

# Department Newsletter



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Civil, Architectural, and  
Environmental Engineering

College of Engineering

Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering

Spring 2014

## ENHANCE Workshop



In April, [Dr. Aspasia Zerva](#), Professor in the Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering (CAEE) Department, hosted a 3 day workshop for her NSF sponsored project titled "Career Enhancement of Academic Women in Earthquake Engineering Research (ENHANCE)". The ENHANCE visitors were comprised of 17 young female faculty members (fellows) from Universities throughout the United States and 5 mentors, who are successful senior female faculty and have excelled in the field of earthquake engineering. This workshop, held at Drexel, provided the fellows and mentors with an opportunity to meet in a formal setting and discuss the importance of mentoring for young female faculty. The workshop consisted of sessions about the importance of formal mentoring, personal experiences from both mentors and mentees, presentations by professional females in the field, productive brainstorming sessions, as well as a group dinner at Dr. Zerva's home (picture to the left), and some Philadelphia sightseeing.

## Faculty Promotions—James Mitchell and Sabrina Spatari

CAEE Department's [James Mitchell](#) was promoted to Professor and [Sabrina Spatari](#) was promoted to Associate Professor.

Professor Mitchell is the director of Drexel's Architectural Engineering program. He is a registered architect and former principal in the Philadelphia design firm Jordan-Mitchell, Inc. He has shaped the Architectural Engineering program, led it to accreditation and developed [MS and PhD degrees](#). His research has been primarily in the area of engineering education. He has served as associate dean of engineering and as interim department head. He has twice won the College of Engineering Outstanding Teacher Award and has also won a University Teaching Excellence award and a University service award.



Dr. Spatari's research and expertise focuses on the development and application of life cycle assessment (LCA) and other systems analysis methods for guiding engineering decision making and public policy. Her specific interests include industrial ecology, biomass and bioenergy, biofuels, and urban infrastructure. She currently represents Drexel in the [NEWBio Consortium](#) led by Penn State, which focuses on researching and producing the non-food biomass resources in the Northeast region. Her research on biomass and bioenergy extends to multiple U.S. and international projects to understand the sustainability of bioenergy resources. In 2013, she was an invited speaker at the National Academy of Engineering's Frontiers of Engineering meeting to speak on LCA of biomass conversion and she is recently a 2014 recipient of the Drexel University's Louis and Bessie Stein Family Fellowship for Exchanges with Israeli Universities.



## Mira Olson selected as an ELATE Fellow



[Dr. Mira Olson](#), an Associate Professor in the CAEE Department, has been selected to participate in the 2014-2015 [Executive Leadership in Academic Technology and Engineering](#) (ELATE) program at Drexel University. This one year, part time program consisting of 21 female faculty from diverse institutions throughout the country, is focused on increasing personal and professional leadership effectiveness for women in the academic STEM fields.

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## Drexel's Building Science & Engineering Group Hosts CSIRO Researchers

[Dr. Jin Wen](#) and the [Building Science & Engineering Group](#) at Drexel hosted a group of visitors from Australia's [Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization](#) (CSIRO) who were visiting Philadelphia for a collaborative research activity funded by the [Penn State Consortium for Building Efficiency Innovation](#) (CBEI, formerly known as the EEB-HUB). These visitors were here evaluating their Automated Fault Detection and Diagnosis (AFDD) toolkit side-by-side with the Drexel's AFDD toolkit using CBEI demonstration buildings. They also gave a seminar titled "Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) Energy Flagship Division". The seminar was also broadcast as a CBEI webinar and was joined by researchers from United Technology Research Center, Purdue University, and Siemens Corporate Research.

*CSIRO researchers*



## Drexel ASCE Student Chapter and Chester A. Arthur School Lab Activity



The CAEE Department with the [American Society of Civil Engineers \(ASCE\) Drexel student chapter](#) recently hosted the Civil Engineering Club (CivE Club) of the Chester A. Arthur middle school which was formed by recent CAEE department graduate **Jesse Gormley** in conjunction with the [Philadelphia section of ASCE](#). This event involved CAEE faculty and staff as well as members of the current senior class. These visiting middle school students made their own plasterer cylinders and tested them to see the strength of their mix designs. Students also observed compression testing of an actual concrete cylinder, the tensile testing of steel rebar, and the flexural testing of a 2 by 4 piece of wood. CAEE Department faculty in attendance were [Dr. Jonathan Cheng](#), [Dr. Joseph Martin](#), and [Professor Robert Swan, Jr.](#) The College of Engineering lab technician **Greg Hilley** also assisted with the demonstration.

## Concrete Canoe Teams Advances to National Competition

Drexel's Concrete Canoe Team won first place overall at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Competition held at the United States Naval Academy in April. The team will be representing Drexel at the National Competition at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, June 19-21. More information can be found [here](#).

## Graduate Student Awards

There are a number of graduate students in the CAEE Department who have recently received awards and recognition from the College and the University. These students are: **Benjamin Cohen** (Civil) – The Koerner Family Award; **J. Douglas Goetz** (Environmental) – The Koerner Family Award; **Kerry Hamilton** (Environmental) – Fulbright CSIRO Postgraduate Scholarship and the Steven Giegerich Memorial Scholarship; **Fuad Khan** (Civil) - The George Hill, Jr. Endowed Fellowship Award; **Jared Langevin** (Civil) - Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award; **Kimberlee Marcellus** (Civil) – The Steven Giegerich Memorial Scholarship; **Suk Joon Na** (Civil) - The Leroy Resser Endowed Fellowship Award; **Hossein Nourzad** (Civil) - Continuing TA Excellence Award; **Ge (Jeff) Pu** (Environmental) - The Weggel Family Fellowship Award; **Adams Rackes** (Civil) - Fulbright Scholarship, NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, The Steven Giegerich Memorial Scholarship; **Kaitie Sniffen** (Environmental) - Professor Wesley O. Pipes Environmental Engineering Student Award; **Walter Yerik** (Environmental) - The Joseph and Shirley Carleone Endowed Fellowship Award.

## Richard Weggel wins Golden Dragon Society Award

CAEE Department Professor Emeritus **J. Richard Weggel** and friends from the Drexel Civil Engineering Class of '64 celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation from Drexel at the recent Alumni Weekend. Dr. Weggel was this year's recipient of the Alumni Association's Golden Dragon Society award for his service to the University.

## A.J. Drexel Institute for Energy and the Environment (IExE) Seed Funding

CAEE Department Faculty members were awarded seed funding from the A.J. Drexel [Institute for Energy and the Environment](#) (IExE) on collaborative research projects with faculty members from other Colleges. These CAEE faculty are: Drs. [A. Emin Aktan](#), [Peter DeCarlo](#), [Eugenia Victoria Ellis](#), [Patrick Gurian](#), [Charles N. Haas](#), [Franco Montalto](#), [Mira Olson](#), [Christopher Sales](#), [Sabrina Spatari](#), and [Jin Wen](#). More information about these awards can be found [here](#).