

# ALUMNI CIRCUIT

*“My MBA has provided me with a tool kit of skills I use every day to grow and expand my new business.”*

— Alan Weinberg

## NEWARK'S NEW ENGINEERING DIRECTOR

Alumnus Mehdi Mohammadish was sworn in as director of engineering for the City of Newark last November at a ceremony in the City Hall Municipal Council Chamber. Mayor Cory A. Booker held the Bible and City Clerk Robert P. Marasco administered the oath of office. Previously acting director of engineering, Mohammadish came to the city's engineering office in 2007 from the Essex County Department of Public Works, where he had served as principal engineer since 1989.

A Newark resident for more than 15 years, Mohammadish completed his BS in civil engineering in 1985 and a master's

in traffic and transportation engineering in 1991. In addition, he is licensed in radon measurement and building and pesticide inspection. He is also a certified federal Department of Housing and Urban Development inspector.

Mohammadish, who oversees a staff of more than 170, has a variety of engineering responsibilities within the city, including design and construction of roadways, buildings, bridges, parks and traffic signals. Under his direction, Newark has seen the successful completion of the Broad Street Streetscape and Ferry Street projects, and the renovation and modernization of 13 parks. He has also supervised state and federally funded roadway resurfacing and traffic-signal modernization projects. ■



PHOTO: DAVE ROSSI

Alan Weinberg EMBA '07 (right) and business partner Michael Goldblatt

## IN ALAN'S ORCHARD

“Local food is better for you, your family, your community and the environment for countless reasons.” That’s the philosophy Alan Weinberg and business partner Michael Goldblatt have put into practice at Alan’s Orchard, the store they recently opened in downtown Westfield, New Jersey. The emphasis is on fresh and organic vegetables, fruit, breads, dairy, meats and more delivered daily from local farms and artisans. Visit [alansorchard.com](http://alansorchard.com) to learn more about what Alan and Michael offer at 102 Quimby Street in Westfield.

A former community relations director for New Jersey Transit, Alan sharpened his entrepreneurial acumen with an Executive MBA from NJIT’s School of Management. “The Executive MBA not only helped me advance at the corporate level, but has also been absolutely essential in helping me plan and implement my start-up business,” Alan says. “My MBA has provided me with a tool kit of skills I use every day to grow and expand my new business.”

For more about the School of Management and the Executive MBA: [management.njit.edu](http://management.njit.edu). ■



PHOTO: FREDDY TENORE, NEWARK FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mayor Cory A. Booker and Mehdi Mohammadish

## ALUMNI PROFILES



### **MONEESH ARORA**

#### *Improving the Process*

For industrial engineer Moneesh Arora '92, improving processes is of paramount importance. That's as true in his current position as vice president and general manager at ADP as it was when he started on his first job after graduation with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Arora, who grew up in Bergen County, says that "research and recommendations led me to NJIT. I wanted to attend a good engineering school. Research that I did myself and recommendations from my father and guidance counselors confirmed that NJIT would be a good choice."

Asked why he decided to become an industrial engineer, Arora explains that it's a solid foundation not only for careers that draw mainly on the engineering expertise involved, but for a wide spectrum of leadership positions. "You learn how processes work, and how

to implement and improve processes – whether it's a manufacturing process or any one of many others needed to make an organization successful."

With full-time jobs scarce when he completed his degree, Arora accepted a contract position with the Port Authority. His responsibilities were significant. They included helping to manage a \$700 million capital improvement plan and budget for JFK, LaGuardia and Newark Airports. The work entailed oversight of 200 concurrent capital projects and coordination of 3,000 contractors.

The breadth and level of Arora's subsequent positions clearly validate his assertion that industrial engineering can open numerous doors in the workplace. Moving on to Ogden Energy Group, he became director for finance and information systems. As a principal consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers, Management Consulting Services, he was responsible for leading business development and service delivery. His responsibilities for national and international enterprise management continued to increase at Dun & Bradstreet and Thomson Reuters, ranging from online applications and enterprise software for energy companies to a portfolio of media products and services for the legal profession.

