

ALUMNI CIRCUIT

HONORING EXCELLENCE FOR 2011

Two civil engineers and a mechanical engineer were named Outstanding Alumni by Newark College of Engineering at the college's annual Salute to Engineering Excellence in May.

NCE has long been known for offering first-generation college students an education that becomes a pathway to professional success. Consider, for example, **Jeffrey Beck**, one of the three graduates honored.

Following his older brother, Beck was the first generation in his family to attend college. Beck, who earned a mechanical engineering degree in 1986, worked in a printing plant as well as at UPS while studying at NCE.

Beck credits his professional success – he is president of the home robots division of iRobot Corp. – to his well-rounded education. “Without the broad-based science education I received at NJIT my career would not have been possible.” His

NCE classes, he says, emphasized practical learning. His professors taught him hands-on engineering. He was also required to take classes in an array of fields.

After NCE, Beck worked as a mechanical engineer for some years, then earned his MBA at Boston University. Now, as president of iRobot's home division, the leading maker of home-maintenance robots, he's in charge of the division's overall business strategy.

“To build a robot, a team must integrate all the sciences, said Beck. “And thanks to my NCE education I understand all of those fields.”

Born in Newark, **Joseph Fleming** commuted to campus on his Schwinn 10-speed bike. He was the first in his family to graduate from college – he earned a civil engineering degree in 1976. Working his way through NCE, he took on “a kaleidoscope of horrific part-time jobs that included cleaning industrial toilets.”

At NCE, he was the heavy-weight member of the Wrestling Team and was also a member of Tau Delta Phi fraternity.

“To build a robot, a team must integrate all the sciences. And thanks to my NCE education I understand all of those fields.”

– Jeffrey Beck



Joseph Fleming

Fleming is now executive vice president of Paulus, Sokolowski & Sartor, a top design and engineering firm. He is responsible for the firm's land-based consulting engineering services.

One of his favorite projects was helping to plan and design Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC). But he enjoys all aspects of consulting engineering. “Guiding a project through the challenges of construction to the ribbon-cutting is a satisfying experience,” he says.

Fleming gave thanks to his wife Mary Pat, without whom, he said, he might not have graduated from NCE. “Just prior to graduation in 1976,” Fleming recalled, “NCE sponsored a ceremony that honored the supporting spouses of that year's graduating class. Mary Pat was among the spouses who received the PHT Award (Pushed Him Through) at the ceremony.”

Wei Wang, who left China to study engineering at NJIT, washed dishes in the university's cafeteria during his first semester. But a generous NJIT scholarship made it possible for him to continue his studies without washing dishes after that first semester, and he graduated in 1995 with a PhD in civil engineering.

After working for a few years as a civil engineer, Wang founded UrbanTech, a consulting structural engineering firm. He started the company in his basement in Edison, New Jersey. Now based in Manhattan, the firm has completed major bridge and building projects.

UrbanTech has reconstructed three swing bridges that connect Manhattan to the Bronx and in just one weekend replaced two Amtrak railroad bridges. The firm also rebuilt the historic Verizon building in Manhattan. Located next to the World Trade Center, this structure was damaged on 9/11.



Wei Wang

In his last year at NJIT, Wang met a woman working on her master's degree in civil engineering and transportation. The two are now married, and April Wang, who graduated in 1996, works for the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

Wang credits his success to his “practical and hands-on” NCE education. “I would not have made it without the NJIT scholarship,” he also says. “I'll do anything to help NJIT.” ■

Robert Florida, Contributing Editor



Jeffrey Beck (left) and NCE Dean Sunil Saigal

PHOTOS: LARRY LEVANTI



NJIT'S NEWEST ALUMNI

On May 16, at NJIT's 2011 Commencement, Panasonic Corporation of North America Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Joseph M. Taylor urged graduates to keep their dreams alive, and NJIT President Robert A. Altenkirch emphasized the importance of the cultural diversity they experienced as NJIT students.

The university awarded 2,350 degrees to the Class of 2011, which Taylor addressed as the keynote speaker at the Prudential Center in Newark. Taylor also received an honorary doctorate of science, along with Intellect Wireless CEO and inventor Daniel A. Henderson.

Taylor explained that his connection to NJIT started 20 years ago with an idea for encouraging high school students – particularly disadvantaged students with an interest in

science and engineering – to enter technological fields. That was the genesis of the Panasonic Creative Design Challenge, in which students compete to create a robotic solution to real-life problems and win scholarships. Taylor's company also instituted the Panasonic Scholarship Program to provide resources for high-achieving students whose academic careers are at risk due to financial issues.

"I can tell you that Panasonic has hired many NJIT students, and we love them," Taylor said. "Many came to us as interns."

When Taylor asked these students why they thought they were able to succeed, the unanimous reply was that they had held onto their dreams over the years. "I have no doubt that in these heads in front of me there are already the beginnings of some great world-changing ideas that you will refine and test and successfully turn into tomorrow's inventions and companies,"

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have news about your career, your family, an avocation? Share it in a class note for *NJIT Magazine*. And be sure to let us know if you have a new address.

On the Web, use the form at www.njit.edu/alumni/classnotes.

By e-mail, send news and photos with your graduation year(s) to alumni-classnotes@njit.edu.

