



# Black Diamonds

From the  
**WVU**  
Department of Mining Engineering

Inaugural  
edition

For the latest visit our web site at <http://www.mine.cemr.wvu.edu/>

Vol 1  
No 1

## A Message from the Chair

Dear Alumni and Friends:

This is the inaugural issue of the Mining Engineering Department Newsletter, which is designed to inform our alumni and friends of the major events that have occurred in the Department and provide a forum for alumni and friends for topics of common interest. We are planning to publish twice a year: one each in the Fall and Spring Semesters. We welcome your input especially brief notes about your self and your fellow alumni.

The Department has currently 60 students: 37 undergraduate and 23 graduate students. For the 2000-2001 academic year, there were a total of 13 graduates including eight BS, four MS and one PhD. The demand for graduate mining engineers is very strong. This is



**Dr. Peng assists graduate student Asmaa Yassien**

especially true for WVU graduates because all of them have had solid practical mining experience through our summer job employment program before their graduation. Among the eight (8) BS graduates, four (4) went to the coal industry, one (1) each to stone quarry and gold mining, and the remaining two (2) stayed and continued on to graduate school for MS degrees in mining engineering.

In order to satisfy industry demand for new engineers, the Department has initiated a freshman recruiting program to increase enrollment. We visit and present seminars to high school students at several major high schools every year. Many of these presentations are arranged by local alumni including Jeremy Abraham, Robert Baldwin, Barry Dangerfield, Bob Ellis, Randy Hansford, Charles Howard, Joe Larry, and Jim Laurita. We appreciate their assistance. Next Fall we are expecting approximately 15 freshman and transfer students.

We are very proud to tell you that the Department was awarded three research projects as a result of highly competitive national solicitation by Federal government in the past year. Among the two funded by US Dept. of Energy, one in cooperation with J.H. Fletcher & Co. of Huntington, (continued, page 3)

## It's Your Newsletter – Give Us Some News!

The graduates of the Department of Mining Engineering are among the most loyal alumni at West Virginia University. For decades they – you – have supported this department in every way possible. And what is one thing they are frequently interested in? What's happening!! The department has decided to initiate a newsletter to keep alumni informed, and this is the inaugural issue. This will be a semi-annual issue, coming out once a term. Let us know how we're doing. Also, submit news, information, or requests that you or you colleagues would enjoy knowing about. Our addresses, both postal and e-mail, are on the back. We would love to hear from you.

## Distinguished Engineer of Mines Program initiated



**Douglas Blackburn, Jr.**

Alumni from West Virginia University's Department of Mining Engineering has provided much of the leadership that the United States coal mining industry has depended upon. They have formed and run major corporations. They have

been inducted into the Engineering Academy. They have even changed the manner in which the industry operates.

Our visiting committee recommended that we (continued, page 2).



**Syd Peng, James Boyd, Bob Quenon, and Gen Cilento**

## Distinguished Engineers (cont'd)

start recognizing those alumni of ours who have made major contributions to the profession, provided exemplary leadership, and formed the industry as the United States and the world sees it now. We wholeheartedly agreed, and starting in the 2000-2001 academic year, initiated these awards. The recipients come to our college and



**Doug Blackburn shares his experiences with the students**

share the benefit of their experience and insight with us. And so far, it has been a substantial success. The only trouble is, with so many deserving candidates, where do we start? In this case we started with Doug Blackburn was honored on November 2, 2000, as the Fall recipient of this award. He is a 1972 alumnus, and has received an MBA from the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies (1978) and a J. D. from Harvard (1989). Mr. Blackburn has held numerous responsible positions in the coal industry, including Sr. Vice President of Operations for Zeigler Holding Company. Currently he is the President of Asian American Coal, Inc., and this was the focus of his talk. It was a real education to hear firsthand what it is like doing business in another country. It is also a real eye-opener to learn how the rules differ and the risks. Imagine making a mistake and then being arrested by the People's Army for wasting the people's resources!