In his progression of posts, Arora has helped to meet the needs of diverse segments of the economy. Today, at ADP, he is contributing to the vitality of one

## 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](http://www.njit.edu/alumni/classnotes).

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

of our nation's most important engines of prosperity – small businesses. He oversees a portfolio of services, including payroll and human-resource management applications designed for the small business market.

While Arora has been engaged with a varied range of enterprises, he does speak of one constant. It's implementing processes that enable people to realize their potential to the fullest and to do the best job possible. "Putting the right people in the right positions and helping them grow is the foundation for success in any organization," he says. "I'm passionate about growing people that grow the business."

Nearly a decade after graduating from NJIT, Arora continues to endorse the value of studying industrial engineering, especially as preparation for participating in the fast-evolving 21st century economy. "You want to be able to take advantage of all the career options that come your way. A background in industrial engineering can put you in that position. The skills acquired will make you flexible and adaptable for work in many environments. And NJIT is a great place to gain those skills."



### **PATRICK J. Mc GOWAN**

#### *Enjoying a 30-Year Vacation*

Patrick Mc Gowan '88 likes to tell people that he's been on vacation for a very enjoyable 30 years, ever since he traveled to the United States from Ireland for what was to be a month-long visit with relatives. "I just fell in love with the people and the country and decided I wanted to stay," he says. Since making that decision at the age of 17, Mc Gowan has built a full-service construction firm that today has projects worth \$100 million under way.

The journey to Mc Gowan's present success began when his uncle, Patrick Herbert, head of New Jersey-based ICS Builders, gave him his first taste of life in construction – wielding shovel and broom to clean up debris at a job site. Then there was the

# ALUMNI CIRCUIT

ALUMNI PROFILES, *continued*

question of how to stay in the country legally. The answer was a student visa.

Mc Gowan's uncle had studied at Newark College of Engineering and highly recommended the school to his nephew. Attending classes in the evening, Mc Gowan completed a BS in construction engineering. He continued to work for ICS Builders, rising from laborer to executive vice president.

In 2001, Mc Gowan felt that it was time to strike out on his own. He has tirelessly invested his energy and talent in making Mc Gowan Builders, Inc. a leading general contracting and construction management company that has booked projects in many fields – including retail, office, hospitality, health care, education, non-profit, residential, culture and transportation. Along the way, brothers Martin and Thomas joined him at the firm. Headquartered in East Rutherford, the Mc Gowan team and a substantial staff serve clients from New Hampshire to Florida. These have included JPMorgan Chase, Saks Fifth Avenue, Columbia University, Beth Israel Medical Center, H&R Block, Macy's, Staples, and United Parcel Service. The Cenacle Sisters Convent and Retreat in Ronkonkoma, New York, and the Lincoln Square Synagogue in New York City are also on the firm's roster of projects.

Mc Gowan's strong ties to New Jersey and Newark are evident in his hopes for the city, and the satisfaction he takes in having

worked on projects such as the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and the new headquarters of The Leaguers, one of the largest non-profit community organizations in the state. The Leaguers facility was built to consolidate and expand the group's services, which include pre-school classes for nearly a thousand children. "Newark has seen hard times, but there are good things happening," Mc Gowan says. "I'm glad that we're part of the rebuilding."

But Mc Gowan is committed to much more than success as a builder. He and his brothers are dedicated to making a positive difference for people facing very difficult challenges in life, especially individuals with Down syndrome. Growing up in Ireland, Mc Gowan had a beloved aunt who was challenged by that congenital affliction. "Our parents made us aware that we have an obligation to care for others, for our elders and for those who have not been as fortunate. It's the way we were raised." Mc Gowan and his brothers have established The Loretta Mc Gowan Foundation, named in memory of their late aunt, to foster Down syndrome research as well as to provide assistance for families coping with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities in the United States and Ireland.

A member of the NJIT Board of Overseers, Mc Gowan also maintains a strong supportive connection with his alma mater. "I was really blessed to attend



*Grand Marshal Patrick Mc Gowan at the 2010 Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City's borough of Queens. Left to right (front row): Emma, Sarah and Niamh Mc Gowan; (back row): Patricia Mc Gowan, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Honorary Female Grand Marshal and Executive VP of Irish Radio Network USA Aine Sheridan, and New York State Senator Martin J. Golden.*

the school," he says. "I was in the U.S. for only a few months when I started, and people I met as a student became my first friends here. Quite a few became very good friends, and I've stayed in touch with them over the years."