Via U.S. mail to: Robert A. Boynton, Executive Director, Alumni Relations, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Eberhardt Hall NJIT Alumni Center, Room 218, 323 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Newark, NJ 07102-1982

Taylor said. "So keep those dreams alive!"

Daniel Henderson, longtime friend of NJIT, began his career at IBM and was invited to work with Kazuo Hashimoto, known as the inventor of caller ID and the modern answering machine. Henderson has received 26 U.S. patents for innovative telecommunications technology, and in 2007 his prototype wireless picturephone was received by the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of American History.

Henderson is the creator of the NJIT-ECE Phonetel Scholarship, and for more than a decade at commencement he has presented the Hashimoto Prize to outstanding doctoral

graduates in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He serves on the Board of Visitors of Albert Dorman Honors College, and the college's computer lab was dedicated to him in 2008.

In his remarks, NJIT President Robert A. Altenkirch noted that the careers of the two individuals awarded honorary doctorates exemplified the significance of a worldview that embraces international cooperation as the foundation for technological and economic progress in the 21st century.

"NJIT's faculty, administration and staff have helped you to gain knowledge that will enable you to plan and act effectively in many fields," he said. "It is our hope that with this knowledge you will realize the greatest degree of professional success and lifelong personal fulfillment. It is our hope, too, that the ethnic and cultural diversity you have experienced at NJIT has fostered an appreciation of how vital it is to be a thoughtful and a positive participant in the global community." ■



Joseph Taylor

ALUMNI CIRCUIT

SIX OUTSTANDING GRADUATES

2011 ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The presentation of Alumni Achievement Awards was once again a highlight of NJIT's annual Class Reunion Weekend in May. The 2011 awards ceremony sponsored by the NJIT Alumni Association honored six graduates for a wide range of professional accomplishments – which this year included helping U.S. astronauts reach the moon.

GURINDER S. AHLUWALIA '90

Pursuing His Passion

"Decide what you're passionate about and pursue that passion to the very best of your ability, always keeping the goal of excellence in mind." That's the advice Gurinder S. Ahluwalia offers to young people contemplating the path ahead in life.

For Ahluwalia, following his own path to the post of president and chief executive officer at Genworth Financial Wealth Management included a 1990 master's in electrical engineering from NJIT. The undergraduate experience that led to NJIT – where his father, Daljit, chairs the Department of Mathematical Sciences – was a dual degree in electrical engineering and computer science earned at Cooper Union and New York University.

Although he did well academically as a graduate student,

Ahluwalia says he wasn't as happy as he felt he could be at that point in his life. "I knew that I needed a PhD for a career in college teaching or research, but that meant spending a lot of time more or less alone doing work that just didn't appeal to me. However, I really enjoyed being a teaching assistant, which helped me realize that I wanted to be much more engaged with people on a daily basis. I decided that I had to move in a different direction."

Ahluwalia found that direction when, with MS in hand, he left academia for a manufacturing-management position in the aerospace field with GE in Boston. A subsequent move to GE Medical Systems also meant a move to Wisconsin and assignments as far afield as Tokyo. It was the mentoring relationship Ahluwalia had with his GE plant manager that motivated a very direct question about the future: "How do I get your job?" His manager's answer: "You need a financial background. You should join the GE Audit Staff."

No problem. Auditing applicants just had to pass an intellectually and physically grueling one-month test of their ability to acquire and apply the knowledge essential for resolving a complex business challenge. In Ahluwalia's case, this rite of passage involved sorting out a problem in "transfer pricing" – a dense provision of the U.S. tax code pertaining to allocation of manufacturing value added and income.

Ahluwalia's impressive results on his real-world test marked the



Gurinder S. Ahluwalia

starting point of a career which, through corporate evolution, has taken him from auditing to positions of increasing executive responsibility in the financial world. At Genworth Financial Wealth Management, he heads an investment-management and consulting firm that oversees over \$25 billion in assets and is helping some 6000 independent advisors build their individual practices.

Now living in California with his wife and children, Ahluwalia has definitely found a satisfying degree of engagement with people in his position of leadership. "I love being able to build an environment that brings out the best in each person when it comes to working together on solutions for the problems we have to solve."

Has Ahluwalia's education in science and technology been relevant to his achievements in finance? Definitely, he says without hesitation. "I really learned how to break a problem down into its component parts, and to use the resources available to come up with the best possible solution. Studying science sharpens your analytical skills and bolsters self-confidence; these are requisites for success in any field."

STANLEY BARAUSKAS '61 *Launching a Leap for Mankind*

When Neil Armstrong took one small step for a man and a giant leap for mankind on the moon in 1969, he did so with the help of many people. They were the thousands of scientists, engineers and technicians who helped to make the Apollo moon-landing program a national triumph. Those individuals included NJIT alumnus Stanley Barauskas.

Barauskas, fascinated by space travel as he grew up in Jersey City, avidly read science fiction and watched TV "space operas" like *Tom Corbett Space Cadet* and *Rocky Jones Space Ranger*. In elementary school, he recalls, "I wrote an essay about how I wanted to become a chemist and work on fuel for rockets."

