

Jones was perpetuating an innovative internally funded, college-wide Faculty Fellows program, started in 2003 by then Dean Hassan Aref. Aref designed the initiative to acknowledge and reward faculty in the junior ranks who show exceptional merit in research, teaching and/or service.

Recipients of the Jones Fellow of ME will be eligible to receive supplemental funding for a period of up to five years. The department head will make the selection following recommendations from the Mechanical Engineering Honorifics Committee. The Jones gift represents the first of its kind at an engineering department level for junior faculty.

"I like the idea of helping junior faculty through these fellowships. I think I can make a bigger impact with this type of gift and help the department more. I've endowed a scholarship since 1995 and that helps only one student. By creating this fellowship, we can touch every student these outstanding faculty members teach. I find that to be immensely rewarding," Jones said.

"All of our existing endowed positions are professorships, which are reserved exclusively for full professors," said Ball. "John Jones' generous gift allows us to recognize outstanding mid-career faculty, who are often recruited aggressively by other universities that can offer endowed fellowships to them. Now, we are in a position to preempt this loss of talent and the Jones Fellowships will definitely help us to retain our rising faculty stars."

Jones further explained his rationale by saying that if he can help the faculty, and then a larger effort can help improve the facilities, then "we will all be helping a lot more engineering students. And we will be helping to keep the innovators at Virginia Tech. Virginia Tech is prospering almost despite itself. We have these world-class people but our facilities don't match. It is criminal if we do not support the people next with the facilities they need. The need for better facilities is a big emphasis of the ME advisory board."

People are key to Jones. "Walter O'Brien was one of my instructors as a student. He taught me rocket propulsion. It was he who later recruited me to the advisory board," Jones says. He also recalls with obvious fond memories some of the icons among the engineering professors who were teaching when he was a student: J.B Jones, his nephew J.B. Jones, Dan Pletta, Fred Bull, and Bob Comparin.

"I am one who attended school here in the 1960s, and at that time we all knew that ME, aerospace, and chemical had good programs and were well-recognized by industry. These three departments were all in Randolph Hall then. They still are and the building hasn't changed. This is very tough on today's faculty and students, and all of us on the ME advisory board are very concerned," Jones adds.

Jones truly understands how a scholarship or a supplemental award can make a significant difference in someone's career. The grandson of an Italian immigrant who settled in St. Paul, Va., Jones saw hard times first-hand as he grew up in this southwestern Virginia mining town in the 1940s and 50s. Today, Jones remains well acquainted with this rural area and visits about two out of every six weeks — his

86-year old father was the well-respected tire dealer of this community of 1,000 until his death in fall 2005.

After he received his diploma in ME from Virginia Tech in 1967, Jones spent his 36-year career with American Electric Power (AEP). In his 20s, Jones was involved in the construction of some of the largest power plants on the planet. In fact, of the nine 1300-megawatt coal-fired units in the world, Jones was involved in building seven of them. He also was in charge of converting a nuclear plant to coal, the first and only time this has been accomplished.

In 1993, AEP asked him to take over its fossil and hydro generating operations as a senior vice president for fossil and hydro operations. In 1998, Jones became a senior vice president in charge of generation projects. He directed leading-edge environmental projects, such as flue gas scrubbers, selective catalytic reduction, and other measures to remove nitrous oxides and he pursued innovative new generation alternatives. In 2000, AEP named Jones president of a wholly owned subsidiary of the company, Pro Serv, Inc., an organization of some 1,400 professionals responsible for the engineering, design, construction, and maintenance of AEP's in-house fleet of 80 power plants and to market those services to others in the power industry.

When Jones retired from AEP at the end of 2002, Pro Serv had become the ninth largest power contractor in the country, increasing in revenues from \$150 million to \$800 million in the 30-month period. Since his retirement, he has remained active by consulting to the power industry.

His penchant for success is part of what he believes he can continue to impart to the ME department as a member of its advisory board. "We add a business perspective to the educational process. We have questioned hard the university's commitment to its facilities and faculty. We have questioned the long-term strategic plans, and we look to see how we can encourage more participation by our distinguished alumni."

