The 51st Commencement Exercises at Rensselaer’s Hartford campus were held on Saturday, June 7. It was the first of a four-day heat wave in Connecticut, but it was shaded under the tent for the 286 graduates, their families and friends, and members of Rensselaer’s faculty and staff. The Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson, President and Professor of Physics, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, presided over the ceremony. She said to the graduates, “You are here today, receiving your master’s degrees, because you chose to stretch your limits.”

Three students were honored for their remarkable accomplishments during the presentation of the Outstanding Student Awards. The Hartford Chapter of the Rensselaer Alumni Association (RAA) sponsors these annual awards. Faculty members submit nominations for the awards based on graduating students who had distinguished themselves from their peers through superior academic achievement, demonstrated leadership skills, works published, and contributions to Rensselaer.

The Outstanding Student Award in Management was presented to David E. Jean-Louis. He earned an M.S. in Management completing his studies with a 3.63 G.P.A. Jean-Louis is a Senior Information Technology Analyst with Carrier Corporation, a division of United Technologies Corporation (UTC). He plans to develop an infrastructure as well as educational and economic opportunities in his native Haiti through the founding of a not-for-profit organization, “Spread the Love, Inc.”

Gregory Sparzo ’93, Adjunct Professor, Hartford Department of the Lally School of Management and Technology, nominated Jean-Louis for the award.

ISP Provides Life-Changing Experience

Rensselaer’s inaugural International Scholars Program (ISP) has wrapped-up a most memorable experience for the students, faculty, and staff who participated in this exciting 10-week summer program. The 19 students who completed the program earned 40 percent of the requirements toward a Rensselaer master’s degree in Management or Information Technology. In addition, the Rensselaer ISP provided college graduates with a global learning experience in Europe and Asia, and an accelerated career-building opportunity, as they make the transition from college to the working world.

ISP set sail, literally, on June 8, as the group traveled aboard Cunard® Line’s Queen Mary 2® (QM2®) for the transatlantic journey to Europe, which marked the beginning of classes onboard the ship. Students met with the ship’s officers and were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the vessel. The cruise lasted six days with the ship arriving in Southampton, England. From there, the group split up with students in the Enterprise Management track traveling to Barcelona, Spain, and Shanghai, China; while participants in the Information Technology track traveled to Rome, Italy, and Warsaw, Poland.

Some of the highlights from the Enterprise Management track were: guest speaker

Continued on page 4
New Collaboration Pods Added to Cole Library

Three new collaboration pods were installed in the Cole Library. Students will be able to study and work on projects in a collaborative workspace that features a 46” monitor and keyboards that include USB ports and cables to easily save and share materials, and connect external devices such as a digital camera. Mary S. Dixey, Director, the Cole Library, spearheaded the project, while Adam Hechler, Senior Analyst/PC System Administrator, Technical and Information Services (TIS) and Arthur Potter, Jr., Technical Advisor/PC Support Specialist, TIS, installed the new pod stations.

Team Rooms Available in the Cole Library

Four team rooms are available for student use in the Cole Library. The rooms offer a quiet and private place for groups of students to work and include dry-erase marker boards and large tables for projects. All of the rooms have wireless access. Sign-up is not required as rooms are available on a first-come, first-accommodated basis. Try using a team room for your next group study meeting.

IPM 2009

Rensselaer’s Industrial Process Management (IPM) cohort program, previously only available to employees of United Technologies Corporation, will be open to the public for admission beginning in 2009. This unique educational program enables engineers to simultaneously earn Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certification along with a Rensselaer Master of Science (M.S.) in Engineering Science degree. The goal of this program is to teach engineers to use these statistical and probabilistic tools to enhance and improve the quality of products and services.

IPM courses cover the following areas of study: Lean fundamentals, applied statistics, project management, design of experiments, statistical methods in quality control, quality management, Six Sigma fundamentals, and more. Instructors use computer-based tools such as MINITAB and CrystalBall. Applications in both manufacturing and services are stressed. A work-related engineering project is an integral component of the program.

More information and admission requirements can be found on the Web at: www.ewp.rpi.edu/hartford/academic/ipm. Students interested in applying to the program should contact Enrollment Management at (860) 548-2420 or e-mail: info@ewp.rpi.edu.
Alumni News

1980s
Robert van Heiningen ('80 M.S. Healthcare Management) joined the senior management team of Johnson Health Network as Vice President of Human Resources at Johnson Memorial Hospital. He will also chair the hospital’s Service Excellence Committee.

Michael H. Brothers ('89 M.S. Computer Science) passed the Connecticut bar exam in February and serves as a lawyer on a contractual basis, traveling to the law firm of Clifford & Garde in Washington, D.C. Previously, he was a nuclear engineer and was formerly Vice President of Millstone Power Station.

