

# ALUMNI CIRCUIT

PHOTOS: SCOTT JONES PHOTOGRAPHY



## EXCELLENCE HONORED

Each year, a highlight of the Salute to Engineering Excellence sponsored by Newark College of Engineering is the presentation of Outstanding Alumni Awards. The ceremony also spotlights a notable corporate partner and NCE students who include exceptional seniors – young men and women soon to join the generations of proud NJIT alumni.

For 2012, four NCE graduates garnered awards for their engineering and entrepreneurial achievements at the March event.



Joseph A. Branco

Alumnus **Joseph A. Branco** is president of the construction company EIC Associates. He's responsible for general administration of the firm, with special emphasis on finance, bonding and insurance. Branco, who has two degrees from NCE – a 1974 bachelor's in civil engineering and a 1977 degree in architecture – co-founded the firm in 1998.

Branco launched EIC with **Andre B. Ameer**, who earned his NCE bachelor's in civil engineering in 1978. Ameer, executive vice president of EIC, is responsible for all of the firm's field construction operations. Before founding EIC, both Branco and Ameer worked for EE Cruz and Company, a firm owned by 1963 civil engineering alum Edward Cruz that hires many NCE graduates.

"We talked about starting a business, so we decided to stop talking and do it," says Ameer. "All we had was our engineering knowledge, but more importantly engineers have a certain mentality. We are problem solvers, whether it's in business or in construction. We never throw in the

*"All we had was our engineering knowledge, but more importantly engineers have a certain mentality. We are problem solvers, whether it's in business or in construction."*

– Andre B. Ameer

towel. We always get the job done. That's what helped our business."

Ameer characterizes EIC as a medium-sized construction company that excels at specialty construction projects. Recently, for instance, the firm constructed a park, called Pier C, which extends over the Hudson River on the Hoboken waterfront. The project involved doing considerable marine work, an EIC specialty. EIC also dredged and cleaned up a contaminated tract of land in Bayonne; that land is now the Bayonne Golf Club.



Andre B. Ameer

**Bhavesh Adani** is executive vice president and co-founder of cyberThink, Inc. The firm provides information technology services to companies in the pharmaceutical, financial and computer industries. Started in 1996, the company now employs more than 300 people in the United States and India. Adani received a master's degree in electrical engineering from NCE in 1988.

To go from a cash-strapped graduate student to a leader of a major tech company is no small feat, and Adani credits NCE for helping him launch his career. His big break came, he

says, during his second semester when, on the basis of his academic achievement, NCE awarded him a teaching assistantship. That job came just as his bank loan was running dry.

"I had just eight dollars left in my pocket and the teaching-assistant job allowed me to continue my education uninterrupted," Adani recalls. "I'm grateful to NCE for that. My NCE education also served as a valuable springboard into the tough job market. It enabled me to seek challenging positions in companies such as JP Morgan, AT&T and Transax Systems."

Just before starting cyberThink in 1996, Adani worked as a database administrator and project manager for Transax Systems. He played a major role in building the first Windows-based tariff and rate-retrieval system. Three colleagues he met at Transax would become his founding cyberThink partners. Adani says the four of them came up with



Bhavesh Adani

the idea for cyberThink during "an informal chat over lunch."

**Leon K. Baptiste** is president and chief executive officer of LB Electric Co. His firm designs,

installs and maintains conventional and alternative electrical systems for companies, schools, hospitals and government agencies, in addition to providing other related services.

Baptiste graduated from NCE in 1991 with a degree in electrical engineering and started his company at the NJIT Enterprise Development Center. He also received a 2012 Achievement Award from the NJIT Alumni Association, and there's more about his accomplishments in this issue.

This year's Outstanding Corporate Partnership Award was presented to Valcor Engineering Corporation, a supplier of fluid-control components to clients in the aerospace, nuclear, industrial and scientific fields. Valcor was founded by the late **Morton A. Krietchman**, who graduated from NCE in 1944 with a degree in mechanical engineering. Krietchman founded Valcor in 1951 in a small industrial loft in Newark. For many years, Valcor has provided generous scholarship support for NJIT mechanical engineering majors.

Among the outstanding NCE seniors honored was **Julia Gayner**.\* She received two top awards, being named the Outstanding Senior in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the NCE Outstanding Senior.

Other seniors recognized this year were **Olakemi Akinlabi**, Otto H. York Department of Chemical, Biological and Pharmaceutical Engineering; **Michael Anderson**,\* Mechanical and Industrial Engineering;

**Tia Montalto**, Engineering Technology; **Mary Yousef**,\* Biomedical Engineering; and **Luz Angela Zidziunas**,\* Civil and Environmental Engineering.

