

Department of Fire Protection Engineering 2003 Newsletter

This is the first issue of the Fire Protection Engineering Department newsletter in the new format. We plan to issue the newsletter once a year in the spring to complement the annual report that is issued in the fall. The annual report focuses on the activities and accomplishments of the faculty, staff and students while the newsletter is devoted to the alumni and friends of the Department.

As you may know by now we open this year with the resignation of Cindy Gilbert. Cindy has been the soul of the Department for the past twelve years and we would have loved to have her with us for a long time more. The State of Maryland financial shortfall has hit the University hard. For us it meant reducing the staff position to part time. I explained our predicament to Cindy and when a full-time position materialized in another program of the School of Engineering we decided together that, in Cindy's best interest, it was time for her to move on.

The faculty bid farewell to Cindy during a dinner in her honor at the Inn and Conference Center on Thursday, February 20 and, the following day, students and alumni threw a huge party for her at the University Golf Course Club House where fire trucks from Berwyn Heights station 14 and College Park Station 12 raised their ladders to salute her. A tremendous number of testimonials were presented to her dedication to students and alumni. She really has made a difference for most of the people that came through the program over these years and she will be missed greatly by all of us.

The theme of this newsletter is the recruitment of students both in the undergraduate and graduate program in the Department. This is our top priority and it is also one of the key aspects where alumni and friends have contributed generously in the past and continue to strongly support us by establishing undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships.

We have talked about the FIRE Center and its mission of providing support for our students. It is indeed through this effort that we will be able to grow our programs and offer learning opportunities for the new generations of fire protection engineers. In the following we will individually recognize the contributors to the Center. We are proud of their commitment and dedication to the Fire Protection Engineering Department.

In terms of the opportunity for our students we are offering a broad range of programs. I thought that this is an excellent opportunity to summarize them hereafter:

- BS in Fire Protection Engineering
 - Four-year ABET accredited program
 - Transfer program leading to the full ABET accredited degree
- BS-MS in Fire Protection Engineering
 - Five-year dual degree program with MS Thesis
- Professional Master in Fire Protection Engineering
 - 30 credit-hours professional Master
- Distance program in Fire Protection Engineering
 - 30 credit-hours web-based courses starting fall 2003
- MS in Fire Protection Engineering
 - 24 credit-hours with research thesis
 - 30 credit-hours with scholarly paper (non-thesis option)
- PhD with emphasis in Fire Protection Engineering (administered through a variety of programs in the A. James Clark School of Engineering)

This array of possibilities is the result of the dedication and commitment of the faculty in the Department in cooperation with faculty and staff of the A. James Clark School of Engineering.

We are continuously improving and revising the various aspects of the program with the assistance and guidance of the graduate and Undergraduate Curriculum Advisory Committees under the outstanding leadership of Dave Ilove. I greatly appreciate your input and comments on any aspect of the life of the Department. In particular, I am most grateful for the cooperation of Kathleen Almand (SFPE) and for the guidance of John Bryan over the past several months.