Mc Gowan goes on to say that his classes served him well as someone already working in construction. "I feel that I received an education that was unique in a very important way in that I had instructors who were working in the field themselves. They brought their practical experiences into the classroom. We could talk to them about what really happens on the job, in all phases of a project."

Commenting on how NJIT has changed since he was a student, Mc Gowan speaks enthusiastically about the increased range of academic programs and the many physical

improvements on campus. He also emphasizes the value of NJIT's ethnic and cultural diversity, which he quickly came to view as a significant plus when he experienced it as a young immigrant from Ireland. "At NJIT, for the first time, I associated with people from many different backgrounds every day. I learned that culture can influence the way one approaches a professional challenge as an individual and as part of a team. Bringing as many perspectives as possible to a project produces the best results."

To date, Mc Gowan has worked with numerous alumni as clients and is always looking forward to both serving other NJIT graduates as a builder and hiring young alumni looking for careers in the construction industry. More information on his firm may be found at [www.mcgowanbuilders.com](http://www.mcgowanbuilders.com).

*“When I drive over the bridges that we have helped to build, I know that we have not only connected points on a map or crossed a river with steel. We have connected people to each other.”*

*– Wei Wang*

## **WEI WANG**

### *Applying the Best Means and Methods*

You might say that Wei Wang PhD '94, founder and head of Manhattan-based UrbanTech, is a “builder’s builder.” Much of the work at his structural engineering firm involves specifying the best means and methods for meeting key challenges posed by projects that main contractors have booked. Even before submitting their bids, some contractors ask him to advise on incorporating the best techniques for timely and cost-effective completion of project requirements – with an overarching emphasis on delivering the highest quality possible.

UrbanTech’s expertise is manifest in numerous projects in the public and private sectors. But Wang cites several recent contracts that have given him and his colleagues special satisfaction. In New York, UrbanTech had a major role in the reconstruction of three swing bridges connecting Manhattan to the Bronx – the 145th Street, 3rd Avenue and Willis Avenue bridges. “We bridge the future,” UrbanTech’s Website says of these and comparably impressive efforts.

While Wang continues to look toward future success in the U.S., his path to a PhD in civil engineering at NJIT and the founding of UrbanTech began in China. After earning a bachelor’s in engineering at Tongji University, Shanghai, in 1984, doctoral work took him to Denmark for research in the plasticity and

fracture mechanics of reinforced concrete. As fortune would have it, a mutual acquaintance mentioned Wang’s research to NJIT Professor of Civil Engineering Thomas Hsu at a conference in Canada. A discussion between Hsu and Wang about his work led to Wang’s coming to the U.S. in 1991 and completing his doctorate.

A number of consulting jobs followed before a friend who headed a construction company suggested that Wang consider starting his own firm. Wang made this entrepreneurial move, and UrbanTech was launched from the basement of his home. When it comes to engineering solutions for the most complex construction challenges – such as those recently surmounted for the New Jersey Department of Transportation on Route 46 – UrbanTech has gained wide recognition over the past decade.

Wang explains that UrbanTech worked closely with the main contractor to prepare the winning bid, which presented a superior scenario for replacing the highway bridge spanning Overpeck Creek in Bergen County. “The process was hyper bid-hyper build,” he says of the strategies they formulated to accelerate both bidding and high-quality construction. It was a process validated by the results. Demolition of the existing bridge and completion of the new structure took just seven months, an award-winning accomplishment for UrbanTech.

Wang, a Professional Engineer registered in New York and



*Wei Wang at the Willis Avenue Bridge in New York City.*

Delaware, says that it is especially gratifying to see his firm’s tangible contributions to the infrastructure that people need and use every day. “When I drive over the bridges that we have helped to build, I know that we have not only connected points on a map or crossed a river with steel. We have connected people to each other.”

On a personal level, Wang speaks of the imperative to increase the number of clients served by UrbanTech while maintaining the quality for which his company is known. Dedicated to these goals, he is working to achieve even greater success for UrbanTech. Yet Wang also calls attention to a broader imperative – that of replacing and upgrading key components of our country’s infrastructure. It’s a message that he shares at NJIT as a member of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Advisory Board.