The recipient of the Madame Mau Outstanding Female Engineering Student Award was **Lisha Malkani**,\* a biomedical engineering major enrolled in the accelerated BS/MS program. **Priya Radhi Santhanam '09**, a chemical engineering major, won the NCE Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Having completed her master's in chemical engineering, she is now a PhD candidate. ■

\*Dorman honors scholars

## A TRADITION CONTINUES

### 2012 ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

*Alumni Weekend in May once again brought graduates back to campus for activities and events that included the annual presentation of Achievement Awards by the NJIT Alumni Association. Six alumni were honored for singular accomplishments in fields spanning energy, biomedical technology, global infrastructure development and telecommunications, and for a deeply felt sense of service to NJIT and their communities.*

*The Alumni Association also honored Gail Clarke '44, who died in January, with a posthumous Meritorious Service Award. Clarke's many years of support for his alma mater included serving as president*

## 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



Visiting the NJIT Campus Center, where Leon Baptiste and his company installed 160 solar panels in 2004.

*of the Alumni Association and with his wife, Dee, participating on the Leadership Circle Council of the NJIT Annual Fund. In 2004, the music of the carillon that the Clarkes donated to NJIT was first heard on campus, a gift presented with the intention of inspiring reflection on how a “creative combination of science and art can make life better.”*

### LEON K. BAPTISTE '91 Ample Energy for Success

The success that Leon Baptiste has achieved since earning his degree in electrical engineering resonates with energy. It's the entrepreneurial energy he has invested in building LB Electric and the energy he helps to provide

through conventional and alternative electrical technologies.

Baptiste, who grew up in Newark, briefly attended Cheney University in Pennsylvania. Deciding that NJIT would be a better match, he transferred to both a new school and a promising career path. Baptiste gives substantial credit to NJIT's Educational Opportunity Program for setting him on that path, towards becoming an electrical engineer and launching his own business.

One of Baptiste's EOP advisors recommended an internship with Nordling Dean Electric Company that introduced him to the field and led to the part-time job he needed to continue his studies. Baptiste says guidance

# ALUMNI CIRCUIT

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, *continued*

provided by other faculty and staff mentors at NJIT, as well as his EOP counselors, was invaluable in charting the positive direction of his life. "Having someone to guide you when you are a student makes a huge difference. I'll never forget the help I received."

Full-time employment with Nordling Dean followed graduation, and Baptiste spent a total of 18 years with the company. But in 2000 Baptiste decided that he was ready to take a major entrepreneurial step and start his own company. Since then, he has achieved success across a broad spectrum of services offered through LB Electric and several subsidiaries.

Baptiste and his employees are expert in designing, installing and maintaining all types of electrical power systems, including solar and wind equipment. In 2004, he installed the 160 solar panels on the roof of the NJIT Campus Center that now help to meet the center's power needs.

Subsidiary LB Glass Enterprise specializes in glass curtain wall construction that can incorporate photovoltaic technology. Branching out in still another related area, LB Training provides instruction in the installation and maintenance of power systems, with particular emphasis on solar energy.

The range of business initiatives that Baptiste oversees as president and CEO of LB Electric has become increasingly diverse since he founded his company over a decade ago. He takes special satisfaction in

being at the forefront of making renewable energy technology part of our everyday power picture. He adds that it is equally satisfying to help ensure that power resources of every type are installed and utilized with the greatest possible degree of safety and efficiency.

Baptiste has also maintained a close connection with NJIT, one that reflects the importance he places on the mentoring that gave him direction as a student. He is a member of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department's Advisory Board, and an industry advisor to the Interdisciplinary Design Studio (IDS) program in Albert Dorman Honors College. The multi-year IDS program allows students to take an innovative technological concept all the way to commercial development, and perhaps follow Baptiste on the path to entrepreneurial success.

## **PETER A. CISTARO '68**

*Encouraging People to Do Their Best*

Reflecting on his four decades with the utility company PSE&G, Peter Cistaro says that his greatest satisfaction as a manager was helping people use their talents to the fullest and do the best job possible. This focus even factored into Cistaro's decision to major in industrial engineering at NCE after graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School in Elizabeth.

"I felt that industrial engineering was a good balance between learning about technology and

*"Learning to work effectively with the many different personalities one will meet in life is very important. Join a club, a sports team. It will help you develop the ability to meet challenges creatively as part of an organization."*

*—Peter A. Cistaro '68*



*Retired from a long and fulfilling career at PSE&G, Peter Cistaro recently enjoyed a trip to the Grand Canyon with his wife, Mary Ann.*

developing management skills," Cistaro says. "At the time, it was the best option for someone like me." And of his NCE experience, he does not hesitate to say that some of his professors were "awe inspiring."

Wanting to remain in his home state after graduation, Cistaro accepted a job with PSE&G and started on the career from which he would retire in 2007 as a vice president. His first assignment was assisting a district manager, a post he later held himself. Over the years, he moved on to positions of increasing responsibility in labor relations, marketing, quality assurance, and customer service.

Sharing his thoughts on management, Cistaro cites the concept of "servant leadership." He explains that a good manager is someone who helps people do their jobs better by encouraging them, by providing the right tools, and by working to put the necessary processes in place. "It's very different from management

through fear, pounding on the table and expecting to get the best from people."

Cistaro urges students today to take a broad range of courses, and to develop the interpersonal skills that lead to success in the workplace. Technical knowledge is vital, he says, but also learn from the humanities.

