Welcome! A special welcome to all our new students and faculty to the School of Engineering and to all our returning students and faculty. I hope you all had a good summer—getting in a little R&R but also hope y’all did something useful/special. I’m looking forward to a very productive and exciting year for the GRB SoE and hope you are too! If anyone wants to compare fishing stories, let me know. I caught stripers, cod, haddock, wolf fish, cusk, sea robins, dog fish, almost a tuna...

There are some great events coming up that I want to highlight. On Saturday, the Rice Center for Engineering Leadership (RCEL) is hosting a special event just for freshmen engineers. The Engineering Liftoff is a great way for freshmen to join our community of engineers—Outward Bound will be facilitating a team-building activity and there will be great door prizes and dinner will be served. Sign up at http://rcel.rice.edu/liftoff-registration.

I want to see a lot of new and familiar faces at the School of Engineering/RCEL ice cream social next Monday. Put it on your calendars—Monday August 27th, 3:30-5pm in front of Ryon Lab. Student clubs will be there recruiting new members, we’ll have some guest scoopers and a bus will be running from the BRC so the Bioengineers can join us!

Faculty! Some words of encouragement needed!
On Thursday, October 4, RCEL is sponsoring a Research Screech for grad students. This is like an elevator pitch competition but it’s all about research. The object is to let people within other departments—maybe even in your department—know what kind of research is going on in your labs. It could kick-start some new collaborations or at the very least, it will let others know what our grad students spend their time doing and how passionate they are about their work. The students with the best 90-second “screech” will get cash prizes. Please encourage your students to enter. More information can be found at http://rcel.rice.edu/screech.

While you were out fishing...
Just because it was summer didn’t mean that things slowed down. Several faculty win honors over the past few months—and some students, too! Read on:

Vivek Sarkar, professor of computer science, has received the 2012 ACM SIGPLAN Programming Languages Software Award for his contributions to the Jikes Research Virtual Machine. This award...
recognizes the development of a software system that has had a significant impact on programming language research, implementations, and tools. Congratulations, Vivek!

The Governing Board of the Tissue Engineering and Regenerative International Society has named Tony Mikos, professor of bioengineering, a Founding Fellow for his formative role in shaping the field of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. Congratulations, Tony, on your latest honor!

Yildiz Bayazitoglu, professor of mechanical engineering, has been recognized by two national organizations, the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). The ASME bestowed its highest honor on Yildiz, honorary membership, and SWE will present her with its 2012 Achievement Award, also its highest honor. You can read more about these awards and Yildiz’s accomplishments at http://engineering.rice.edu/Yildizasmeswe/. Congratulations, Yildiz!

Big win for second year in a row!

A team of Rice students has won Texas Instruments’ annual Analog Design Contest Engibous Prize, for the second year in a row! Recent graduates Richard Latimer, Adam Samaniego, Kevin Beale, George Chen and Minhee Park’s winning device, mobileVision, allows untrained individuals to take photos of the retina outside of a clinical environment for an ophthalmologist to review remotely. This is very cool! You can read more about the device and the team that won it at http://engineering.rice.edu/NewsContent.aspx?id=8589935267. And special thanks and congratulations to the faculty advisors on this project, Professor Ashu Sabharwal and Assistant Professor Ashok Veeraraghavan, both from ECE!

New SSPB Ph.D. Program

I’m pleased to announce a new interdisciplinary PhD program, Systems, Synthetic and Physical Biology (SSPB), which will enroll its first
students in the fall 2013. This program involves faculty from several departments in the schools of engineering and natural sciences. **Michael Deem**, professor of bioengineering and of physics, has been named its first director. You can read more about the program here: [http://engineering.rice.edu/sspbf/](http://engineering.rice.edu/sspbf/).

You might recognize Bill Gates in this photo. He’s checking out the device built by **Naomi Halas'** lab for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Reinvent the Toilet Fair. He’s talking to graduate student **Oara Neumann**, who led the team that built the nano-solar powered steam generator that Bill is admiring. Apparently he was so enthralled by their invention that he had to be pulled from the exhibit to see what else was on display!

If you’re out surfing on the web, take a look at ChBE’s new website. It’s a beauty! [http://chbe.rice.edu](http://chbe.rice.edu).

Here are the events scheduled for this week:

**TODAY**

**CEVE**
CEVE Graduate Orientation
3:45 p.m. 201 Ryon
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18506](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18506)

**WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY**

**STAT** International Conference on Stochastic Processes in Systems Biology, Genetics and Evolution
BRC
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=16999](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=16999)

**THURSDAY**

**CHBE**
Ali Mohraz, University of California - Irvine
“Interfacial Colloid Gelation: A Route to Novel Microstructured Materials”
2:30 p.m. 210 Herzstein Hall
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18419](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18419)

**SATURDAY**

**RCEL**
2012 Engineering Liftoff: Orientation to the School of Engineering
1 p.m. Grand Hall RMC/Ley Student Center
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18452](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18452)
Heads up on coming events:

**Dining with the Dean for Undergraduates**
- **Sept. 12: BIOE**
  - RSVP by Monday, Sept. 10
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18381](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18381)
- **Oct. 3: ChBE**
  - RSVP by Monday, Oct. 1
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18382](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18382)
- **Oct. 24: CEE**
  - RSVP by Monday, Oct. 22
- **Nov. 20: CAAM**
  - RSVP by Friday, Nov. 16

**Aug. 27**
- School of Engineering/RCEL Ice Cream Social
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18390](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18390)

**Sept. 6**
- CS Back to School Luncheon
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18388](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18388)
- Sept. 18
  - New Professors Lecture
    - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18392](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18392)

**Oct. 4**
- Research SCREECH
  - [http://rcel.rice.edu/screech](http://rcel.rice.edu/screech)

**Oct. 10-14**
- Rice University Centennial Celebration
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18398](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18398)

**October 10**
- Research Screech winners lunch with Dean Thomas

**Oct. 12**
- REA Outstanding Alumni Presentations
  - [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18325](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18325)
School of Engineering Centennial Reception

http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18328

Have a great week and I’ll see you at the ice cream social a week from today!
Ned

Edwin L. Thomas
William and Stephanie Sick Dean of Engineering