Today, a comparison with infrastructure development in China is unavoidable, and Wang adds his voice to those cautioning that the U.S. must address its infrastructure deficiencies for the sake of continuing prosperity both nationally and on the global economic stage. “Much of our infrastructure – roads, bridges, utility systems – was built many decades ago. Some of it is a century old and must be replaced.”

It bodes well for the nation’s future that engineers like Wang and companies like UrbanTech are committed to this task. ■

# 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 –*

By virtue of having been advisor to the NCE class of 1960, I became an honorary Golden Highlander at the 2010 NJIT Alumni Reunion. The new Golden Highlanders present at the reunion were **Bill Bambrick, Dave Bannon, Joe Begasse, Ed Blyskal, Mary Cody, John Cole, Bob Geissler, Lenny Gigantino, Paul Koelbel, Dick Miske, John J. Mooney, Ed Sapp and Bob Sorensen.**

**Bill Bambrick** believes he was born with a science gene that directed most of his life choices. As a junior and senior in high school, he studied college and graduate level material and ranked 5th among high school students in a statewide science and math test. Bill writes that he received a top-notch education at NJIT and looks back fondly on those years and the great teachers he had. In his senior year, he was selected to the Omega Chi Epsilon Honorary Chemical Engineering Society. His first position was as a researcher at American Cyanamid Company working on the catalytic muffler program. He was twice recognized with the American Cyanamid Scientific Award and contributed 47 papers and patents to the public domain. Upon retirement, Bill

struck out in the new directions of consulting and politics, which included being elected a Town Meeting Representative, serving on the Board of Assessment Appeals, and as a Justice of the Peace in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, where he and his wife live.

**Dave Bannon** was very active in campus organizations. He was elected president of the freshman, sophomore and junior classes, and president of the student council and archon (president) of Pi Kappa Phi social fraternity in his senior year. Dave was recognized for his academic and leadership achievements with selection to the Phi Eta Sigma, Eta Kappa Nu, Tau Beta Pi and Omicron Delta Kappa honorary societies.

Dave's professional career started at AT&T Bell Laboratories where he wrote key software for the first commercial electronic switching system. He moved to GTE Labs in Bayside, New York, as research manager for switching and memory, where he wound up his engineering career as principal promoter for GTE's first digital switching system and the GTE 800 Number Intelligent Network Service. After earning an MBA, Dave joined the GTE Network Business

Planning Group and helped write GTE's first competitive business plan. In 1988, he moved to Digital Equipment Corporation in New England as a telecom marketing and business planner. Dave changed careers again in 1993, working in the hospitality industry as a manager at an upscale yacht club in Clearwater, Florida. He decided to retire for good in 2004 after surviving his fourth hurricane. Dave and wife Margaret are snowbirds with homes in Westbrook, Connecticut, and Oldsmar, Florida.

During his days at NCE, **Joe Begasse** played intramural sports, was a member of Phi Eta Sigma and Eta Kappa Nu, and marched on the AFROTC Highland Rifles drill team, becoming its commander in his senior year. Upon graduation, he received an Air Force commission and was assigned to Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a year to learn weather forecasting. Joe was then sent to an Air Force base in Japan for two years where, in addition to his military duties, he taught basic electronics, business math and college algebra for the University of Maryland extension program.

While in Japan, Joe met his future wife, Kiko, who was working part-time on base while completing a degree in English Literature. After his Air Force tour, he moved into the computer field and worked for IBM as trainee instructor. When IBM wanted to transfer him out of New York City, he went to Con Edison as a training and technical manager, where he stayed for 26 years until retiring in 1995. Joe and Kiko live in Livingston, New Jersey.

**Mary Cody** married classmate Harold Cody two days before starting their senior year. Their

son, Harold, was born six weeks after graduation. Her cap and gown made a nice pregnancy ensemble. After graduation, Mary worked for Hercules Powder Company and then Allied Signal Corporation. While working as a research engineer, she developed a health problem that led her into the medical/nutritional field in search of answers. This resulted in a second career in clinical and therapeutic nutrition after earning an MS and PhD in the field.