Douglas A. Kartsen ('89 M.B.A., '97 M.S. Management) has been appointed to the Board of Directors at the Farmington Chamber of Commerce. He is a financial advisor at Edward Jones and earned his CFA designation in 2001. Kartsen will serve two terms on the Chamber through February 2010.

1990s
Raymond J. Huey (HGC '96 M.S. Biomedical Engineering), CEO, Z-Medica Corp., recently accepted an award on behalf of Z-Medica from the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, for the company’s success in utilizing best practices in exports and creating international trade opportunities for Connecticut.

Chandler J. Howard ('97 M.S. Management), President and CEO, Liberty Bank, was elected to the board of directors of Middlesex Hospital by its parent corporation, Middlesex Health Systems, Inc. Howard was also recently awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters from Charter Oak State College when he served as the keynote speaker at the commencement ceremony held on June 1.

Faculty and Staff News

Mary S. Dixey, Director, the Cole Library, has been invited to a seat on the iCONN Database Selection Committee. This committee advises the Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board (CDLAB) on all matters pertaining to iCONN content, including the evaluation and selection of specific databases to license and also making difficult decisions about which databases to cut when the budget is cut or when the budget must absorb significant license fee increases. iCONN is a joint project of the Connecticut State Library and the Department of Higher Education. The project is administered by the Connecticut State Library under the auspices of the Commission for Educational Technology and the Connecticut Digital Library Advisory Board (CDLAB). Funding is provided by the Connecticut General Assembly.

Tunnessia Owens, Production Assistant, Southeastern Connecticut Site, earned an Associate of Science degree in Human Services from Three Rivers Community College on May 18.

Kim Scalzo, Director of Outreach Programs, Troy Campus, and Ronnie Rowe, Senior Student Services Administrator and Point of Contact for students via Distance, also from the Troy Campus, attended and participated in the 26th Annual National University Telecommunications Network (NUTN) conference in Park City, Utah, June 9-11. They attended various NUTN workshops and seminars to explore the impact of current and emerging technologies on distance and higher education, leadership in distance education, and long term strategic planning. Scalzo also moderated and facilitated a thought-provoking and engaging discussion on Leadership Development and New Administrators in Online Learning. The workshop addressed common organizational elements with a focus on leadership development for online and distance education including strategic planning, student support, faculty development, and the learning infrastructure. Rowe also participated in the Poster/Technology Demonstration, where she presented Rensselaer’s unique Point of Contact Model.

Rensselaer is the only licensed Network Associate of the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)® in New England. Rensselaer’s Centers for Professional Development (RCPD) is part of an elite international network licensed by the CCL to offer its renowned leadership programs. There are two different leadership programs that focus on two different audiences offered by Rensselaer: Foundations of Leadership (FOL) and Leadership Development Program (LDP)®. FOL is a three-day leadership development workshop designed to assist the development of emerging leaders and managers by increasing their personal awareness, interpersonal effectiveness, and managerial abilities. LDP is an intense, five-day program designed to improve the effectiveness of upper-middle to senior-level managers by helping them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses as leaders. Both programs will be held in Hartford. The three-day FOL session will be offered December 2-4, while the five-day LDP session is scheduled to run October 27-October 31. For more information, please visit: www.ewp.rpi.edu/rcpd.

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Francesc Miron, Economic Minister, City of Barcelona; a presentation by La Caixa Group, one of the largest banks in Spain; a visit to Ecotecnia, a wind and solar power company with a tour of their wind turbine farm; studying at Funan University; learning about Lean Six Sigma at the Eastman Kodak Company in Shanghai; site visits to Accenture and Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation; and exploring Beijing.

Some of the highlights from the Information Technology track were: checking out the antennas at the Vatican Radio transmission facility and touring the broadcast booth and operation and production studios; studying at Rome University; guest speaker Stefano Zatti, European Space Agency Security Manager; a site visit to IBM Rome Software Laboratory; traveling to nearby Italian cities; software demonstrations at Gdansk University of Technology; touring Budapest; learning about online analytics at Gemius; and sightseeing in Warsaw.

The group as a whole had the opportunity to get to know one another on the cruise. The two academic groups also bonded closely through team projects and exploring new cultures. Students in this Class I of ISP came from across America. Every ISP country, Italy, Poland, Spain, and China, had a Rensselaer faculty or staff member who had traveled extensively in the host country.

Some of the students posted blogs, photos, and video from ISP. View some of the photos on the Rensselaer Hartford Web site at: www.ewp.rpi.edu/isp. Applications are currently being accepted for ISP 2009. Starting with this class, ISP will now provide students with a complete one-year accelerated master’s degree program which includes a nine-week summer term abroad. All students will be a part of the international summer term regardless of the term in which they begin their master’s degree. College graduates or soon-to-be college graduates with a bachelor’s degree in 2009 are highly encouraged to apply to ISP early, as space is limited.
Whitney, a division of UTC. Her thesis work has potential to improve the strength of materials used in the aerospace industry. Clinical Associate Professors Brice N. Cassenti and Ernesto Gutierrez-Miravete of the Department of Engineering and Science co-nominated her for the award.