Bob Quenon is a 1951 alumnus, and was the recipient of the Spring Distinguished Engineer of Mines Award on April 19, 2001. In addition to his BSEM from WVU, Mr. Quenon received a law degree from George Washington University in 1964.

His work experiences, in chronological order, include Berwind Coal, CONSOL, Pittston Coal, Riverton Coal, Exxon (where he established the Monterey Coal Company), and then joined Peabody as Executive Vice President. In 1978 he



**Bob Quenon receives his Distinguished Engineer of Mines Plaque from Syd Peng**

became President and CEO. Peabody holding – Peabody's parent company – appointed him President and CEO in 1983, and he became chairman in 1990. Since his retirement from Peabody, he has been a consultant with PIER. Mr. Quenon's lecture focused on professional development and on what the requirements of good leadership are. Especially interesting was his comparison of an engineering approach, where one approaches a problem head-on and linearly, and a legal approach, where one examines a problem from all sides.

He credited a measure of his success to being able to blend these skills and bring them to his operations.

We are fortunate to have alumni such as these represent the Department of Mining Engineering in industry. We are also fortunate that these busy individuals can take the time and the resources to return to their Alma Mater and share the benefits of their experiences with our academic community.

Copies of the presentations made by these Distinguished Engineers of Mines may be found on our web page. We would welcome your nominations for this award. If you know of an alumnus who has made a substantial contribution to the mining industry, send us a nomination with a brief description of his or her accomplishments, and we will give it to the awards committee.

## CEMR Has New Dean

Dr. Eugene V. Cilento has been appointed Dean for the College of Engineering and Mineral Resources. He was appointed interim dean in May, and was a finalist for the permanent position among a group of exceptional candidates. Dr. Cilento has been with WVU since 1979 in the Department of Chemical Engineering, where he was Chair for 11 years. In addition to being Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering, he is also a Research Professor in the Department of Anatomy. Dr. Cilento received his Bachelor of Engineering from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY in 1973, and went on to obtain his Master's and Doctorate in Chemical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati in 1976 and 1978, respectively. His research interests revolve around microcirculatory transport phenomena, fluid mechanical analysis of blood flow, application of micro-optical techniques to intra-vital microscopy, tissue engineering, and image analysis of biological tissues. One can easily see that Interim Dean Cilento has long been an advocate of, and leader in, interdisciplinary research approaches.



## Capital Campaign

The capital campaign is well under way at WVU. Of course the mining engineering department is looking forward to the benefits that it will bring to it, in particular the much-needed opportunity to increase scholarship and professorship endowments, department operation funds, and to upgrade its laboratories, teaching aids, and technical facilities. There will be an expanded story about the Capital Campaign in the next issue.

## A Message (cont'd)

WV, is to develop technology to utilize the drilling parameters (i.e., torque, thrust, RPM, & penetration rate) of the roof bolter to identify in real time the rock strata being drilled. This information may then be used for improving roof control measures including roof bolting design. The other project in cooperation with Stolar Inc. of Raton NM is to improve the existing RIM (Radio Imaging Method) to identify sandstone channels ahead of mining. The 3<sup>rd</sup> project funded by NIOSH (National Institute of Safety and Health Mining Division, formerly the Bureau of Mines) is to develop better methods for yield pillar design.

In summary, the Mining Engineering Program at West Virginia University is well and alive. We would very much like to hear from you.

## A Rocky 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The 20<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Ground Control in Mining will be held in Morgantown this August 7<sup>th</sup> through the 9<sup>th</sup>.



**Karen Centofanti, Senior Administrative Secretary**

Since Syd Peng formed this conference in 1981, it has become the premier event on ground control in the world, and it attracts attendees from every continent. (Okay, okay – not Antarctica!) This year's conference includes 58 technical papers, a poster session, a golf outing, and a barbeque. A special banquet is scheduled to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this conference. For more details, visit our web page. For those who have wondered who owns that pleasant voice that helps them register, get their paper submissions in order, gives directions, and a myriad of other things, we have included a picture of our department secretary, Karen Centofanti.