Mary founded a neutraceutical company specializing in herbal-based smoking deterrents and developed five related patents. She had a private practice for more than 25 years in Boonton Township, New Jersey, before retiring and moving to her current home in the Mid-Hudson Valley of New York State. Sadly, after 37 years, her husband died. Now in retirement, Mary writes short stories and poetry, volunteers at church and travels the world.

**John Cole** and his wife, Kathryn, to whom he has been married for 45 years, live at the Jersey shore in Manahawkin. John's first position was with Procter and Gamble as an electrical and instrument planning engineer for two years and he then worked as an electronics engineer at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center for five years.

In 1967, he went to work for the Communications Electronics Command at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. As a civilian employee, he was division chief of the Computer Security Group, C3 Systems, and managed the Army's computer security research and development program, jointly funded by the Army and the National Security Agency. After

10 years as project manager with Unisys Corporation and computer security analyst for Telos Corporation at Fort Monmouth, John started his own company, Sigma Solutions. He provided support for the certification and accreditation of a classified Army system until his retirement in 2001.

**John J. Mooney** is co-founder and president of the Environmental and Energy Technology Institute. John earned an MS in chemical engineering from NCE in 1960 and an MBA in Marketing from Fairleigh Dickinson University in 1991. He worked for Engelhard Corporation for 43 years, primarily in research, development, marketing and sales of catalytic converters for automobiles, trucks, motorcycles and water craft, as well as for small engines for chainsaws and garden equipment. He holds 17 U.S. patents and is co-inventor of the three-way catalytic converter now used on all gasoline-fueled passenger cars and other vehicles in North America, Europe, Japan and other industrial countries. Among his many honors, he received the National Medal of Technology in 2002 from President George W. Bush at a White House ceremony, and an honorary doctorate from NJIT in 2007. John and his wife, Claire, live in Wyckoff, New Jersey.

**Fabian Hurtado '74** and his wife, Jeanie, are on the move again. This time to Egypt where Fabian is managing a project for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. More information can be found by typing "Wheeled Vehicle Maintenance Facility" on Google. Fabian and Jeanie have toured six continents and worked in most of them, including Asia (Jordan and Turkey), Europe (Romania and Greece),

Central America (Guatemala), South America (Venezuela and Brazil) and North America.

After two careers with the Air Force and at Picatinny Arsenal, **Lou DeVito '60** is on his third career as the fencing and soccer coach at West Milford High School in New Jersey. An interesting coincidence is that one of his team's opponents is New Jersey's Wayne Valley High School, coached by Dan Kilday, former NJIT soccer coach. Lou's coaching career actually started after graduation from NCE when he served as assistant soccer coach of the 1960 National Champions while, on assignment for the Air Force, he was studying meteorology at New York University.

The golf rain gods did not favor us in September as the NJIT Athletic Golf Outing and Soccer/Basketball (Feet and Hands) Outing were rained out. The golf outing was rescheduled, but the Feet and Hands event could not be rescheduled. Host **Bob Welgos '62** has promised sunny weather for the next outing in 2011 at the Newton Country Club. Bob has taken on a new professional challenge by serving on the Board of Directors for a medical alert company founded by a long-time friend. Visit [www.activecare.com](http://www.activecare.com) for information about the company.

Plans are underway to honor alumni from the 1951-54 soccer teams in September 2011. Members of those teams are urged to contact me at [coach7157@yahoo.com](mailto:coach7157@yahoo.com).

And keep all the news coming.

## 1962

**Walter H. Kraft PE** (CE), MS (CE) '65, PhD (Engineering Science) '75, a member of the Albert

Dorman Honors College Board of Visitors, received the Coordinating Council Best Project Award at the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) 2010 Annual Meeting and Exhibit held in Vancouver, Canada. Kraft, who is executive technical director for Eng-Wong, Taub and Associates was recognized for an outstanding project titled "Management and Operations of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): An ITE Informational Report," which promotes the sharing of Council members' extensive experience in the field of ITS technology and management and operations.

