Limitless possibilities

Welcome back events scheduled
The start of another academic year is just around the corner. Below is a list of key events that will kick off the year:

- First-year Student Resource Fair, 9 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Aug. 26, Gordon Field House and Activities Center. An opportunity to help first-year students and their families learn about various RIT services.
- Convocation for New Students, 9:11 a.m., Aug. 27, Field House. A welcome event for all first-year students and their families that is preceded by the Tiger Walk, an RIT tradition of providing a rowdy welcome to incoming students as they process into the commons.
- President’s Address to the Community, 9:10-10 a.m., Aug. 30, Field House. Bill Destler, RIT’s ninth president, makes his first formal address to the RIT community. This event also features remarks by the president of Academic Senate, chair of Staff Council, president of Student Government and the interim chief diversity officer.
- Lighting the Way Ceremony, 8:30-9:30 p.m., Aug. 31. This ceremony, in its second year, is designed to welcome RIT women to the campus community. The ceremony begins in the Field House with several speeches before a candlelight procession to Grace Watson Hall for a reception.

RIT scores high in U.S. News annual college rankings
RIT is again recognized for educational quality and value in the annual U.S. News & World Report America’s Best Colleges. Since the magazine began ranking colleges in 1983, the university has consistently been listed among the top regional universities.

RIT ranked eighth overall in the “Best Universities—Master’s (North region)” category and scored second in peer assessment, which is a survey of presidents, provosts and deans from other universities judging a school’s academic excellence.

In the “Great Schools, Great Prices” category, RIT ranked sixth among master’s universities in the North. The formula used to determine which schools offer the best value relates a school’s academic quality to the net cost of attendance for a student who receives the average level of financial aid. The higher the quality of program and the lower the cost, the better the deal, according to U.S. News.

In the “Programs to Look For” category, RIT was listed as one of only 14 colleges nationally.

$1 million in federal funds slated for RIT microsystems research
RIT’s NanoPower Research Laboratories are slated to receive $1 million in federal support for the university’s Integrated Power for Microsystems initiative thanks to legislation authored by U.S. Reps. John “Randy” Kuhl Jr. and James Walsh.

The congressmen secured the funding—equal to the funding for an earmark in the House Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which passed the House in July—on the Research on nanopower is groundbreaking,” says Kuhl, whose district includes the RIT campus.

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Ziyian Zhou was among a pool of more than 100,000 students to advance to the Microsoft Imagine Cup World Finals, a competition for technology students. The second-year RIT computer science student participated in the software design category representing Team North America. Ziyian’s team members were from Western Washington University, Texas A&M University and McGill University in Montreal.

“It was like participating in the Olympic Games,” says Zhou. “I met the brightest 300 youths in the world from 56 different countries. It was a lot of time and work, but it was totally worth it.”

Preceding the World Finals Competition in Seoul, Korea, Zhou’s team was one of 10 to visit Microsoft headquarters in Redmond, Wash., to share their software application with Microsoft chairman Bill Gates. Zhou and his team created a language-learning network called Project Tzu.

“There were two key factors that led us to our idea,” says Zhou. “The first is how popular social networking sites are with millions of students, including our friends using them every day. We wanted to find a way to take the excitement surrounding these massive student apps and apply it to educational technology. The second key factor is the struggles students face when learning foreign languages. Meeting people and helping them with language is one of the most effective ways to learn a new language. Our team sees social networks as a natural solution for helping students learn and communicate.”

Zhou advanced to the World Finals after successfully competing at the regional and national levels following an online qualifying round. He is the first student from RIT’s B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences to attend the Imagine Cup competition in 2003.

“The kaleidoscope project wrapped up a successful year for the 15-member student team, which last spring captured first place in a Project Management Institute competition and second place in a contest sponsored by APICS—the Association for Operations Management. This October, chapter members will compete in the APICS International Conference and Expo national competition in Denver.

In addition, the Xenon Foundation awarded scholarships to chapter members, funded the development of projects such as the kaleidoscope motorized display board, and supported student travel to the National Technical & Career Conference 2007, sponsored by the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, in Denver.