Space flight was much more than grist for imaginative entertainment when Barauskas enrolled at Newark College of Engineering. U.S. technological complacency had been shaken by the Soviet Union's launch of the first artificial satellite and its development of nuclear-armed missiles. In 1961, the year that Barauskas graduated, Yuri Gagarin became the first human to orbit the Earth, followed in catch-up mode by Alan Shepard's sub-orbital flight.

“Only humans have the resourcefulness to react to the unexpected in ways that exploration really requires, as well as the intelligence and imagination that lead to important discoveries.”

– Stanley Barauskas

These events – and President John F. Kennedy’s inspiring commitment to surpass the Russians by landing humans on the moon – gave Barauskas the opportunity for a fulfilling aerospace career. But it’s a career that actually began by chance. At NCE, Barauskas earned a degree in mechanical engineering, a discipline he found more appealing than chemistry. Upon graduation, he considered jobs in various fields, not necessarily one related to space.

in the early 1970s, he contributed his expertise to the Skylab missions and the symbolically significant linkup of U.S. Apollo and Russian Soyuz spacecraft in Earth orbit.

Next, with Space Shuttle contractor Rockwell International, Barauskas worked on the system that powered hydraulic operation of the main engine valves upon takeoff and flight control when the Shuttle descended through the atmosphere to land. He was involved with this aspect of Shuttle technology until the recent final mission of the program.

As a Manned Flight Awareness Honoree, Barauskas has been accorded NASA’s highest tribute to professional abilities that support the human presence in space. He has also received two Astronaut Achievement Awards, presented to individuals personally selected by those who have

flown in space for contributions to mission safety and success.

Barauskas acknowledges the considerable economic challenges of manned space flight, and that private-sector companies may be able to take over transporting humans to the International Space Station at acceptable cost. Robotic craft also have their place in exploring the depths of space.

“But only humans have the resourcefulness to react to the unexpected in ways that exploration really requires, as well as the intelligence and imagination that

lead to important discoveries,” he says.

When it comes to the cost of returning humans to the moon and traveling on to the asteroids and Mars, Barauskas asserts that the worth of such journeys should not be judged by short-term profit. He is sure that the knowledge gained would ultimately yield invaluable dividends for all of humanity.

MARTIN HAMMER '80 *Building Better, Giving Back*

For architect Martin Hammer, every building has a close and complex relationship with the world around us. It is a perspective that fosters thoughtful examination of how we build and how we live.

Hammer asks, “Is it healthy to build with a particular material and to live in the space created? What natural resources and how much energy are consumed in its manufacture? Is the material local? How can it be reused or recycled, and finally, how does it return to the earth at the end of a building’s useful existence?”

Hammer learned to appreciate sustainability long before it became a buzzword, at NJIT’s School of Architecture where he earned his bachelor’s degree in 1980. The energy crisis of the 1970s was the social context that led him to concentrate on energy efficiency in buildings and to integrate passive solar strategies into many of his projects. Today, he utilizes numerous sustainable building technologies and practices, including passive solar design, photovoltaics, rainwater catchment, greywater reuse, use

of salvaged materials, and other ways to harmonize the built and natural environments.

After graduation Hammer moved west, finding employment in Berkeley, California, a community known for its environmentalism. Two years later he started his own architectural practice. His first commission was to design and build a small addition for a friend – literally build the addition. “I put on a tool belt and did the hands-on work. It’s an experience every architecture student should have. It provides direct understanding of materials and how they go together. It makes you a better architect.”

Over the last 15 years, Hammer has become a leading proponent of straw-bale construction, which was first used in Nebraska in the late 1800s. Rediscovered in the 1980s, it has since been employed in 49 U.S. states and in over 45 countries worldwide. His introduction to straw-bale building occurred when a contractor, also interested in environmentally friendly building, commissioned a 3000-square-foot shop and studio.

Straw-bale buildings are energy- and resource-efficient, fire-resistant, and with proper design are highly resistant to earthquakes. Hammer has since been involved in their design, engineering, construction, and testing. He has authored state and national building codes for straw-bale construction, and he is a contributing author of the book *Design of Straw Bale Buildings*.

After a devastating earthquake in 2005, Hammer helped bring the benefits of straw-bale building to Pakistan as one of
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Stanley Barauskas

Fortuitously, Barauskas saw a newspaper ad placed by General Dynamics, a major aerospace contractor. The ad led to his working on the first U.S. intercontinental ballistic missile, the Atlas. Moving to California and eventually to employment with North American Aviation, Barauskas was responsible for the installation and operational certification of the attitude-control rocket engines critical to guiding the Apollo service and command modules to the moon. After the moon program ended

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ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, *continued*



ABOVE: At a straw-bale construction site in Pakistan – Martin Hammer is standing third from the left.

INSET: In Haiti with straw-bale construction trainee Jean-Louis Elie.

the founders of Pakistan Straw Bale and Appropriate Building (www.paksbab.org). In 2010 a catastrophic earthquake struck Haiti, and Hammer volunteered to evaluate damage for the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, and later assessed historic buildings with a World Monuments Fund team. But it was the sustainable reconstruction of Haiti that interested him most, and since June 2010 he has been promoting safe, affordable, sustainable and culturally appropriate rebuilding in Haiti through Builders Without Borders (www.builderswithoutborders.org). In March the first straw-bale building in Haiti was completed by his American and Haitian team.