## 1981

**August (Gus) F. Manz, Jr.** (EE) has earned the designation of Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM) from the Institute for Supply Management (ISM). Gus writes that achieving CPSM certification requires passing three difficult exams covering all aspects of supply management. A member of the New Jersey affiliate of ISM, Gus currently serves as senior manager of strategic sourcing at Wyndham Worldwide in Parsippany, New Jersey. Prior to joining Wyndham in 2009, he was a contractor at Merck, sourcing IT professional services for 10 months, after having worked for more than 25 years in a variety of procurement roles at Western Electric/AT&T/Lucent Technologies/Alcatel-Lucent. The New Jersey affiliate of ISM, consisting of 700 members, represents the state's procurement managers with respect to promotion and education for the supply management and purchasing profession. It is affiliated with the Institute for Supply Management, Inc., which has over 38,000 members internationally.

## 1984

**Curtis J. Schopfer** (ME) has been in the cable and wire rope industry since graduation and employed since 1997 at Loos & Co., a manufacturer of steel wire and wire rope for aircraft, medical, automotive and commercial applications. Curtis also chairs the Aircraft Control Cable Group, a collaborative effort by manufacturers of aircraft cable and hardware, assemblers, and the government agencies responsible for related specifications. In addition, he serves as chairman of the Wire Rope Technical Board.

## 1987

**Ehsan Bayat** (Engineering Technology) has received the 2010 Mahatma Gandhi Humanitarian Award from The Friends of South Asian American Communities and the Afghan California Business Council. Since 2005, the Bayat Foundation, led by Ehsan and Fatema Bayat, has contributed to over 200 projects to improve the quality of life for the youth, women, poor and elderly of Afghanistan by constructing new facilities and infrastructure, and to promote health, education economic and cultural programs.

## 1992

**Chuck Sommers** (Arch) shares the news that he has been named vice president of architecture and store planning at Elie Tahari Ltd. in New York City. "I worked as a project manager for LVMH Fashion Group/Louis Vuitton from 2001-2007. I then joined Elie Tahari as a project director. After surviving layoffs and downsizing, I was recently promoted. I oversee the design and construction of Elie Tahari boutiques worldwide."

# CLASS NOTES

## 1993

**Anthony La Rosa** (ME), principal and managing director, Tri-Power Design, LLC visited campus as a speaker for the Mary Sullivan Memorial Lecture Series and discussed his career path from NJIT. Anthony writes, "I was very impressed with the new facilities and equipment at NJIT, especially the renovation of Eberhardt Hall."

## 2000

**Adeel Yousuf** (ChE) works for the Aviation Department of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as an environmental specialist. He is responsible for environmental issues encompassing air and water quality, noise standards, sustainability, permitting and compliance at all of the airports for which the Port Authority is responsible.

## 2006

**Trevor Williams** (Mgmt) has joined the National Council on Aging (NCOA) as a data analyst in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining NCOA, Trevor provided administrative support for various companies through CityStaff. He also worked as a market analyst, researcher and federal account executive for a software development company in Jersey City.

## IN MEMORIAM

NJIT notes with sadness the passing of the following alumni:

**Edward Kondracki '59**

**Vinson Arnold '63**

**Francis J. Zientara '88**

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

**David Bannon EE '60, Jack Heath ChE '08 and Harry Roman EE '70, MS ENE '74 have written to share some thoughts about their days at NJIT and experiences that followed. All alumni are encouraged to join them and submit brief articles of 150-200 words for consideration in future issues.**

## HOW DID NCE INFLUENCE MY LIFE?

### DAVID P. BANNON

I chose NCE partly because my Dad taught here, but primarily because I enjoyed math and science and wanted a good technical education. NCE was close-by and appeared to be the highest-rated technical school for the tuition – by a long shot. Proof came upon graduation when over a dozen NCE grads were hired over a three-year period by AT&T Bell Labs. I was fortunate to be one of those grads.

After graduation, I wanted a master's degree, and I chose the program at Bell Labs, which had been in place for some years. You couldn't work at Bell Labs unless you got a master's from NYU's on-site graduate school at the Labs' Murray Hill, New Jersey, campus. It was tough as nails – it took me extra work in New York City to meet the requirements, but it was free as long as you got a B or better. My MEE cost me \$75.00, for one C.

So did NCE prepare me for Bell Labs? You bet! NCE's reputation was outstanding, and its approach to teaching was remarkable. Its multiple exams imparted knowledge in depth, and a strong mix of practical knowledge came from the broad industrial base of its professors, many employed in industry.

