Rensselaer at Hartford’s 52nd Commencement Exercises

The 278 graduates of the Rensselaer Class of 2008-2009, their families and friends, and faculty and staff, enjoyed a beautiful Commencement on the grounds of the Hartford campus, on Saturday, June 6. Master’s degrees were awarded in business administration, management, engineering, computer science, and information technology.

The Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., President and Professor of Physics, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, presided over the ceremony. She said to the graduates, “You, already, are working in demanding jobs. Among your responsibilities, many of you count not only marriage or a partnership, a mortgage, and civic and social obligations—but, also, children, who represent the most demanding, albeit rewarding, of jobs….Yet, you choose to assume one more responsibility—enrollment in a master’s degree program—in order to reach for something higher in your career, and for your own intellectual development. To use an old-fashioned phrase, you decided to better yourselves, and your lives will be forever richer for it.”

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

Both award winners were from Rensselaer’s Lally School of Management and Technology. The first Outstanding Student Award winner was Peter W. Keilich.

Continued on page 3

Rensselaer’s Graduate Engineering Programs Rank Among the Nation’s Best by U.S. News & World Report

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute’s graduate engineering programs rank among the best in the nation according to the 2010 U.S. News & World Report guide to “America’s Best Graduate Schools” (www.usnews.com). “The success of our graduate programs at Rensselaer speaks directly to the success and growth of our research and teaching enterprises under The Rensselaer Plan,” said Rensselaer President Shirley Ann Jackson. “Rensselaer continues to recruit some of the top graduate students in the world, who work alongside faculty researchers who are among the most prominent scholars in their fields. Together, they are raising the stature of Rensselaer and making discoveries that will change how the coming generations will live, work, and play.”

The Graduate School of Engineering is ranked 31st in the nation. Six engineering programs are ranked among the top 25 (aerospace engineering, electrical engineering, industrial engineering, materials science engineering, mechanical engineering, and nuclear engineering). The electrical engineering program saw the biggest jump in ranking, rising from 26th to 20th. Mechanical engineering rose from 24th to 22nd.

Graduate engineering degree programs offered at Rensselaer’s Hartford Campus and Southeastern Connecticut Site include Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer and Systems Engineering, and Engineering Science. Graduate certificate program options include Control Systems and High Temperature Materials.
Alumni News

1960s
William Walton Landon, Jr. (’65 M.S. Electrical Engineering) has applied for a patent on the magnet powered motor he has designed. The perpetual-motion motor uses magnets arrayed along the edge of a disc. Previously, he was employed as an electrical engineer at Hamilton Standard (now Hamilton Sundstrand, United Technologies Corporation).

1970s
Christopher S. Fuselier (’71 M.E. Electrical Engineering), President and CEO, Progeos Municipal Services Company, served as a judge for the Business Champions 2009 (Hartford Region’s Fastest Growing Private Companies) sponsored by the Hartford Business Journal. He retired from General Electric in 2007 after 40 years where he held the positions of GM-Engineering and regional executive.

1980s
Marc N. Andrukiewicz (’89 M.B.A.), Vice President of Operations, Yankee Gas Services Company, has been named a 2009 MS Corporate Achiever by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter. He is one of only 20 business leaders to be named to this recognition program honoring some of Connecticut’s most influential leaders while at the same time raising critically needed funds for ongoing scientific research, programs, and services offered by the Chapter.

1990s
Diane (Dowling) Mulholland (HGC ’90 M.S. Management – EMP Class XI), has been named Director of Medical Surgical Nursing at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford. She will be responsible for administrative oversight of the hospital’s medical and surgical nursing units. She most recently worked as Director of Infection Control and Prevention at the Hospital of Central Connecticut.

2000s
Kathleen Peirce (’00 M.S. Management, concentration Health Care) has been appointed Vice President of Clinical Operations and Chief Operating Officer of VNA HealthCare. She will be responsible for the overall management and direction (strategically and operationally) of VNA HealthCare’s clinical operations, performance, and clinical outcomes.