"Learning to work effectively with the many different personalities one will meet in life is very important. Join a club, a sports team. It will help you develop the ability to meet challenges creatively as part of an organization. You will always be part of an organization, a member of some team."

Cistaro has long made it a priority to help the young men and women who followed him at NJIT. In addition to sponsoring the Cistaro Family Scholarship, he has generously contributed time as a member of the Leadership Circle Council and the NCE Board of Visitors, which he chaired for several years. A member of the Board of Trustees since 2002, he chairs the board's Advancement Committee.

Shortly before retirement, Cistaro made another commitment to what he holds especially valuable in life. Heeding the suggestion of his pastor at Saint Peter the Apostle Church in Parsippany, he began five years of study to become a permanent deacon in the Roman Catholic Church. Ordained in 2009, Cistaro assists at Mass, administers some sacraments, and ministers to patients in hospitals and residents of nursing homes. "It's about people," he says. "That's the heart of what I am."

*"When I started, I never imagined that I would work and live in such a variety of places."*

*-Michael J. Corbo '81*

**ROBERT C. COHEN**  
**'83, '84, '87**

*From Aerospace to Surgical Implants*

When he graduated from Livingston High School, Robert Cohen enrolled at NJIT as a mechanical engineering major with soaring thoughts of work in the aerospace field. He's now engaged on a very different frontier.

Cohen is developing innovative joint implants as chief technology officer and senior vice president for research and development at Pipeline Biomedical Holdings. Along the arc of his career, he has been awarded over 20 patents and has had numerous peer-reviewed publications.

Cohen's transition to pioneering technology for the human body began with part-time employment as an undergraduate senior. Professor Michael Pappas '59, '64 hired him to help with drafting and detailed engineering for knee, hip and shoulder implants produced by

the company that Pappas had co-founded. One of the venture's innovations was the famed New Jersey Low Contact Stress Knee.

After completing his bachelor's, Cohen studied for a master's and taught physics as a graduate assistant, receiving the MS in 1984. Pappas was the advisor for his thesis, a finite element analysis of a hip joint.

Seeking broader experience in the rapidly growing joint-implant industry, Cohen left academia and joined a company founded by alumni Robert Averill '62, '66 and Alex Khowaylo '63. Yet he didn't sever all connections to NJIT, and in 1987 added an MS in engineering management to his academic credentials.

The company, Osteonics, became a significant orthopedic implant division of Stryker. Cohen advanced rapidly through the ranks to direct a large technical R&D group responsible for the design of joint reconstructive systems. But entrepreneurial opportunity again beckoned, and Cohen rejoined Khowaylo at a start-up, Implex, introducing novel hip and knee implant designs combined with a newly developed biomaterial that encourages bone fixation to the implants.

Success led to acquisition. Implex became part of Zimmer, the world's largest orthopedic implant company. Cohen served as vice-president and general manager of New Jersey reconstructive implant operations and president of Zimmer's spinal implant division. However, reluctant to leave New Jersey when his position was to move out of state, Cohen looked closer to

home. A very attractive opportunity presented itself in 2007 – to help build another startup, Pipeline Biomedical, in partnership with his former colleague Alex Khowaylo.

Based in Cedar Knolls, New Jersey, their company is developing leading-edge hip and knee prostheses designed for younger, more active patients that require removing less bone for implantation. They are also combining their new generation of implants with robotic bone preparation. The objective is to assist the surgeon in making bone cuts and implant placement as precise as possible for a prosthesis that provides long-term performance.

Pipeline Biomedical continues developing new technologies for joint-replacement surgery. One advance involves coating implants with a pharmaceutical material that can promote bone growth and increase bone density around the implant. Potential benefits include a faster return to daily life for recipients and an increased likelihood of clinical success. This translates into greater patient satisfaction, with less chance of the need for revision surgery at a high cost to the patient and medical facility.

An active member of the NCE Board of Visitors, Cohen has also connected with NJIT to move Pipeline Biomedical's R&D program forward. The company is making use of a live-cell lab at the NJIT Enterprise Development Center to confirm the safety and efficacy of the innovative coating on their implants.

And where do Cohen and his colleagues plan to manufacture

their breakthrough products? In New Jersey, in Morris County, where he says they will take the manufacturing process of metal laser sintering to a new level.

Commenting on the siren song of offshore manufacturing, Cohen says that there are very good reasons to keep the production of sophisticated products such as prosthetic implants much closer. "It's been my experience that the efficiency and speed with which it's possible to go from design to a finished product can definitely compensate for higher costs that may be involved. We have the talent and everything else needed to turn a good idea into a high-tech product quickly and profitably."

**MICHAEL J. CORBO '81**  
*A Career Out of the Blue*

"My career started with an interview I didn't have, and with a letter that came out of the blue," says Michael Corbo, today a senior engineering associate who has spent more than thirty years working for ExxonMobil Research and Engineering.