Why does he feel compelled to help in Pakistan and Haiti? Hammer says it's an inclination that was strengthened at NJIT – where he played soccer as well as studied architecture. He specifically recalls being inspired by Anthony Schuman, now associate professor of architecture, and by Mal Simon, his soccer coach. Schuman's presentation on village life in West Africa impressed Hammer with the differences between his life and the lives of people who have far less material wealth, yet a wealth of culture and community. Hammer also cites the example of how Simon and his wife, Diane, volunteered for a Peace Corps family service program in the 1970s,

relocating to Jamaica with their children.

"My education at NJIT was a catalyst for thinking in new ways about how we relate to our environment through architecture, through design and building," Hammer says. "It was there I also met people who motivated me to 'give something back' whenever I could."

GEORGE F. NECHWORT, SR. '41

Cooking Up an Engineering Career

George Nechwort has helped to maintain the Panama Canal, supervise construction of pipelines, power plants and refinery process units, and direct major

bridge and highway projects. His long and varied career in civil engineering has taken him to Liberia, the Dominican Republic and Argentina.

And it's a career that began in a cooking class at Newark's Baringer High School.

Although Nechwort's father had his own business building truck bodies and painting cars, it was the Great Depression, and the family faced financial hardships like many other Americans. The prospect of access to the ingredients for some good meals and an interest in the culinary skills needed to enjoy them prompted Nechwort and several friends to propose the creation of a Boys' Cooking Class at Baringer. The class was approved, and being the first of its kind in New Jersey, it garnered attention that included a story in one of the area's leading newspapers, *The Newark Star-Ledger*.

"Each month, we were also expected to prepare and serve a special meal, with teachers invited as guests of honor and one boy acting as host," Nechwort says. "By chance, I was the host when the school's principal was a guest. He asked me about my plans after graduation, and I said I had thought about studying civil engineering but that my family couldn't afford to send me to college. He then told me about a program at nearby Newark College of Engineering that provided loans and part-time jobs to help students such as myself continue their education."

This advice led Nechwort to enroll at NCE. His tuition and other expenses were covered by

“Be willing to listen to everyone you work with, no matter what their job may be. Their ideas will surprise you.”

– George Nechwort

working a few hours three days a week managing the use of lab equipment for evening chemistry students and by a loan from the owner of the service station where he worked on weekends. A highlight of Nechwort’s NCE years was the scholarship he won that allowed him to travel to Maine for a summer program in advanced surveying organized by MIT. The skills he acquired would serve him very well in the years to come.

World War II was raging in Europe when Nechwort graduated in 1941, and he quickly found work as a quality supervisor at a company producing aircraft parts in East Orange.



George F. Nechwort, Sr.

Through a college friend, he learned of a more attractive opportunity – a position with the Special Engineering Division of the Panama Canal Company. For the duration of the war, Nechwort had a wide range of surveying and dredging assignments essential for ensuring that this vital transportation artery would serve the U.S. and its allies with maximum efficiency.

After the war, Nechwort embarked on a succession of increasingly responsible assignments at various firms. These would involve him with infrastructure development in this country and abroad, beginning with bridge and highway projects in Liberia. Over the years, he gained certification as a Professional Engineer in Connecticut, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. His expertise also earned recognition as a Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Nechwort can look back with pride on projects that include surveying the route of a natural gas pipeline across New Jersey, completing construction of the second Delaware Memorial Bridge and reconstruction of the first Delaware Memorial Bridge. Argentina’s first highway project under the U.S. Alliance for Progress program was completed with his supervision. He has also improved daily life for millions of people through upgrades to highways in New Jersey, New York and Connecticut.

Nechwort attributes much of his success as an engineer to his willingness to learn from talented people working at every level, in every craft. To students and recent graduates, he says: “Be willing to listen to everyone you work with, no matter what their job may be. Their ideas will surprise you.”

MARJORIE A. PERRY '05 *Learning What’s Needed to Navigate*

Today, Marjorie Perry is president and CEO of MZM Construction and Management, a Newark-based enterprise whose projects span transportation facilities, schools, entertainment venues and residences. Very diverse experiences have contributed to Perry’s achieving this position – experiences that include selling sandpaper, a conversation with clothing designer Ralph Lauren, and completing her MBA at NJIT in 2005.

But there’s a common thread of purpose in all that Perry has done. Communicating irrepressible energy and enthusiasm, she says, “I always focus on learning whatever is needed to navigate in any waters where I might find myself.”

During Perry’s tenure at MZM, she has learned what it takes to navigate toward success in full-service construction management, and to branch out into areas such as bio-solid waste transportation, as described at www.mzmcc.com. The course she followed to arrive at this executive destination began in 1974 with a degree in education from Kean College and a teaching job with the Newark public school system. Upon losing that job in a round of layoffs, she had to ask herself: “What can I do next?”

The answer was to move on to sales and marketing, a good match for her personality. This led to joining 3M, and later Johnson & Johnson and United Airlines. It was when Perry was with 3M that she sold sandpaper



Marjorie A. Perry

to clients in the Midwest. “Working for each of these world-class companies was like being in a mini-MBA program,” Perry says of how they helped to hone her business acumen.