Mary P. Kachinsky (’08 M.S. Management – EMP Class XXVIII), C.P.M., became the 44th recipient of the Harry J. Graham Award by the Purchasing Management Association of Boston (PMAB). The award is the highest honor the Association can bestow upon a purchasing professional. Kachinsky is Senior Director for Worldwide Procurement at Pfizer, Inc. The Graham Award is presented to an individual who has not only exemplified professional accomplishments but who is modest, unselfish, sincere, and persistent.

Lally School Hosts Breakfast Lecture Series

A new breakfast lecture series hosted by the Lally School of Management and Technology has been drawing appreciative audiences to the Hartford campus on a monthly basis. Guest speakers and topics have included Lally School professors Robert R. Albright II, Ph.D., on “Leading in Crisis: Motivating in Turbulent Times;” and Randall G. Peters, J.D., on “Financial Crisis Investing in Perspective: Probabilities and Human Behavior Improve Investment Outcomes.”

The $15 admission fee includes a continental breakfast during the networking session from 7:30 to 8 a.m., followed by the presentation from 8 to 9 a.m. There will be a break in the lecture series during the summer months of July and August, and will resume in the fall. Upcoming lectures with dates to be announced: James P. Stodder, Ph.D., on “The State of the Economy: When Life Gives You Lemons...” and David L. Rainey, Ph.D., on “Sustainable Enterprises: the Pursuit of Success in an Ever Changing Environment.” Reserve your seat for the series online at: www.ewp.rpi.edu.

New EWP Web Site

Rensselaer has launched a new Education for Working Professionals (EWP) Web site: www.ewp.rpi.edu. Students are encouraged to bookmark the new Student Homepage for quick access to the most commonly needed pages and resources at: www.ewp.rpi.edu/student_services. Many of the most frequently referenced pages are now conveniently located in the “Quick Links” menu in the upper-right hand corner of every page. Nick Saretzky (’09 M.S. Information Technology), a member of the first Rensselaer International Scholars Program (ISP), built the redesigned site with enhanced navigation features and served as the lead on the project.

In Memoriam

Alumni
Robert E. Furst (’77 M.S. Materials Engineering, ’82 M.B.A.) of Griswold, died on June 8. He was employed by CDI Corporation as their Windsor Locks site manager.

Professor Albright spoke about “Leading in Crisis: Motivating in Turbulent Times” at the May 29 Breakfast Lecture.
who earned an M.S. in Management. He is a technical specialist with Hamilton Sundstrand, a division of United Technologies Corporation, integrating his Rensselaer experiences into various aspects of his career and personal life. These included the successful turn-around of a project in California where he was instrumental in integrating supplier and facility capabilities to put this major project on track. Kellich completed his studies with a 4.0 GPA, and was nominated for the award by Randall G. Peters, J.D., Clinical Associate Professor.

The second Outstanding Student Award winner was Angelica Sharma, who earned an M.B.A. through the accelerated Weekend M.B.A. cohort. She is a project manager of automation projects with the Hartford Financial Services Group. She brings honesty and sincerity to her efforts as evidenced by a recent project where her recommendations will allow the customer to meet scheduling constraints and technical requirements, saving the customer time and revenue without instituting a costly upgrade to software systems. Sharma finished her studies with a 3.9 GPA, and was nominated by James P. Stodder, Ph.D., Clinical Associate Professor.

Rensselaer was honored to have Congressman John B. Larson as the Commencement speaker. He addressed the graduates saying, “Most of you are employed already and yet you see the stresses in this global economy. You understand the importance for government to make investments in science and technology and to ensure that we bring together the great platforms of economic growth, our academic institutions and our great industry in this country….It is not a question of concentrating on one issue at a time. Because the growth of the nation, the environment and its preservation and the health and well being of its people are intricably linked and tied to our future.” For the full text of Congressman Larson’s address, please visit: www.ewp.rpi.edu/news_and_events/events/commencement09/larson_remarks609.html.