Corbo, whose bachelor's is in electrical engineering, explains that when he was a junior he tried to sign up for a preliminary "practice" interview with Exxon Corporation but the list was full. Instead, he just submitted his resume. Then, "out of the blue," he received a letter asking if he would be interested in a summer internship at the company's refinery in Bayway, New Jersey. "I've always assumed that I received the letter because I sent my resume, and Exxon liked what they saw," he says.



*The hip prosthesis that Robert Cohen is helping to develop can mean both better mobility and faster recovery.*

# ALUMNI CIRCUIT

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS, *continued*

Corbo's internship led to an offer of full-time employment upon graduation. He had a choice of three assignment locations and opted to join the Central Engineering group at the Exxon research and engineering facility then located in Florham Park, New Jersey. There he became involved with instrumentation and control systems, the field in which he has built a career that has taken him to the U.S. Gulf Coast, Canada, Europe and Asia.

"When I started, I never imagined that I would work and live in such a variety of places," Corbo says. "It's been eye-opening, and fun learning the different cultures." A specialist in automated process control technology, he has relocated to projects in Louisiana, Texas, Holland, Singapore and Thailand. Another leg of his career brought him back to Florham Park, to head the group he first joined after completing his NJIT degree.

Corbo is also applying the extensive technical acumen he has gained over the years to work with the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the International Society of Automation (ISA). He chairs the API subcommittee on instrumentation and control systems, and is ExxonMobil's representative to the ISA subcommittee on safety instrumented systems.

Now based in Texas, Corbo is one of several senior instrumentation and process-control engineers who help to oversee the complexities of operating ExxonMobil's five U.S. petrochemical complexes, which include Baytown, Texas; Baton Rouge and Chalmette, Louisiana; Joliet, Illinois; and Torrance, California. They're among the 120 technical professionals who staff a Central Engineering satellite office in Houston. Central Engineering, headquartered in Virginia, located this expertise in



*Jeanie and Fabian Hurtado with their boatman and guide on the Nile.*

Texas to make it available more rapidly to U.S.-based operations.

Corbo has also been highly recognized within ExxonMobil over his career, having received the ExxonMobil Engineering Award for Excellence in 1991, 1995 and 2005 for his leadership and initiative. Most recently, he received consecutive ExxonMobil Capital Efficiency Awards in 2011 and 2012 for identifying and implementing cost-effective solutions in his area of expertise on several large capital projects.

Asked to share his thoughts about our society's energy needs, Corbo says that we have to continue developing and making the best use of global petroleum resources. But he does add that we need to bring alternative energy technologies online, including wind, solar and biofuels.

There's even an ExxonMobil initiative on the alternative-energy frontier under way not far from Corbo's office. It's a pilot project that may one day be scaled up to augment our energy supply with biofuel obtained from algae.

## **FABIAN HURTADO '75**

*Embracing the World*

For Fabian Hurtado, life has been an international odyssey that began when he immigrated with his parents to the U.S. from his birthplace in Pereira, Colombia. Settled in New Jersey, Hurtado had two abiding aspirations – to become a civil engineer and a good soccer player. As it turned out, his prowess on the soccer field led to NJIT.

Hurtado joined the German-American adult soccer league as a teenager, proving himself to be an outstanding player. Teammate Bob Miller '72 and coach Alex Malone encouraged him to consider NJIT as the best choice for both earning an engineering degree and pursuing his passion for soccer.

Recognized as one of the best players in the college arena, Hurtado was selected for the NJIT Hall of Fame, named an All-American, and drafted by the Dallas Tornado professional soccer team in 1975. Yet engineering held more appeal for Hurtado



*Michael Corbo is on call in Texas to provide process instrumentation expertise.*

*"I am very proud of what I see Americans working to accomplish in many parts of the world."*

*- Fabian Hurtado '75*

than pro soccer. He moved on to engineering positions in Nevada and at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where he worked with fellow engineering alumnus Alfredo Teran '75. A licensed Professional Engineer, Hurtado also served the city of Maitland, Florida, as city engineer and assistant public works director.

Hurtado says that his education at NJIT "opened up the world for me." That's been literally true as his engineering career has taken him to Central and South America, Europe, Africa and the Middle East accompanied by his wife, Jeanie. Hurtado also says that some of the most gratifying assignments on his professional itinerary have involved working on projects funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. State Department.

Life for the Hurtados has had some unexpected moments of excitement in recent years, such as when they were evacuated from Egypt in the midst of the civil unrest that toppled the government of Hosni Mubarak. "We thought it would be a one-day demonstration. We soon discovered, along with the rest of the world, that the massive protest was going to last a lot longer."

But Hurtado emphasizes that experiences like this have been very much the exception as he and Jeanie have traveled extensively for pleasure as well as for work. Thus far, they've been to some 60 countries.

"I am very proud of what I see Americans working to accomplish in many parts of the world,"

Hurtado says. "We're doing our best to help a lot of people. I also think that when we live in another country we really get to understand each other better. You learn that most people everywhere just want to enjoy life together."