Bringing her skills to United Airlines when the airline industry was deregulated in the 1980s, she enjoyed first-class global travel. On flights to Hong Kong, Tokyo and other distant cities, conversations with businessmen – and Perry emphasizes that they were virtually all men in those days – caused her to think seriously about her own entrepreneurial inclinations.

Perry cites one conversation in particular – with Ralph Lauren. He spoke about the exciting challenges of starting a business and the positive difference that individuals willing to take the chance can make in the world. “I can do that,” she decided.

In 1986, Perry launched a consulting company focused on helping nascent entrepreneurs, including women and minorities, succeed in the marketplace. Two clients, young engineers, asked her to get their construction company off the ground. She subsequently became a partner in the firm. The company was MZM. In 1994, she became the sole principal.

Perry says that she had a lot to learn, and did so by taking
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"I was really interested in drawing and art, and saw myself working for Walt Disney one day. But I also liked mechanical drawing and decided that engineering would be a good, probably more realistic, backup option, especially if Walt Disney did not hire me."

—Robert Sommerlad

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, *continued*

courses at Rutgers, Stevens, NYU and NJIT. She augmented her already considerable background in business with new knowledge of engineering theory, project management, and hands-on basics like learning how to read a blueprint. Eventually, feeling the need to gain the benefits of an MBA, she applied to schools that included Columbia, Dartmouth and Harvard, and was accepted by all of them. However, given the unique technological context of NJIT's program, Perry concluded that her future — and that of MZM — would best be served by studying for the degree at the School of Management in Newark. "It was definitely the place I wanted to be," she says.

Perry also manages to find the time to share her experiences and insights with women's groups, civic organizations and on television. Additionally, she returned to the classroom at NJIT last spring as an instructor, teaching Principles of Management. Whether speaking at the Governor's Conference for Women, on the TV show *NJ Caucus* or to NJIT students, her optimism about personal and entrepreneurial possibility conveys a consistent message: "You, too, can do it."

ROBERT E. SOMMERLAD '60, '63

Focusing on Power

Robert Sommerlad has thought a lot about the challenges of power generation since he completed his bachelor's in mechanical engineering at Newark College of Engineering in 1960. He's

built a distinguished career at the leading edge of power-plant technologies needed to produce the electricity that sustains virtually every aspect of modern life.

Sommerlad has applied his expertise, enhanced with a 1963 master's from NCE, to supplying power not only in abundance, but in ways that safeguard the environment as well. He has helped to pioneer techniques for controlling atmospheric emissions of sulfur and nitrogen oxides from power plants, for fueling the generation of electricity with municipal solid waste, and for producing power from coal with the least environmental impact possible. He has also taken on environmentally significant assignments such as advising the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its Alaskan counterpart on disposing of solid waste from the *Exxon Valdez* oil-spill cleanup using mobile incinerators.

Before college, Sommerlad thought seriously about entering a very different field. "I was really interested in drawing and art, and saw myself working for Walt Disney one day. But I also liked mechanical drawing and decided that engineering would be a good, probably more realistic, backup option, especially if Walt Disney did not hire me."

Sommerlad first studied engineering at Saint Peter's College in Jersey City, which had a cooperative program that required taking courses at the University of Detroit. However, his first academic experience outside of New Jersey was not appealing, and he decided to continue his studies



Robert E. Sommerlad

closer to home.

"The environment at NCE was very welcoming and simply outstanding with respect to instruction," Sommerlad says. "It's where I began to develop a lifelong fascination with thermodynamics, a real love of the subject."

After graduation, Sommerlad's knowledge and enthusiasm led to a position with Foster Wheeler, a corporate name synonymous with power-plant technology since the beginning of the 20th century. Sommerlad spent nearly 30 years with Foster Wheeler, advancing from R&D engineer through senior management posts with responsibility for a wide range of initiatives involving combustion, energy recovery, air pollution control and environmental services.

Subsequent to Foster Wheeler, Sommerlad worked with organizations that include the Energy and Environmental Research Corporation, Midwest Research Institute, Research-Cottrell Companies, Gas Research Institute, GE Energy and Environmental Research Corporation, and GE Energy Services. A Professional Engineer registered in New Jersey and a Board Certi-

fied Environmental Engineer with the American Academy of Environmental Engineers, he is now the principal of his own consulting practice.

In 2010, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers recognized Sommerlad with a Pioneer Award for his professional achievements in thermal-treatment technologies and service to the society. An ASME Life Fellow, he has served on many of the society's committees in various capacities, among them as an officer and chairman.

Although he did not become a Walt Disney artist, Sommerlad does use a term current at the Disney companies that communicates the essence of his approach to technological innovation. It's "imagineering," a succinct expression of the idea that creative thinking can yield a solution for more than an immediate challenge.

A case in point is the project where an oil refinery was to be built atop a pipeline in the Arizona desert. Sommerlad championed adding a central-receiver solar energy system that could meet most of the new refinery's energy requirements. Not only did he convince the plant owners to embrace the concept, he also persuaded the Arizona Solar Energy Agency to co-fund the project. "It's a matter of looking at a concept from all angles," Sommerlad says, "which can produce unexpected benefits — imagineering!" ■

CLASS NOTES

MAL & FRIENDS

NJIT Magazine invites new correspondents to join Mal Simon in sharing news about class members and alumni organizations. Professor emeritus of physical education and athletics, Mal was director of physical education and athletics, and men's soccer coach, for 30 years. In 1993, he received the Cullimore Medal for his service to the university.

