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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.

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.

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

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.

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.