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Jerrie Fiala, Editor: jerrie.fiala@wmich.edu

Saturday Preview Day showcases CEAS programs, people, facilities

The CEAS opened its doors on the first Saturday in October to prospective students and their families and to anyone else interested in checking out CEAS engineering and technology programs, student organizations, Parkview Campus facilities, and life as an engineering student.

Administrators, faculty, and students offered information about CEAS programs in 13 quizless classrooms and demonstrations and hands-on activities in 27 open labs. Visitors could tour the Paper Coating Plant and examine numerous table-top displays prepared by student organizations to highlight their activities. Three outdoor presentations – on the wind generator, the concrete canoe, and the Sunseeker solar car – were available throughout the day.



Concrete floats! On the Parkview Campus pond, civil engineering students (from left) **Nick Francis, Joe Barbera, Matt Czachowski, and Mike Romkema** enjoy the concrete canoe built for last year's ASCE competition.

Preview Day Coordinator **Larry Ahleman**, a master faculty specialist in the Department of Paper Engineering, Chemical Engineering, and Imaging (PCI), said the purpose of the event was “to recruit future students, to help current students find majors, and to provide parents of future and current engineering students the opportunity to check out our programs.”

In the Parkview Campus Plastics Lab, **Courtney Rawlings**, a senior in engineering and graphics technology program, shows **Manny Tsang**, 7, how to use an extrusion machine that makes thermoform license plates from recycled plastic sheeting. The lab's closed loop recycling allows parts to be ground up and reused in new parts. Manny's dad is **Dr. Edmund Tsang**, associate CEAS dean.



According to Ahleman, WMU has about 1,500 students who have not declared a major or who have not yet been accepted into a program that requires a pre-program. “Preview Day allows them to check out what we have in engineering,” he said.

In the Parkview Computer Controlled Manufacturing lab, **Dr. Tarun Gupta** (left) demonstrates a robot to Preview Day visitors. The robot, which served as the FIRST Robotics competition entry last year for a local high school group, manipulates the large red tube visible in the background. WMU has been helping FIRST teams build robots for the last three years.



Thanks go to those who helped organize the event. They include STEP Program Director **Kathleen Kallen**, industrial engineering senior **Ashley Bazzana**, and the members of Alpha Pi Mu (industrial engineering honors fraternity), Tau Beta Phi (engineering honors society), and the Institute of Industrial Engineers.



Resident Assistant **Mark Greene** (left) and **Mario Bateast** showcase Bigelow Hall in a display. Three floors of Bigelow are reserved for engineering students, and plans call for a floor devoted to women engineering students. The hall offers computers and mentoring services.

The day's attractions included information on the STEP first-year experience by CEAS associate dean **Dr. Edmund Tsang**, a review of student-centered engineering education and research by **Dr. Parviz Merati**, and internship and co-op information by **Fred Sitkins**. **Dr. John Patten** showcased the new wind turbine dedicated this semester.

Information about specific engineering research, programs, and careers was provided by **Dr. Upul Attanayake** (civil), **Dr. Don Nelson** (computer), **Dr. Frank Severance** (electrical), **Lois Lemon** (imaging), **Dr. Steve Butt** and **Dr. Tycho Fredericks** (ergonomics / industrial), and **Dr. Raja Aravamuthan** and **Nichole Perk** (paper).

CEAS presently offers 17 undergraduate programs, nine master's programs, and five Ph.D. programs; more information is available at www.wmich.edu/engineer

Opinions and ideas, please! Send your thoughts on this article or suggestions for future articles to the editor at jerrie.fiala@wmich.edu. Thank you.