If you would like to be a regular correspondent, don't hesitate to send an e-mail to the editor of NJIT Magazine: dean.maskevich@njit.edu.

First, the latest news from Mal –

A highlight of the NJIT Alumni Association's social year is the annual reunion, and a key alumna in planning the 2011 reunion was **Anita Rubino '83**. In addition to being vice president of the Alumni Association, Anita is the chair of the Reunion Committee and Awards Committee, and co-chair of the Florida Gulf Coast Regional Club.

Anita's work ethic was obvious right from the get-go. While an undergraduate, she worked full-time for Murray Turoff and Roxanne Hiltz as business manager for the Computerized Conferencing and Communications Center, a position she held from 1977-84. She was in charge of recruiting staff that consisted mainly of student helpers and gladly takes credit for hiring a new student by the name of Fadi Deek, now Dr. Fadi Deek, Dean of the College of Science and Liberal Arts. (A brief aside here if I may: I also recognized Fadi's expertise early on and when I became confused while learning to use the computer would pick up the phone and yell, "Fadi, HELP!" and he would patiently put me on the right track.)

From 1984-86, Anita worked as a consultant with Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) while

earning her MBA from Seton Hall University. She left BCBS to do free-lance consulting and recruiting. One of her longest assignments was with IMS America, a company that specialized in market research for the pharmaceutical industry. Anita was hired as full-time manager of staffing and employee relations, a position that launched her career in the human resources field.

For the next twenty years, Anita held senior management positions at Dun & Bradstreet, Nielsen Media Research and the global Nielsen Company. Her willingness to take on new challenges and increasing responsibilities resulted in significant advancement as she rose from director of human resources and manager of staffing and employee relations at Dun & Bradstreet/IMS America in 1998 to senior vice president of global knowledge and Internet marketing for the Nielsen Company in 2007. In the latter position, Anita was taking on the task of redefining the role of client services, a challenge she welcomed as it involved a whole new world to explore.

Unfortunately, when private investors bought the company and made changes that were not expected or understood, Anita

decided to leave Nielsen. Her decision had sort of a bad news/good news result. The bad news was that she misses her Nielsen friends and colleagues. The good news is she has more time to work with new friends and colleagues at NJIT, and counseling young people who are assessing their future direction. She is also looking into a new career, healthy fast food, which she hopes will lead to having her own restaurant. In whatever spare time remains, Anita relaxes in her dream home on Tampa Bay watching a daily show of dolphins and reminiscing in her New York Yankees game room looking at Billy Martin's portrait.

Two of the new Golden Highlanders (Class of 1961) at this year's reunion were **Rich Comiso** and **Carol Rose Fordonski-Ronayne**. Rich, whose non-academic activities focused on Pi Kappa Phi fraternity, felt that his professional preparation taught by many outstanding professors was the foundation for a successful and meaningful career and life. After graduation, he worked for a small construction company until drafted into the United States Army in 1963. Rich completed Officer Candidate School and began a twenty-nine year career in Artillery and Engineering that included overseas assignments in Italy, Viet Nam, Saudi Arabia and Germany and twelve stateside assignments, the last at the Pentagon from 1984-92. Following his retirement in 1992 with the rank of lieutenant colonel, he was director of operations for the Army Engineer Association, a non-profit organization that provides support for military personnel and civilians involved with U.S. Army engineering. Rich fully retired in 2005 and moved with his wife, Barbara,

to Tellico Village on Tellico Lake near Knoxville, Tennessee. They welcome anyone coming through the area to visit.

Carol Rose started at NCE in September 1957, but we had met during the 1957 Easter season at a florist shop in our hometown of Palisades Park, New Jersey. She was a part-time employee during her senior year at my alma mater, Leonia High School, and I worked there during holidays to supplement my princely annual income of \$3700 at NCE. An excellent athlete at Leonia, Carol did not let the lack of women's athletics at NCE dim her athletic ability by joining the cheerleading squad, learning how to swim, play golf and fence in the physical education program, and participating in intramural softball. She helped edit the *Nucleus* and was elected to Pi Delta Epsilon and to *Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities*.

Carol's professional career included engineering and management positions with DuPont in Aiken, South Carolina, Western Electric in Cicero, Illinois, AT&T in New Jersey, and Southern Bell and ATTIX in Atlanta, Georgia. A few years after returning to New Jersey to take on a budget management position with AT&T's International Communication Services, Carol took early retirement and moved with her husband, Donald, to Kent Island on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. She became actively involved in local concerns, including being part of a successful fight against open bay dumping and as a volunteer for animal rescue groups. Carol was elected a County Commissioner in Queen Anne County in 2006, which she says is the best and worst job she

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ever had. The frustration of having to deal with irresponsible and greedy developers convinced Carol to never again seek public office, and she has returned to civic activism primarily for the environment and animal rescue.