Poe earns inaugural scholarship
In recognition of former RIT first lady Carole Simon’s dedication to and involvement with NTID and Keynotes School for the Deaf, the two institutions have established The Carole R. Simone Endowed Scholarship at NTID. Throughout her 15 years at RIT, Ms. Simone worked towards increasing access and enhancing educational opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Matthew Poe of Henrietta has been named the first recipient of the scholarship. He is the son of alum Vincent and Susan Poe, and will be joining his two brothers Jonathan and Nathaniel when he begins classes in the Kate Gleason College of Engineering this fall. Poe is a junior at Keynotes School and will attend RIT this fall, majoring in mechanical engineering.

Library open house to offer food, fun and musical entertainment
The campus community is invited to attend RIT Libraries’ annual Fall Open House from noon-4 p.m. Aug. 31. Guests are encouraged to stop by and “Get Connected” with RIT Libraries’ staff who provide various activities, live entertainment and networking opportunities. Other activities include a guest DJ booth in the Idea Factory, showcasing custom playlists created by RIT Libraries staff members, and the creation of the RIT Community

“A device with a sturdy base, an arm and a plate with Velcro to hold the painting in place, a motor powered by a 12-volt battery, and a potentiometer to regulate speed. One of the first project challenges, says chapter president Ramon Campmus, a second-year computer engineering major, was securing the painting to the metal plate without using a screw. “Don’t touch the front,” he says about the design consideration that leaves the painting untouched.

The device, demonstrated in Bevier Gallery last spring, is a prototype. But for Coke, for who has showcased her students’ immovning artwork and glass, the invention has given her colorful visions of grandeur.

“This is just a starting point,” she says. “I have this vision of well over 20—all spining at the same time. This project has been very significant because of its interdisciplinary focus of art and technology.” said Bob Chandler, rrcwml@rit.edu or contact Bryan Hensel, NTID development, 475-6222.

RIT student competes in Microsoft Imagine Cup finals
RIT computer science major Ziyan Zhou, left, and second-year RIT computer science student, along with three other college students from the United States and Canada, comprised the North American team in the World Finals of the Imagine Cup in 2007.

This year, the Imagine Cup competition and the SPACE (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) competition will be held simultaneously. The Imagine Cup, which is a Windows software development competition, is open to students at all levels of education. Student teams are given a software application problem to solve and must submit a software program, along with a written description of their solution and a video presentation. The judges are looking for originality, creativity, technical skill, and team collaboration.

More than 150,000 students from 100 countries and 300 U.S. colleges and universities have submitted Imagine Cup projects in the last four years, and more than 10,000 students attended the Imagine Cup finals last year in Beijing.

For more information on RIT’s participation in the Imagine Cup, contact Michael Saffran | mjsuns@rit.edu or contact Bryan Hensel, NTID development, 475-6222.
A third-year student at CIS, Callyns was chosen to be a star in a July 22-26 science symposium hosted by the Research and Education Center. Her presentation was titled "Living Materials: Fabrication and Imaging of Polymeric and Mesoporous Materials." Callyns' research is jointed with and catalyzed by the RIT’s Self-Assembling Materials Laboratory, headed by professor Joseph Hornak.

Callyns is the only student in the program to have worked with Hornak, a member of the PRISM team. He attributes the team's success to Hornak's leadership and to his own drive and creativity.

"The goal is to produce materials with the ability to self-assemble on their own through the formation of building blocks that spontaneously form a larger structure," Hornak said. "This approach to materials discovery does not rely on traditional chemical synthesis, but rather involves the use of self-assembling building blocks that can be used to create materials with unique properties."
Members of the New York state Assembly delegation, including Assemblymen Joseph Morelle and David Koons, along with RIT President Bill Destler and Nabil Nasr, assistant professor and director of RIT’s Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies, recently announced $100,000 in new funding, which is included in the 2007-2008 state budget, to support a pair of programs—the Innovation Testbed and the Knowledge Clearinghouse. Assemblymember Susan Johnson and David Gantt also requested the funding on behalf of RIT. These two initiatives were among the recommendations of CIMS’ Roadmap for the Revitalization of Upstate New York Manufacturing, a two-year, bottom-up analysis of upstate manufacturers that was funded with a grant from New York state Assembly delegation and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Both efforts will assist companies in implementing new technologies into their production processes, enhance technical knowledge and improve overall competitiveness.