Another area in which NCE excelled was the Dean's Office, which assisted students in finding industrial experience before graduation. I worked on 900 MHz radar at Lockheed Electronics, and built electric meters at QVS, a small factory in East Orange. This job was the turning point in my NCE career.

At QVS, I met a Navy veteran, John Florin, who suggested I become involved in extracurricular activities at NCE. The easiest way to do that, he said, was to put my name in to be a class representative. So I became a representative, and in due course ran for class president and won! This introduced me to a whole new world of friends and mentors, particularly Dr. Herman A. Estrin, professor of English and Student Council advisor. After that came sophomore and junior class presidencies, and in my senior year, Student Council president. Student activities did not displace studying, however – they couldn't, for our semester class loads were never less than 18 credit hours.

Participating in class activities led to invitations to join a social fraternity, which was a good substitute for the campus dormitory life that I was not able to experience at NCE – dorms didn't appear until much later. I joined Pi Kappa Phi and was elected archon (president) late in my junior year. Other societies joined were Phi Eta Sigma (National Freshman Honor

Society), Eta Kappa Nu (EE Honor Society), and Tau Beta Pi (Engineering Honor Society). These led to an invitation to join Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership and Scholarship Society.

All of these activities and events led to my job interview for one of the elite departments at Bell Labs, the Electronic Switching Systems Development Group, which would produce the world's first commercial electronic computer-driven telephone office by 1965. The early work I did was to coordinate technical inputs of many engineers working on interfaces among the various system components. It put me in working relationships with many engineers, supervisors and department heads at the Labs. The NCE extracurricular activities had prepared me well for this work, and this work experience proved invaluable in subsequent managerial assignments in my professional career.

So, did attending NJIT/NCE become important to me? Absolutely, and in ways I could not have imagined. The message for student readers is this: Make the most of your career on campus at NJIT. Join groups that appeal to you, and participate to the absolute, fullest degree that you are able. The rewards of these efforts may not show for years, but they will surely arrive. But always make your studies your first priority, for that is why you chose NJIT, one of the finest technical institutions you will find, anywhere.

*Editor's note: David Bannon's father retired from Newark College of Engineering as an associate professor of metallurgy after a 25-year teaching career in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.*



Harry Roman (right) before retirement from Public Service Electric and Gas, conferring with Professor Ken Chin on a joint NJIT-PSE&G research project.



Joining Jack and Linda Heath (3rd and 4th from right) are (from left) children and spouses John (son) and Carrie, Bob and Laura (daughter), Kristin (daughter) and Burt.

## FATHER DID KNOW BEST

### HARRY T. ROMAN

By 8th grade, I was sure I was going to:

- be an engineer and inventor... after my boyhood hero Thomas Edison
- attend Newark College of Engineering
- work for Public Service Electric and Gas Company

Dad had seen my head and hand skills at work in our North Newark home basement workshop, and felt NCE might be a great choice for me later on. His years at Public Service (now PSE&G) showed him there were excellent jobs in engineering at the company. My inspirational high school science teacher (and lifelong mentor) also discussed engineering and NCE with me.

I clearly remember the day I picked up my freshman orientation kit. Close to 30 hours of classes a week seemed pretty daunting to me. Back in the day, NCE was referred to as “the factory”...9 to 5 every day. Dad’s simple message was, “It will pay off down the road. You can do this.”

Having a part-time job through high school at the Robert Hall clothing store in Bloomfield, I kept it through NCE, making about \$1.75/hr, and working 20-25 hours a week...certainly enough to pay the \$235 a semester (plus books) tuition back then; and enough to afford a used '57 Chevy with gasoline at 25 cents a gallon. When classes let out at the end of the day, homemade, big-bore, Detroit-steel muscle cars

grew to life, and we all rumbled off to a night of homework.

I tutored Central High students in algebra, geometry and trig for a few extra dollars, which later led to a career-long association with teachers, lecturing about engineering in many New Jersey classrooms. Some early attempts at serious writing emerged in sophomore year; and today in retirement, I write teacher resource books and educational math card games.