Also at the reunion were **Art Kaiser '71** and **Vince Schettini '76**. Art and Vince were actively involved in intramural activities and served as directors of softball and badminton, respectively. After graduation, Art began pilot training in the U.S. Air Force. From 1973 to 1978, he was a C-141 pilot at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey, a great assignment as he was near his family and the Jersey shore. He also took advantage of an Air Force program to earn a master's in urban planning and transportation at NJIT. After leaving active duty in 1978, Art was hired as a pilot for Delta Airlines based in Miami and Atlanta, making captain in 1990. He took early retirement in 2005 and went to Macau, China as captain of a new airline company in Asia and Australia. In his career, Art has flown more than twenty thousand hours and eight million miles. His desire to get a job as a corporate pilot in the United States in 2008 was not successful due to the economic cutbacks, so he decided to retire fully. Art and his wife, Elaine, live an hour north of Atlanta, in the First Mountain Town of Jasper, Georgia.

Vince retired in January 2010 after thirty-three years in government service. He spent twelve years in Aviano, Italy and Wiesbaden, Germany as a project engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His last assignment was at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. Liking the area, Vince now lives near Dover.

Hank Krauss '54 missed a Florida soccer alumni reunion for the first time in ten years due to recovering from a back operation. He was diagnosed with spinal stenosis in 2010. After receiving three epidurals and the quality of his life going to zero, he decided to undergo surgery in February 2011. The surgery consisted of decompression and fusion in the Lumbar 1-5 area. He has discarded the back brace he had to wear for three months and is walking now with moderate pain that he has been told will decrease in time. Hank's recuperation has put a temporary crimp in further travels with his partner, Betty. They have already visited sixty-nine countries and all seven continents.

Alumni are urged to save the dates of March 2-4, 2012, when **Ed Cruz '62** will host the soccer reunion at Boca Grande on Florida's southwest coast. Boca Grande, on Gasparilla Island, features beautiful beaches and golf courses. Activities will include the usual picnic and soccer game, evening parties and golf. The golf outings will be held on the Coral Creek Golf Course, rated among the top 20 courses in Florida. Check out the details on the NJIT Alumni Soccer Club website at www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs/menssoccer.

After ten years of "living on the road," **Gil '54** and **Joan Blair** have given up their wanderlust, sold their recreational vehicle and bought a home in Sun City, Florida just south of Tampa. Among numerous other adventures, they traveled in a 25 RV caravan for two months in Alaska and Western Canada.

My new e-mail address is mjs@njit.edu. Some of you may have received a scam email allegedly from me stating that I was stranded in London and needed money to get home. I sincerely appreciate **Sam Givas** for stringing the hacker along with a promise to send \$2200 collected from Sigma Pi brothers and then, in no uncertain words, told the hacker off. I want those who did send money to know I will be contributing this amount to the NJIT soccer fund and their names will be published in the next NJIT Honor Roll. Finally, those of you who wrote such needles as "I hope you were not really in trouble as I ignored the request," "Your email was easy to ignore," "Let the Brits take care of you," and "I heard that a few people were disappointed to hear you were not really in UK custody" know what you can do.

I'll close my column with an Irish Toast from the Annual St. Patrick's Day newsletter from **Ed Monahan '58**: "Here's to health, peace, and prosperity; May the flower of love never be nipped by the frost of disappointment, Nor shadow of grief fall among your family and friends."

Keep the news coming to my new e-mail address at mjs@njit.edu.

1950

Frank T. Scalera PE (ME) tells *NJIT Magazine* that he was elated to read in the winter 2011 issue that the Central High School Building is now part of the NJIT campus. "This, for me, represents closure of sorts – now my birthplace (63 Colden St. – 1924); my high school (Central, class of 1942) and my college (NCE) are all on the same campus in close proximity. Although I had a successful and satisfying career (manager of design engineering for a large corporation, with nine U.S. patents to my name) and an honorable war record (Purple Heart and Combat Infantry Badge from my service in WWII), these accomplishments do not rise to the level that would compel the Trustees to place a monument, a gazebo or even a park bench to mark my on-campus birthplace. But if they were to, how cool would that be?!"

1972

Steven Harvey (ChE), MS (ChE) '79 writes that he has retired from Hoffmann-La Roche as "VP of supply chain" and is working as a "sourcing specialist and consultant" for a smaller pharmaceutical company.

1974

John Fumosa (CE) has been appointed president and district manager of New Jersey operations for Gilbane Building Company.

1976

James W. Tarpey MS (EE), Orange and Rockland Utilities' vice president of operations, is the new chairman of the Rockland Community College Foundation's Board of Directors.

1982

Kenneth J. Peters (EE) has been promoted to vice president of engineering and projects at Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo Canyon power plant.

1983

John Iozzia (Engineering Technology) is vice president of business development at PM Digital, an online marketing agency based in New York.

1987

Bob Janacek (Computer Science), co-founder and CTO of DataMotion, Inc., has joined the board of directors of Optima Professional Services LLC. DataMotion provides secure encryption solutions for businesses and Optima Professional Services specializes in licensing, primary source verifications and document-management services for health care providers, hospitals and insurance companies.

1993

Mario Iannelli PE (CE), MS '01 (CE) is the manager of land development for the Parsippany, New Jersey, office of Dewberry, a national professional services firm. He has extensive experience with site-development work that includes residential, recreational, commercial, health care, educational and heavy industrial projects.