After the completion of recent projects that included one in Iraq, Hurtado and his wife have returned to Florida. The expectation is that their stay in the U.S. will be brief, and that a new assignment will soon take them to another distant and interesting spot on the globe.

#### **YING WU '88**

##### *Building Telecom Bridges*

Ying Wu, chairman of China Capital Group, is in the business of connecting people and countries, specifically the United States and China. One of his main goals is to bring the benefits of advanced telecommunications technology developed in the U.S. to the people of his native country. The demand for access to telecom services is growing rapidly in China, which Wu says presents major opportunities for U.S. companies.

Since earning his master's in electrical engineering at NJIT, Wu has become a widely known and widely respected figure in the field of telecommunications and international economic development. In 2003, China Central TV named him one of the "Top 10 Most Influential Persons" in that country's economy.

But Wu recounts that when he came to the U.S. for graduate study at NJIT he had less than \$30. In China, he had been



*Ying Wu also received the Edward F. Weston Medal for Professional Achievement at Celebration 2011.*

teaching at Beijing Polytechnic University, now Beijing University of Technology. It was a time of significant change in China's relations with Western nations, and talented individuals were encouraged to improve their knowledge and skills abroad. The downside was that the Chinese government could not provide resources adequate to fund this quest.

Researching his options, Wu had determined that NJIT would be a good place for him to gain the academic credential he wanted. And at NJIT he found a very welcoming environment, along with the teaching assistantship he needed to complete his degree.

"I really liked how my professors brought real-world problems into the courses," Wu says. "That's a very important foundation for a good education and for success later on." The success that Wu himself achieved after graduation began with work at Bell Communications Research and AT&T Bell Labs.

Wu subsequently set an entrepreneurial course that led to producing wireline and wireless products based on U.S. technology for markets in Asia. In 1991, he co-founded Starcom Network Systems Inc. in New Jersey, which several years later merged with Unitech Telecom, Inc., a California developer of digital and wireless transmission systems. Wu became executive

vice president and vice chairman of the board of directors of the new UTStarcom, as well as the founder and CEO of its China-based subsidiary, UTStarcom (China) Ltd.

In addition to his current business commitments as chairman of China Capital Group, Wu is a consultant to the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council and senior Internet consultant to the government of Shenzhen City. Located in Guangdong Province near Hong Kong, the Shenzhen area became China's first Special Economic Zone and one of its most successful. Further recognition has been accorded Wu in being named an honorary professor at Beijing Industrial University and Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications.

Generously acknowledging the role that NJIT has had in his success, Wu pledged \$1.5 million in 2005 to establish the Ying Wu Endowed Chair in Wireless Communications in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. More recently, he helped to organize the NJIT Alumni Association's most distant Regional Club, in China, and presided at the group's first gathering. The dozen PhD alumni attending elected Wu the first chair of the club by acclamation. ■

# 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 –

Ed '63 and Sharon Cruz pulled out all the stops as gracious hosts at the 2012 Florida soccer alumni reunion held at Boca Grande on Gasparilla Island. Blessed with perfect weather, activities were nonstop from the opening night's reception to the ending morning's brunch at their exquisite beachfront home in Boca Grande's historic district. In between, alumni and guests, including NJIT's new President and First Lady, Joel and Diane Bloom, enjoyed the town's Strawberry Festival, soccer, golf, cocktails and dinner, and the infamous Las Cubanas mariachi singers at the Coral Creek Country Club, and simply taking walks and relaxing on the beach.

Making their debuts at the reunion were Libby Hamilton '77, Andy '63 and Barbara Handwerker, Alex '63 and Irene Khowaylo, Gerry '67, '71 and Joanne Kurth, Bill Morris '82, '93 and Stan '64 and Joan Pukash. Gerry was a member of the NCE soccer team and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity, and president of the Class of 1967. He spent 30 years with IBM in engineering, sales, marketing, business and financial planning, and consulting.

After retiring from IBM in 1997, Gerry joined INTECO, a small technology consulting firm, as general manager. In 1999, he brokered the sale of the company to Gartner Group, a large consulting firm from which he retired in 2004. His many retirement volunteer activities include being a court-appointed child advocate and member of the Service Corps for Retired Executives. He also runs in marathons and 5k races. Gerry and Joanne are snowbirds and take one big vacation a year, which has included a 42-day cross-country trip and an African safari.

Stan played baseball for four years for Coach Paul Hausser. He knew many of the members of the soccer team and volunteered to be the team's manager in his senior year. After graduation, Stan started his career with Automatic Switch Company in Florham Park, New Jersey, as an application engineer. He stayed with Automatic Switch for 43 years, retiring in 2007 as vice-president of international sales. Stan and Joan have been married since 1968 and live in Chester, New Jersey.



*NJIT President Joel S. Bloom (standing, fifth from left) and his wife, Diane, made the first of what attending soccer alums hope will be many future appearances at their Florida reunions.*

Diane and I were guests of the Class of 1962 at the 2012 Alumni Weekend gala. I am always awed when I hear about the professional accomplishments of NJIT alumni and this group was no exception. Following are some of their stories.