The Outstanding Student Award winner in Computer Science was presented to Roland A. DePratti. He earned an M.S. in Computer Science completing his studies with a 3.97 G.P.A. DePratti is a Database Analyst Manager with Cigna Healthcare. Throughout his career at Cigna, he has successfully integrated technical initiatives into the business environment. His thesis work advances a new area of database theory. He was nominated for the award by Roger H. Brown, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Engineering and Science.

The Commencement speaker was David P. Hess ’79, ’86, President, Hamilton Sundstrand. He is a Rensselaer alumnus having earned a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in electrical engineering at the Troy and Hartford campuses, respectively. Mr. Hess imparted his “life lessons” on the graduates that spoke to the essence of Education for Working Professionals (EWP). He said, “Keep learning. To some degree, life and your career should be a continuation of your academic experience at Rensselaer and prior academic institutions.”

Mr. Hess used several examples and recounted stories that reinforced his message throughout the Commencement Address. He summed it up in a story he once read. “Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling five balls in the air. You name them – work, family, health, friends and spirit – and you’re keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls – family, health, friends and spirit – are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irreversibly scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. It’s important that you understand that and strive for balance in your life.”

A reception was held on the grounds of the Hartford campus following the ceremony, and all who attended agreed that the ice cream sundae bar was a perfect treat on such a hot day. Graduates and their families and friends enjoyed the rest of the afternoon with Rensselaer faculty and staff celebrating their achievements, taking lots of photographs, and touring the campus. To view the photo gallery and the full text of the Commencement Address, please see: www.ewp.rpi.edu/hartford/news/events/commencement08/index.html.

Hartford Campus Staff Members Graduate From Rensselaer

This year’s commencement at the Hartford campus was extra special with three Rensselaer at Hartford staff members crossing the stage to receive their master’s degrees in Management. The cheers were loud as we applauded our own Carole C. Charles, Program Administrator, Academic Operations and Logistics; Donna M. Hechler, Cohort Program Administrator, Academic Operations and Logistics; and Natalie A. Sutera, Manager, Financial Services. Congratulations to new Rensselaer alumni Carole, Donna, and Natalie!

EWP 2008 Celebration of Graduates

All graduates of the EWP programs from Hartford and via distance learning were invited to participate in 2008 Commencement weekend on the Rensselaer campus in Troy. A Celebration of Graduates was held on Friday, May 16 in the Low Center for Industrial Innovation. Dr. Lester A. Gerhardt, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Acting, welcomed the graduates and their families to Rensselaer and congratulated them on their accomplishments. After a presentation of gifts, each graduating student was invited to share comments and experiences as a working professional. The graduates thanked their companies and families for their support as they completed their degrees from their workplace, at home, on the road, or on campus. The students were thankful the courses were offered in formats to accommodate the lifestyle of a working professional. Finally, Howard R. Hollander, Program Senior Manager, Information Systems Leadership Development Program (ISLDP) from Lockheed Martin Enterprise Information Systems, addressed those in attendance as a representative of the companies and corporate partners who work with Rensselaer. To view the online photo gallery, please visit: www.rpi.edu/ewp/distance/commencement2008/album08/index.html.
HealthCare’08 is part of Rensselaer’s conference series on the current and future state of American health care. The fall conference will take place at the Radisson Plaza Lord Baltimore Hotel, in Baltimore, Maryland, November 13 and 14, 2008. This Rensselaer conference is focused on helping experienced healthcare professionals capitalize on the incredible opportunities for growth presented by emerging healthcare technologies and trends in the 21st century.

Health care is facing crises on a number of fronts, from changing demographics to payers’ cuts and a shift toward “retailization.” The future of the American hospital is a seemingly intractable problem. This definitive conference for senior hospital management will focus on three major themes: policy and strategy, the intersection of technology and medicine, and operational efficiency. Major hospitals, executives, and thought leaders all plan to attend this event, and the success of the program will kick off a series of conferences which will increase the education and influence of this market sector.

Sponsors for the conference, in addition to Rensselaer, include General Electric, IBM, Janus Enterprise International, Medtronic, Microsoft, The Synergy Organization, and TRG Healthcare. To learn more about HealthCare’08, please contact a program manager, toll-free, at (800) 306-7778 or e-mail: healthcareconference@eup.rpi.edu. Complete conference schedule and registration information is available online at: www.rpi.edu/healthcareconference.