## Rodriguez Promises Excitement

"We don't huddle on offense, and we don't huddle on defense. We're going to play like our hair's on fire." Our new football coach means business. He gained national attention with his no-huddle offense at Clemson, and we predict he will receive even more attention at WVU. His approach, one that is designed to keep the opponents off guard, is sure to provide some exciting football this season.



## 2001 Spring Awards Banquet

The mineral resources departments of CEMR held their annual awards banquet on April 22. The banquet was well attended and full of smiling faces as 29 awards to alumni, professors, and students were made. Also, in the program, 62 individual scholarship awards were recognized.

This year the Department of Mining Engineering received a new scholarship from Joy Mining Machinery. The first recipient of this new scholarship was Carrie Daugherty.



**Shelly Shalvis receives her Old-Timers Award from Richard Whiting**

The outstanding Alumni Award this year went to Garold R. Spindler. Mr. Spindler received his BSEM in 1970 and his MSEM in 1976 from the mining department and has held senior positions with a number of mining corporations. He came to the ceremony escorted by his daughter.



**G. Spindler gives his daughter her first experience at a head table (but surely not her last!)**

Dr. Peng was awarded the outstanding faculty member award by the SME Student chapter this year, and accepted it from two-time president Shelly Shalvis. Dr. Peng's enjoyment of the moment was quite obvious. She also presented the Student SME Chapter student award to Ryan Toler.

One popular award among the Alumni is the Old-Timers Award. The recipient this year was Shelly Shalvis, who has contributed greatly to the department and to the student Chapter of SME.

Other awards included the West Virginia Coal Mining Institute award and the Careers in Coal Award, given to E. Austin Scholl and Ryan Toler, respectively. Jason Witt received the MRAC Award for Academic Performance and Dedication.



**Syd receiving an award as outstanding teacher from Shelly Shalvis, SME Student Chapter President (and multiple award recipient)**

Dr. Wahab Khair was given the SME Student Chapter Officer's Award dedication to the profession and his students. (cont'd on next page)

We all need to thank Royce Watts and his administrative assistant, Nancy Ireland, for pulling this event together every year. It takes a lot of work, but the effort is worth it, especially when the students and their parents can be seen enjoying their hard-earned pride of accomplishment. It also is an excellent opportunity for our corporate supporters to meet the students and to see the fruits of their donations and efforts at work.

**Good job to all!**



**Dr. Khair, SME student advisor, and Dr. Peng give Ryan Toler the SME Coal Division Award**

For those of you that haven't had a chance to visit the department in a long time, and haven't met us all yet, here is a current rouge's gallery. We are currently recruiting another professor.

**Dr. Syd S. Peng**



**Dr. A. Wahab Khair**



**Dr. Felicia F. Peng**



**Dr. Lloyd M. English**



**Dr. Yi Luo**



**Could this be you?**



**Alumni and Friends**

**West Virginia University**  
**CEMR**  
**Department of Mining Engineering**  
 P.O. Box 6070  
 Morgantown, WV 26506-6070  
 (304) 293-7680  
 (304) 293-5708 (Fax)

Syd S. Peng, Department Chair	x3301
A. W. Khair, Professor	x3305
Felicia A. Peng, Assoc. Professor	x3308
Lloyd M. English, Asst. Professor	x3309
Yi Luo, Research Associate Professor	x3306

syd.peng@mail.wvu.edu  
 wahab.khair@mail.wvu.edu  
 felicia.peng@mail.wvu.edu  
 lloyd.lenglish@mail.wvu.edu  
 yi.luo@mail.wvu.edu

**If it can not be grown,  
 it must be mined?**