**Bob Averill '62, '66** was co-founder with **Alex Khowaylo '63** of three medical device companies, each of which was sold to a Fortune 500 corporation. He served as director of Meditech, Inc., which was sold to 3M Corporation. He was an executive with Osteonics Corporation, which was acquired by Stryker Corporation, and served as director of Implex Corporation, which was sold to Zimmer Holdings, Inc. Bob holds 28 patents for a variety of orthopedic devices. He's retired but actively serves on the Board of Directors of Axion Power International, Inc. Bob and his wife Gerri, who he married while an undergraduate at NCE, live on Cupsaw Lake in the hilly mine town of Ringwood, New Jersey.

While at NCE, **Bob Fierro '62** joined the Motor Club and Photography Club and was staff photographer for the *Nucleus*. He went to work for Mackay Radio and Telegraph, where he learned about the emerging world of solid-state logic. Bob joined a new group of engineers formed to develop high-speed data communications over international circuits. In those days, high speed meant 1200 baud, and international communications was over telephone bandwidth undersea cable.

Bob was the first person to send and receive 1200 baud data between New York City and Geneva, Switzerland. He spent the next four years deploying high-speed data circuits for the military and participated in the planning for NASA's Apollo program. After a few years in management, he knew this was not his niche. Returning to engineering, he started his own company, which specialized in turnkey design, development and manufacture of communications and control systems.

*"I am always awed when I hear about  
the professional accomplishments  
of NJIT alumni."*

*- Mal Simon*

Starting on his dining room table, he eventually grew his company to two plants with more than 30 employees. His first big break was a contract with CBS to design and deliver a black box that would take the stream of election-results data and display the results automatically for television cameras to photograph. He then contracted with ABC to design and develop a communications system that would allow taping and broadcasting events from multiple venues at the 1976 Olympics. This system was also used for the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics.

A classmate, Tom Duffy, asked Bob if he could design a 1200 baud modem for AT&T Bell Labs in Holmdel, New Jersey. What was supposed to be a short-term assignment turned out to be long-term, and Bob spent 18 of the next 20 years at Bell Labs, later Lucent, on a wide range of projects.

After a stint with a startup company, Converge, in Florham Park, New Jersey, Bob retired. His leisure life lasted only six months when he decided to work in the mortgage business. Eight years later, he retired for good. Bob, who holds a U.S. Coast Guard Master's License, loves to sail and fish and spend time restoring his two classic sail and power boats. A member of the Lavallette Yacht Club, he helps to run the club's racing program. Bob and his wife, Kathleen, live in Island Heights, New Jersey.

**Marshall Lerner '62** came from California for the reunion. At NCE, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Pi Fraternity and was inducted into the Tau Beta Pi, Eta Kappa Nu and Phi Eta Sigma honor societies. Marshall is managing

partner of the intellectual property law firm of Kleinberg & Lerner L.L.P. based in Los Angeles. He received his JD degree with honors from George Washington University in 1965 and is a member of the bars of California and the District of Columbia.

Marshall was a patent examiner in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and a patent advisor in the Office of Naval Research. He has lectured on intellectual property at the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Science, UCLA's Anderson Graduate School of Management, Santa Monica College and the USC Marshall School of Business, where he is also a member of the Advisory Council of the Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies. Marshall and his wife, Jacqueline, live in Beverly Hills.

**Vic Passaro '62** was inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma and Eta Kappa Nu honor societies at NCE. He worked for international companies such as ITT designing telecommunications systems and satellites while working in Europe and Japan. Back in the States, he led a software group for Computer Sciences Corp. developing the first Off Track Betting (OTB) system for New York City.

As director of engineering for a Singer telecommunications division, Vic developed the first handheld portable inventory terminal. Moving to RCA, he managed an advanced systems group that developed international switching systems. While vice president for an international bank, Vic was responsible for various online and terminal-based projects. Retiring in 1997, Vic and his wife, Nancy, who live in Manhattan, have been

enjoying international travel and cruises. They especially enjoyed living in Rome for three months.

**James Quintiere '62** recently retired from the Department of Fire Protection Engineering at the University of Maryland and is now an emeritus professor. Jim has over 130 journal publications and is the author of two books, *Principles of Fire Behavior* and *Fundamentals of Fire Behavior*, and is co-author of *Enclosure Fire Dynamics*. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and has received numerous awards and medals for his work in fire-safety science and engineering. Jim lives in Laytonsville, Maryland, and maintains a condo in Margate, New Jersey, where he plays accordion for the Durning String Band that marches in Mummers parades.

**John Roth '62** spent his entire professional career at Monsanto Company, with three career paths. He first worked in machine design and process development, where he earned one patent. His next path was in manufacturing, where he progressed from engineering and maintenance superintendent to plant manager at a grassroots facility in Chicago. His third career path was in human resources, advancing from manager of compensation to director of all human resources staff for Monsanto Chemical Company.