Ball adds, "John is a valued member of our advisory board, and we are grateful for his continuing involvement with Virginia Tech. He is passionate in his support of the ME department and the College of Engineering. In establishing the John R. Jones III Faculty Fellowship endowment, he is making a significant investment in our future. With a number of young stars on our faculty, his gift will have an immediate impact, and we will continue to benefit from his generosity for many years to come. I am extremely excited by John's gift."

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Students Supporting Students

By 2010, the college's 20-something engineering students should surpass the \$1 million club in giving

If the Ut Prosim Society at Virginia Tech awarded membership to a student organization, Virginia Tech's Student Engineers' Council (SEC) would be well on its way to becoming a member at the level of the President's Inner Circle, comprised of the donors who surpass the \$1 million mark.



The Student Engineers' Council, represented in this picture by Lianne Sandberg, the 2007-08 chair, created a design team endowment in 2007. They started the fund with a gift of \$105,000 using money earned by the students. Their goal is to increase the fund to \$500,000 by 2010. In August 2007, through the efforts of aerospace engineering alumnus Marc Sheffler, Boeing added \$60,000 to this endowment.

In the past eight years, the SEC has contributed more than \$300,000 in support of the College of Engineering's undergraduate programs.

In 2007, the SEC announced the creation of a new \$105,000 endowment to support the nationally and internationally acclaimed engineering student design teams in the college. The SEC's goal is have this endowment reach \$500,000 by 2010. The SEC presented this first installment in spring 2007 to the Virginia Tech Foundation. The SEC's goal is to add to this account each year to become a dependable source of revenue for the design teams.

In addition, since the 1980s the SEC has distributed funds to the various active engineering student organizations to assist with travel needs for conferences, hosting of conferences at Virginia Tech, and participation in competitions. These funding levels vary according to the need and the initiative demonstrated by the group requesting financial assistance. A maximum of \$3,000 is allotted to any one organization.

In 2006, the SEC changed its constitution to allow College of Engineering sponsored student design teams — in addition to the student organizations — to apply for the funds.

"Virginia Tech is known for the large number of design teams in the College of Engineering, with over 100 of them currently in existence. Funding for these design teams is scarce and creating this account will significantly impact the College of Engineering and ultimately the university," said Michael Chappell, the 2006 chair of the SEC and the originator of the idea.

"This endowment is loaded with potential; as it begins to fructify, we will see it feed student involvement, innovation, and ownership in their education.

"The SEC is truly realizing its vision to serve the College of Engineering, engineering student societies, and engineering students by planting and nourishing this financial seed. The SEC is sincerely grateful for every single sponsor; without them, none of this would be possible," adds Chappell, now an alumnus of the university who works as an analyst with Accenture.

From 2001 until 2006, the SEC has grown from an organization with \$60,000 in revenue to an unprecedented \$300,000. In 2006 the National Association of Engineering Student Councils (NAESC) named Virginia Tech's SEC the most philanthropic organization of its kind in the nation for the second time in five years.

In addition to its grants, the SEC also confers three endowed scholarships annually, each having a principal value of \$25,000. The SEC created its first scholarship in 1985 with the financial assistance of the members of the Committee of 100, a select group of Virginia Tech engineering alumni. The students announced this scholarship in honor of Paul E. Torgersen, who was dean of the College of Engineering at the time. Since then, the endowment has grown substantially, and now allows for two Torgersen Leadership Scholarships to be awarded each year. They are awarded annually to two rising seniors who have shown outstanding leadership and academic achievements. Each scholarship is worth \$1,250.

In 1988, the SEC decided to endow a third scholarship from its own generated income. Called the Nathnael Gebreyes Service Scholarship, it is awarded annually to a rising junior or senior who has portrayed outstanding service principles to the university and the community. The scholarship is worth \$1,250. Gebreyes was a past chair of the SEC who was tragically killed in an automobile accident by a drunken driver.

Each year the SEC requests proposals from members of the College of Engineering community that identify ways in which money may best be spent for the improvement of the college and to benefit the greatest number of students. The nature of the proposed projects is virtually unlimited, ranging from physically improving facilities on campus to the establishment of a new scholarship. The magnitude of these projects is substantial, as up to \$50,000 has been set aside by the SEC in a single year. At the discretion of the SEC, the funding may be divided among several proposed projects.