On a very hot graduation day in 1970, under a big tent on the athletic field, I received my diploma on Thursday and started at PSE&G the following Monday. I’ll never forget the smile on Dad’s face. He called every one of his eight brothers and sisters back home in Pittsburgh that night. I never regretted his advice those many years ago. If only I could hear his voice again. Thanks Dad.

## A CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING JOURNEY

### JACK HEATH

Encouraged by my guidance counselor and my father, I began my college career at NCE in the fall of 1964. I thought it was a good choice since I loved math and science and heard that engineers could make a good living. It didn’t take long for reality to set in. During our first “common lecture” we were told to look at the person on our left and on our right. By the end of the first year one of them would not be at NCE, and by

the second year the other genius would also be gone. Welcome to the world of competition.

We were then asked to recite the engineer’s code, a part of which I have always remembered:

*As the keystone of professional conduct is integrity, the engineer will discharge his duties with fidelity to the public, his employers and clients, and with fairness and impartiality to all. It is his duty to interest himself in public welfare, and to be ready to apply his special knowledge for the benefit of mankind.*

Whether in the classroom or laboratory, or on the basketball court, I was exposed to the tools and core values necessary to achieve my personal goals. Integrity, analytical thinking, teamwork, dedication, discipline and commitment were a constant theme on and off the court. I believe my experience playing college basketball provided a foundation that translated well into my professional career. The importance of an individual’s role on the team, discipline and commitment are applicable to any business. In addition, exposure to individuals such as coach Mal Simon, coach and professor Joe Fitzgerald, President Robert Van Houten and others drove home these values on a daily basis.

My career has included teaching, coaching, technical management and site management, which eventually led to my job as CEO of Arkwright, an international manufacturer of imaging supplies owned by OCE (a Dutch imaging

equipment manufacturer). During my entire career I never did any “chemical engineering,” but the skills and values I acquired at NCE served me well. It was not all about the equations or theory.

I retired from business in 2009 and soon realized that retirement was not for me. To make a long story short, I am back at work and have the best job of my career. I am the CEO of a non-profit, Lower Shore Enterprises (LSE). LSE evaluates, trains and employs individuals with disabilities. We are unique in that we pay our employees to work in our facility, a true manufacturing environment. Our ultimate goal is to place individuals in jobs in the community. And yes, the tools I have talked about certainly apply to my new venture. In addition, I now have the opportunity to really live the code I read aloud in 1964. By the way, because of my family situation in 1969, I didn’t receive my chemical engineering degree with my class. I actually received it in 2008, with my children and grandchildren as witnesses, the year before my retirement. It truly has been a challenging but rewarding journey. ■



# ALUMNI CALENDAR

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 13TH ANNUAL SALUTE TO ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE RECEPTION AND NETWORKING EVENT

Thursday, March 24

NJIT Campus Center Atrium

For more information, contact Kathy Dickerson at [kathy.dickerson@njit.edu](mailto:kathy.dickerson@njit.edu) or 973-642-4555, or visit <http://engineering.njit.edu/excellence2011>.

### GOLDEN HIGHLANDERS ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Monday, May 16

For all alumni who have already celebrated their 50th anniversary reunion, classes 1935 – 1960.

For more information or to register, visit [www.njit.edu/alumni](http://www.njit.edu/alumni) or call 973-596-3441.

### ALUMNI REUNION WEEKEND 2011

Friday, May 20 – Sunday, May 22

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](http://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](http://www.njit.edu/alumni).

Join us on Facebook and LinkedIn too. Go to [www.njit.edu/alumni/community](http://www.njit.edu/alumni/community).



## A PRIVATE TOUR

In October, members of the NJIT Alumni Club of Metro D.C. enjoyed a private tour of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. Their docent, retired astronaut Larry McKinley, treated alumni and their guests to a wealth of stories about the space program as they toured the popular museum.

## 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](http://www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs)

## REGIONAL CLUBS

NJIT Regional Clubs are planning events across the country.

For more information: [www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs](http://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](http://www.njit.edu/alumni/clubs)

**CORRECTIONS** In the fall 2010 issue, the photo caption on page 20 should have stated that Ralph Izzo is receiving the hood for his honorary doctorate at Commencement 2010 from NJIT Trustee Stephen P. DePalma '72, not Vincent L. DeCaprio. On page 28, the correct graduation year for Henry W. Ott is 1957.