John retired in 1996 as director of human resources for the Saflex Division, a \$600 million international business operating on four continents. His retirement activities include writing short stories, collecting golf antiques, and playing golf with other antiques. John has been married to his

high school sweetheart, Elizabeth Joyce, for 49 years. They live in Mills River, North Carolina.

**Ervin Schoenblum '62, '65** worked for Bendix in Teterboro, New Jersey, as an electrical and aeronautical engineer for four years. While at Bendix, he earned a master's degree at NCE and taught some EE courses in the evening division.

In 1966, Erv decided to move in a different career direction and entered a full-time program at the Harvard Business School, earning his MBA in 1968. He joined the Management Consulting Department of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell in New York City and remained there until 1980. During that time, he managed about 200 consulting projects in a broad range of areas. In 1981 Erv joined a leveraged buyout firm that acquired companies, improved and sold them at a profit. After two years, he decided to go off on his own as a consultant, providing expert testimony on economic issues in litigation proceedings. He remains active in this work, finding it stimulating and educational.

An outstanding tennis player at Passaic High School, Erv continued his tennis at NCE, playing first singles for four years. He met his wife, Diana, at NCE's famous Friday night dance club. They have been married for 48 years and live in Wayne, New Jersey.

**Michael V. Vasilik '62** has over 40 years of experience in research, development, engineering, manufacturing and management. He has held senior management positions in high-tech corporations and as a consultant for the federal government on advanced research



# CLASS NOTES

and development projects. He served for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force and retired as a lieutenant colonel. His assignments included working for the assistant secretary of the Air Force and representing the U.S. on advisory boards and committees with senior scientists, engineers and leaders from NATO countries.

Michael earned a PhD in industrial engineering and operations research from Arizona State University. He also earned a Diploma in International Relations and National Security Policy from the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. Michael is actively involved in community and church activities and is a volunteer at the Lehigh Valley Health Network. He continues a lifelong program of physical fitness and participates in various sports.

A highlight of the reunion was two performances of the famous “e to the x” cheer by **Leona Balkenende Seazholtz '62**, **Virginia Thomas Sulzberger '62, '66** and **Edith Jeffrey '62**. I had written about Leona and Virginia after their 45th reunion. And now, five years later, Edith overcame her modesty to send her story, which will be featured in a future *NJIT Magazine*. I guarantee it will blow your mind as it did mine. You will also learn in a future Mal and Friends column how learning to ski on the NCE ski deck had a positive impact on the life of **Jack Wagner '74**.

Keep the news coming to [mjs@njit.edu](mailto:mjs@njit.edu).

## 1953

**Charlie Wilson (ME)**, MS '58 shares the news that he has been appointed to the Environmental Assistance and Protection Board of Forsyth County, North Carolina. Charlie and his wife, Liz, moved to North Carolina a few years ago. They recently had the pleasure of a visit from Coach Mal Simon and his wife, Diane. Liz chairs the Peace and Social Concerns Committee at her church and is a dedicated gardener. Charlie arranges programs for the Sierra Club and prefers kayaking, swimming and hiking over gardening.

## 1960

**Manny Pokotilow (EE)**, managing partner at the law firm of Caesar, Rivise, Bernstein, Cohen & Pokotilow, has received the Pennsylvania Bar Institute's Arthur Seidel Distinguished IP Service Award. The award was presented “in recognition of his commitment to the highest standard of excellence in intellectual property law.”

## 1967

**Patrick M. Coullahan PE (IE)** was presented with the Society of American Military Engineers Wheeler Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Military Engineering at the SAME National Medals and Honors Awards Ceremony held in conjunction with the society's 2012 national meeting in St. Louis. He was recognized for actions as chief, construction and operations, of the Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## 1974

**Richard C. DelCore (ME)** writes “I recently retired from Procter & Gamble after 37 years with them. My career at P&G started in manufacturing management, then to finance and accounting, then human resources and finally global marketing. My final role was global leader for brand entertainment and VP of P&G Productions. I am now consulting in the marketing and entertainment area. My experience and success at P&G is largely attributed to the engineering training I received and my ability to apply process thinking and problem solving to the various businesses I worked on.”

## 1980

**Kenneth (Ken) Drake AIA (Arch)** has joined EYP Architecture & Engineering as a senior project executive supporting the firm's government, corporate and higher-education sectors.

## 1988

**Colonel Brant V. Dayley (Environmental Eng)** recently became garrison commander at Fort Bliss, Texas. Commissioned as a Regular Army second lieutenant in the Air Defense Artillery, he has held a variety of operational and staff assignments over more than two decades of service.

**Francesco Liberti (Eng Science)**, MS '92 (Environmental Eng) is a vice president in the Operational Risk Division at Morgan Stanley, where his work focuses on environmental and operational risks across various businesses.

## 1998

**Manuel Gonzalez (Arch)** has joined Cuhaci & Peterson Architects, based in Orlando, Florida.

## 1999

**Gopinath Kokkonda MS (Computer Science)** writes “I am the managing director of an IT solutions integrator/consulting firm providing Web, mobile, digital marketing and staffing solutions.”