“The key to future economic development will be innovation and partnerships between the private and academic sectors,” Morelle says. “The CIMS testbed and CLEARhouse are precisely the sort of campus-based resources needed to support entrepreneurship and job creation in upstate, and indeed across New York. It is an honor to be a part of this ground-breaking effort and to work with an institution of such reputation in international higher education.”

The “Roadmap report and these two very significant initiatives are demonstrative of the kind of university-industry collaboration that is made possible by unique resources such as CIMS,” notes Destler. “The outstanding members of our Assembly delegation who secured this funding have been strong and uniting proponents of CIMS since its very inception, and we are most appreciative of their continued investment and confidence in CIMS and RIT.”

“RIT has long been among the foremost leaders in addressing the challenges in region facing in turning around our economic fortunes, as demonstrated through the work of CIMS and its Roadmap report,” says Koons. “I am proud to partner with my Assembly delegation colleagues to invest in the initiatives recommen- ded in this report. I believe that the continuing work we are funding will have a dramatic impact on the manufacturing sector in upstate New York and will be a critical component in our economic turnaround.”

CIMS’ Roadmap study sought to analyze the upstate manufacturing environment by surveying individual companies and cluster organizations, making on-site visits to dozens of manufacturing facilities, and engaging government, business and community leaders in an open dialogue regarding current assistance efforts and challenges facing businesses. The implementation of new technological innovations and access to technical knowledge about new market opportunities and industry trends are two areas the study highlights as requiring improved focus.

In response, the Innovation Testbed and the Knowledge Clearinghouse will work with individual companies and cluster organizations to test, validate and implement new innovations and study and disseminate information on new market and product development opportunities. CIMS will also work closely with the state’s Manufacturing Extension Partnerships and Industrial Development Agencies to identify companies who need assistance as well as additional areas of focus.

“This funding will enable CIMS to go full speed ahead in working with manufacturing firms and other partners to help the target industries deal with the competitive challenges they are facing, create new business opportunities using new technologies and identify potential inter-industry collaborations that will further strengthen economic growth throughout upstate New York,” says Nasr. “We look forward to a strong return on this investment for New York state.”

U.S. News rankings

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Steve Diehl, associate professor of imaging and photographic technology, reviewed two articles in World Book Encyclopedia on cameras and microfiche. The issue of storing digital images was the topic of a presentation Diehl gave at the Photo Marketing Association International Convention in Las Vegas.

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Varda Main, director of the Technology Licensing Office, presented on emerging technologies at RIT during the seventh annual SmartStart Venture Forum Featuring UNYTechin.  

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Darcy O’Neill, associate professor of political science, organized the book, Women in My Hands, in the winter issue of the Journal of Dell Studies and Dell Education.

Michael Perea, chair of biomedical photographic communications in the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences, recently received the 2007 Louise Ichimich Award, given by the BioCommunications Association. The award recognizes Perea’s outstanding contributions to the progress of biomedical communications.

Imaging detectors

to develop detector technologies for next generation ground-based and space telescopes.

The new imaging detector under development would boast a dynamic range and greater short wavelength sensitivity. Figer believes the detector could become a key technology for future planetary missions in the most severe radiation environments. The detector technology could figure heavily in missions under consideration for NASA’s Discovery, Mars Exploration and New Frontiers programs.

The detector might someday be used to capture hyperspectral imaging from a platform orbiting the outer planets or their satellites. Cameras looking down on Europa could take a picture of every wavelength at every pixel.

“We could use that information to figure out if there are lakes of water on Europa or hydrocarbons on Titan,” Figer says. “We can figure out the composition of a surface without having to land on it, which is what we might want to do 10 years later. Then we would know where to land!”

Figer was recruited by RIT through a faculty development program grant awarded by the New York State Foundation for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Obituaries

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Robert Wabnitz, RIT alumna and founder and former director of RIT’s medical illustration program, July 28.

State funds boost manufacturing initiatives

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