Among the members of the graduating class were 13 students receiving a second advanced degree from Rensselaer, six students from the first International Scholars Program, and four members of the Rensselaer Hartford Campus staff. A reception followed the conferral of degrees, with lots of smiles, laughter, handshakes and hugs, and plenty of pictures. These most recent Rensselaer alumni join a global network of 90,000 strong. To view photos from the event, please see the Commencement Scrapbook at: www.ewp.rpi.edu/news_and_events/events/commencement09/index.html.

Adjunct Professor Publishes Book about People With A Clue (PWAC)

Gregory M. Sparzo (’93 M.S. Management), Senior Program Manager, Marketing and Business Development, and Adjunct Professor, Lally School of Management and Technology, authored the book, The PWAC Manifesto: Understanding the Skills Gap and Creating a Culture of Competence. The book is a compelling analysis of how the ongoing shortage of skilled, high achieving “People With A Clue (PWAC)” will impact companies and the economy at large.

“I wrote the PWAC Manifesto when I realized that we were in a profound period of change in the quality of our public education system and in the quantity of high-skilled, value-adding people available to American companies,” said Sparzo. “During my research I learned about the macroeconomic ‘big picture’ issues as well as the microeconomic issues related to the success of individual firms. The next 20 years will be a challenging time for companies who must figure out a way to make their companies a ‘magnet for smart people,’ to retain them and attract new ones. Those that are successful will be able to change the balance of power in their industry,” according to Sparzo.

The book was recently published by PWAC Press. Sparzo came up with the idea for the book while teaching the Rensselaer course, Starting Up A New Venture, offered in the Weekend M.B.A. Class 16. It took him about one year to complete the publication. Sparzo was a guest on “The Brad Davis Program” on WDRC-AM 1360 The Talk of Connecticut on June 25. To learn more about the book and read the PWAC Manifesto Blog, please see: http://pwcmanifesto.wordpress.com.

President Jackson Appointed to PCAST

President Barack Obama appointed Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute President Shirley Ann Jackson as a member of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). Noting the need to engage the scientific community in the work of public policy, President Obama said: “This council represents leaders from many scientific disciplines who will bring a diversity of experiences and views. I will charge PCAST with advising me about national strategies to nurture and sustain a culture of scientific innovation.”

PCAST is a 20-member, private sector advisory group, drawn from industry, education, research institutions, and other nongovernmental organizations, and chaired by the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Dr. John Holdren. “This PCAST is a group of exceptional caliber as well as diversity, covering a wide range of expertise and backgrounds across the relevant science, engineering and innovation fields and sectors,” Dr. John Holdren said. “The President and I expect to make major use of this extraordinary group as we work to strengthen our country’s capabilities in science and technology and bring them more effectively to bear on the national challenges we face.”

“The agenda President Obama outlined...demonstrates, in a profound way, his commitment to and enthusiasm for the power of science and technology to transform our society,” Dr. Jackson said. “Across a broad front—from reinvigorating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, to support for the propagation of the results of scientific research into the public policy arena and into commerce—he is renewing our national commitment to scientific discovery and technological innovation. I am honored to join this effort.”

EWP@Rensselaer is published by the Office of Communications at Rensselaer’s Hartford Campus. Send comments to: EWP@Rensselaer, 275 Windsor Street, Hartford, CT 06120, or e-mail: offcomm@ewp.rpi.edu.
Faculty and Staff News

S. Ratnajeevan H. Hoole, Ph.D., Clinical Professor, Department of Engineering and Science, had his Op-Ed piece entitled, “Between the Devil and the Deep Sea” published in the New Indian Express on April 15. Dr. Hoole was previously Vice Chancellor and University Grants Commission member in Sri Lanka. He fled Sri Lanka after receiving death threats from the Tamil Tigers for his stand on human rights.

Christa A. Sterling (’95 M.B.A.), Senior Program Manager, Enrollment Management, has joined Connecticut For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) as a volunteer mentor for the Girls of Innovation Program. The group, working with the Connecticut Technology Council’s Women of Innovation and the Connecticut Science Center, will lead an all-girls FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team for the 2009-2010 season. CT FIRST seeks to instill a love of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in students.