## 2000

**Jeff Starr (Mgmt)** has been named Boys' Basketball Coach of the Year in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, for the second time in recognition of leading Arundel High School, his alma mater, to a 24-2 record.

## 2009

**Karen Patten PhD (Information Systems)** was recently named a Scholar of the Month by the Office of Research at the University of South Carolina, where she is an assistant professor of integrated information technology. Karen's two co-authors of the recently published book *Information Technology for Small Business* include NJIT Associate Professor Katia Passerini.

## 2011

**Danielle L. Green MS (Mgmt, Information Systems)** has been promoted to program director at New Jersey Advocates for Education, a non-profit foundation.

## 2012

**Ravi Trivedi** (Computer Science) has accepted a position as a software engineer at TATA Consultancy Services.

### IN MEMORIAM

The NJIT community has been saddened by the deaths of the following alumni:

**Victor Lindner '53**

**Harry Elder '54**

**Leroy J. Ducharme '56**

**Henry Paulson '60**

**William J. Parkinson, Jr. '72**

Also noted with sadness is the passing of **John Walker Ryon III**, professor of computer science.



## CLEAR SAILING

Electrical engineer **Claus Kinder '75**, who recently joined Zumtobel Lighting, Inc. as CEO/COO, also volunteers on the executive board of the *Clearwater* organization as treasurer ([www.clearwater.org](http://www.clearwater.org)). Launched in 1969, the *Clearwater* is a replica of the majestic sloops that sailed the Hudson River in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was conceived and built to focus

attention on dire pollution in the river and the need for better stewardship of our global environment.

Named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2004, the *Clearwater* has sailed as America's environmental flagship for more than four decades. It has been the heart of educational programs, social advocacy and musical celebrations like the annual Clearwater Festival - inspiring



millions of people to support positive environmental action such as the measures that have greatly improved the Hudson River.

## PROUDLY PRESENTED

Traveling to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado, alumnus Stanley Barauskas had the honor of presenting four 2012 graduating cadets with awards on behalf of the "Bald Eagles" – retirees of North American Aviation, Inc. The awards, endowed by the company's retiree organization, are given for excellence in astronautics, aerodynamics and basic research.

A 2011 NJIT Alumni Achievement honoree, Barauskas' role as an engineer in the aerospace field included contributing to the success of the Apollo, Skylab



and Space Shuttle programs. Of his recent experience as a Bald Eagle representative, he writes:

"The three days I spent at the Air Force Academy participating in the North American Aviation Awards for outstanding cadets

and then attending their graduation the following day were very rewarding and inspiring. I was extremely impressed with the young men who received awards for their excellent academic performance.

*Stanley Barauskas '61 presenting awards for excellence in basic research to U.S. Air Force Academy cadets Cody O. Deacon and Mark W. Boyer.*

"They stand ready to make a significant contribution to our nation's defense and improve the lives of all U.S. citizens. It was a great honor to be able to recognize these young men for their accomplishments and witness their graduation and entry into the U.S. Air Force as second lieutenants. They are fine examples for others to follow and our Air Force is truly enhanced by their joining its ranks."

# ALUMNI CALENDAR

## SAVE THE DATE!

### THIRD ANNUAL EMBA BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Thursday, October 18  
NJIT Campus Center

“Political Strategies and Business Realities in a Time of Transition”

In a year characterized by global changes and crises in national and international politics, contending with transition is a reality. This all-day conference seeks to identify the challenges and highlight the drivers affecting the intersection where business, public policy and globalization merge.

Sponsored by the NJIT School of Management

For more information and to register, contact D. Elaine Frazier at [frazier.njit.edu](mailto:frazier.njit.edu) or 973-596-6378.

### CELEBRATION 2012

Friday, November 2  
Pleasantdale Chateau  
West Orange, New Jersey

NJIT's annual festive evening in support of endowed scholarships for students.

Information: Jacquie Rhodes  
973-596-3407 or [rhodes@njit.edu](mailto:rhodes@njit.edu)

Also visit [www.njit.edu/celebration](http://www.njit.edu/celebration)

### ALUMNI WEEKEND 2013

Friday, May 17 – Sunday, May 19

Alumni Weekend has something for every NJIT grad! Return to campus for Five-Year Anniversary reunions as well as non-anniversary class, college, department and fraternity/sorority events.

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.

For more information about Alumni 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.

### 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)



### A GOLDEN GATHERING

Wearing the special medals presented as part of Commencement 2012, the contingent of Golden Highlanders attending took time for a photo with NJIT President Joel S. Bloom, and Executive Director of Alumni Relations Robert A. Boynton and Alumni Association President Joseph Stanley '78, '85 (standing, 1st and 2nd from right). Senior among this year's Golden Highlanders celebrating 50 and more years since their graduation is Herman Blackman '38 (seated, 2nd from left). Standing on the far left is Walter H. Kraft '62, MS '65, PhD '75, who returned to campus for the Class of 1962's reunion and the graduation of his grandson with the Class of 2012.

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).