Generally, engineering faculty members submit these proposals and an executive review committee narrows the number of proposals to three to five. The authors then present their proposals to the larger SEC assembly, which makes the final decisions on how to allocate the resources.

Among the efforts funded by the SEC from the competitive proposals are the refurbishing of the Joseph F. Ware Lab (housing a host of engineering design projects), mentoring needs, tutoring facilities, classroom renovation, freshmen engineering laboratory needs, and innovative coursework.

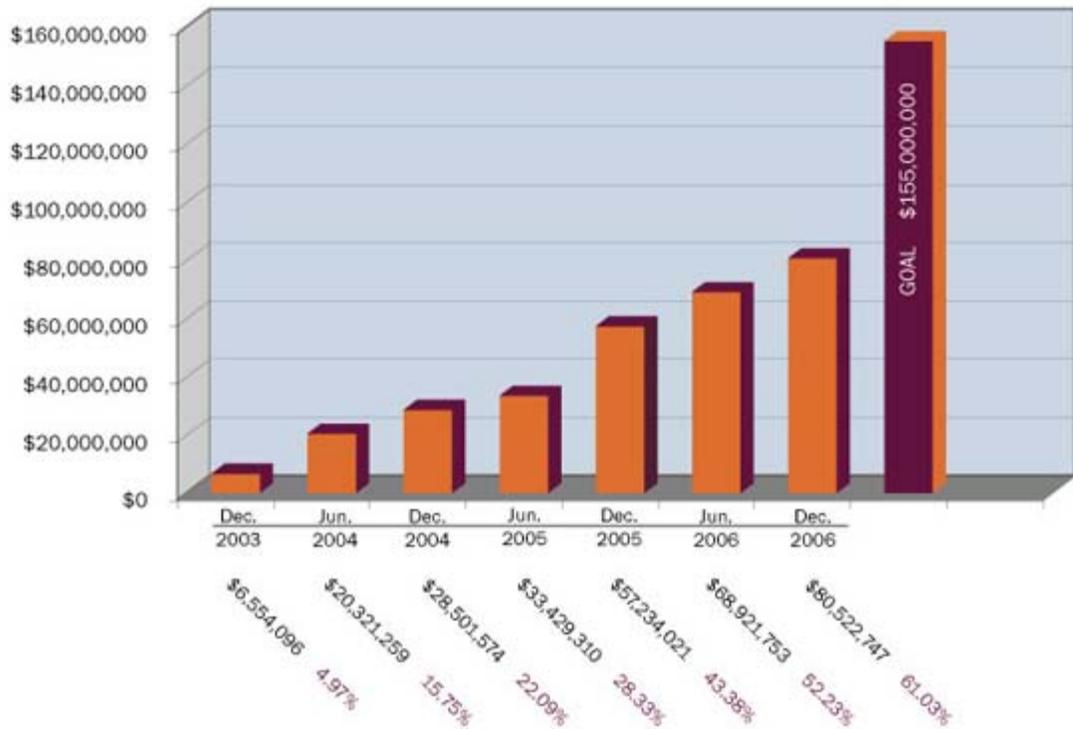
The Ware Lab, founded in 1998 through the generosity of alumnus Joseph F. Ware, Jr. and his wife, Jenna, is one of the first and most successful undergraduate design-and-build facilities in the world. It hosts a number of international competition winners, including the Autonomous Vehicle Team, Hybrid Electric Vehicle Team, Human Powered Submarine Team, and the Mini-Baja Team. The SEC grant will enable the Ware Lab's new manager, mechanical engineering alumna Susan Cortes, to "spruce up" the facility and its promotional materials in anticipation of an industrial affiliates program.

The SEC earns the money it donates to the college by hosting the Engineering Expo career fair each year. In 1980, approximately 40 companies attended the Career Fair; today some 250 companies participate and, due to a lack of space, another 50 have remained on the waiting list for the past two years. Virginia Tech's Engineering Expo is one of the most successful career fairs in the country.

College of Engineering

Silent Phase Campaign Growth Chart

July 1, 2003, through December 31, 2006



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