1995

Michael Smith (EE) has been promoted to the newly created position of chief digital officer (CDO) at Forbes Media, retaining his operating responsibilities

as president of Forbes.com. For ten years, he has been a member of the Board of Visitors of Albert Dorman Honors College.

1996

Michael Hanrahan MS (Arch) has been installed as president of the American Institute of Architects' New Jersey chapter. An associate partner at Clarke Canton Hintz, an award-winning architecture, planning and landscape-architecture firm based in Trenton, Michael has been with the firm for nearly 15 years. He has managed projects in a variety of market sectors, including historic preservation and the adaptive re-use of existing buildings.

Carol Suchit-Hudson (Mgmt), MS '97 has been named to the board of trustees of the Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children.

1998

Greg Tilton (EE) has joined Ohio-based Molded Fiber Glass Companies (MFG) as executive vice president and chief operating officer.

1999

Stacey Ruhle Kliesch AIA MS (Arch, Mgmt) received the Distinguished Service Award in February from the New Jersey chapter of the American Institute of Architects. She is the owner of Stacey Ruhle Kliesch, Architect LLC, located in Ridgewood.



PAWLIKOWSKI IN COMMAND

Lieutenant General Ellen M. Pawlikowski '78 (ChE) is the first female commander of the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC). The 5000 personnel assigned to the center in California are responsible for executing a \$10 billion annual budget to acquire and sustain most of the nation's military space capabilities.

Pawlikowski is returning to

the SMC after having previously served as the center's vice commander and commander of the Military Satellite Communications Systems directorate. From February 2010 to May 2011, she served as the commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. She was responsible for managing the Air Force's \$2.2 billion science and technology program as well as additional customer-funded research and development of \$2.2 billion. She was also responsible for a workforce of approximately 10,800 in the laboratory's component technology directorates, the Air Force Office of Scientific Research and 711th Human Performance Wing.

Pawlikowski entered the Air Force in 1978 through the ROTC program at NJIT. She then attended the University of California at Berkeley and received a doctorate in chemical engineering in 1981, entering active duty at McClellan AFB, California, in 1982.

2003

Greg Kohn MS (Professional and Technical Communication) has joined Virtual, Inc. as vice president for client services. Greg was previously staff director for the IEEE Industry Standards and Technology Organization. Virtual is a technology-focused association management firm.

2006

Yuanqiu Luo PhD (EE) is a senior research engineer in the advanced technology department of Huawei Technologies USA. She was

recently honored with an IEEE Standards Award for her contribution to the development of IEEE standard 802.1ASTM-2011 (Local and Metropolitan Area Networks - Timing and Synchronization for Time-Sensitive Applications in Bridged Local Area Networks).

IN MEMORIAM

The NJIT community has been saddened by the passing of **Walter Decker** '57, **Edward Sabo** '68 and **Peter Paul Beltran** '06.

ALUMNI CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE!

THE ART OF INVENTION

SCULPTURE BY DANIEL A. HENDERSON

October 1 - December 23
NJIT Campus Center Atrium

For exhibit hours and other information, call the Campus Center Information Desk at 973-596-3605 or see the University Calendar at www.njit.edu.

CELEBRATION 2011

Friday, November 11
Pleasantdale Chateau
West Orange, New Jersey

NJIT's annual festive evening of dining and dancing in support of endowed scholarships for students. Celebrity entertainment by the Surf City Allstars with former Beach Boy David Marks.

Information: Jacquie Rhodes
973-596-3407 or rhodes@njit.edu
Also visit www.njit.edu/celebration

ALUMNI REUNION WEEKEND 2012

Friday, May 18 - Sunday, May 20

Five-Year Anniversary Class celebrations as well as non-anniversary class, college, department and fraternity/sorority events. Alumni Reunion Weekend has something for every NJIT alum!

Reconnect with NJIT and fellow alumni over a weekend of activities featuring receptions, dinners, college and department presentations, exhibits, and the annual Alumni Achievement Award presentations by the Alumni Association. There's a Saturday evening dinner dance in the Campus Center Ballroom, a "Party on the Roof" sponsored by the Association's Young Alumni Club, and the "All Alumni Lounge and Bar."

For more information about Reunion Weekend or to make reservations online: www.njit.edu/alumni/class or contact the Alumni Relations Office at 973-596-3441.

For the most current information about Alumni Association activities, visit www.njit.edu/alumni.

Join us on Facebook and LinkedIn too.
Go to www.njit.edu/alumni/community.

CORPORATE CLUBS

NJIT's Corporate Clubs provide valuable networking opportunities for alumni in the workplace while also assisting NJIT students and faculty. Current Corporate Clubs include: Eng-Wong, Taub & Associates, Hatch Mott MacDonald, PSE&G, Schering-Plough, Turner Construction and United Parcel Service.

For more information:
www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs

REGIONAL CLUBS

NJIT Regional Clubs are planning events across the country. For more information:
www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs

YOUNG ALUMNI CLUB

The Young Alumni Club organizes social, networking, and educational events for alumni and their families. For more information:
www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE ALPS

NJIT Associate Professor of Mathematics and alumnus Murray Lieb '61, MS '63 has been hiking in the Swiss Alps for nearly twenty-five years and says "As long as I still can I will be going there. Ten years ago, I hiked from the French border through Switzerland to the Austrian border – 225 miles in 24 days."