James P. Stodder, Ph.D., Clinical Associate Professor, Lally School of Management and Technology, was quoted in an article at: www.oregonbusiness.com/articles/62-july-2009/1883-barons-of-barter.

Cole Library
Offers
Euromonitor International’s Passport and a Virtual Executive Reading Room

Passport: Gateway to Global Strategic Intelligence
Passport is Euromonitor International’s premium global information solution. It offers a complete picture of the commercial environment with a single gateway to intelligence on industries, countries, and consumers. Receive integrated access to internationally comparable statistics, market analysis, and insightful comments on emerging trends from expert analysis at: www.ewp.rpi.edu/hartford/library/euromonitor.html.

Virtual Executive Reading Room
Keep up with management white papers, blogs, news, and more! The Virtual Executive Reading Room at http://colereadingroom.pbworks.com/ is a collection of some of the best online management resources around. The wiki format allows you to share your thoughts and ideas on what you’ve been reading. We hope your visits to the Reading Room become habit forming. Note: If you don’t have a pbwiki account and want to comment on our pages, click “request access” at the top of the right hand column.

CCL Ranked in Top 10 for Five Years-in-a-Row

Rensselaer at Hartford is the only certified network associate of the internationally renowned Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)® in the northeastern United States. CCL ranked 6th overall in the 2009 Financial Times worldwide survey of executive education released in May. CCL has ranked in the survey’s overall Top 10 for five straight years, placing it in the company of many of the world’s elite business schools. It is the only institution in the survey focused exclusively on leadership education and research. The survey ranked 45 institutions globally.

Rensselaer offers two CCL programs: Foundations of Leadership (FOL) and Leadership Development Program (LDP)®. These programs teach developing managers as well as seasoned executives how to improve their leadership styles and to be better leaders and team builders.

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.

Public offerings of both the FOL and LDP are scheduled three times per calendar year through Rensselaer Executive and Professional Development. The next LDP will run October 6-8, while the FOL will be offered October 26-30, both at the Hartford campus. For more information and to register, please visit: www.ewp.rpi.edu/hartford/rcpd/ccl/index.html.
Alumni Career Networking Event

Mike Scricca (back to camera), Membership Director, Connecticut Technology Council (CTC), draws a crowd in the Seminar Hall breakout room during the 8th Annual Alumni Career Networking Evening held on May 28. The event was hosted by the Rensselaer Alumni Association (RAA) Hartford Chapter. For the latest Chapter news and upcoming alumni events, check out the Web site at: www.alumni.rpi.edu/involved/chapters/hartford.html.

Rensselaer at Hartford Forms Team for World Affairs Council Challenge

The World Affairs Council of Connecticut sponsored a “quiz challenge” on May 20 that focused on current events, geography, world leaders, and flags from around the world. It was designed for young professionals in the Greater Hartford area, with 27 teams competing from law firms, insurance companies, and private groups. Team RPI finished a respectable score in the middle of the pack. The event was hosted by John Dankosky of the National Public Radio show, “Where We Live.” Pictured here, Christa Sterling (’95 M.B.A.), Senior Program Manager, Enrollment Management, checks in with Team RPI members (seated, left to right): Stephen Bergeron (’09 M.S. Management), Business Analyst, Office of the Vice President and Dean; Jonathan Judd, Program Manager, Enrollment Management; Brendan Wilson, Business Analyst, Academic Departments and Programs; and Mark Crosskey (’08 B.S. Materials Science and Engineering), Business Analyst, Office of the Vice President and Dean.

RAA Hartford Chapter Sponsors New Alumni Wall

The Hartford Chapter of the Rensselaer Alumni Association (RAA) provided funds for a “Chapter Alumni Wall,” which includes signage, a new Outstanding Student Awards plaque, chapter awards, a banner, and an alumni resources brochure. Please visit the new display at the beginning of the Alumni Hall of Fame hallway located on Level 3 at the Hartford campus.