I really enjoyed the **New Professors Lecture** last Tuesday and if you weren’t in the room, you missed some great talks! They were exciting and **visionary**. Each of the four speakers talked about where their research is going in the future. I want to thank **Jun Lou** of MEMS, **Ashu Sabharwal** of ECE, **Dan Wallach** of CS and **Wotao Yin** of CAAM for doing such a fine job—and to everyone who attended. What a great audience!

The **Rice Center for Engineering Leadership** has a new co-director, **Ray Simar**, ECE professor in the practice, who will use his years of experience at Texas Instruments to add an industry perspective on leadership to RCEL activities. Congratulations, Ray, on your new position! You can read more about Ray and what he will bring to RCEL at [http://engr.rice.edu/simar/](http://engr.rice.edu/simar/).

We have another Centennial Star: **Mandy Nevin** of ECE! Mandy held her first position at Rice as an undergraduate working for Professor Don Johnson. The nominating letter says that “her cheerful willingness to problem solve has endeared her to her campus colleagues and outside corporate affiliates equally,” which sounds like a great reason to honor her as a Centennial Star. Congratulations, Mandy!

Beginning this month, I will include service award announcements in my message each month. We had several in August: **Phyllis Guerra**, STAT, 10 years and celebrating five years at Rice were **Jessica Gipson** and **Chan Pham**, both of BIOE. This month we have a couple of people whose longevity deserves extra special recognition: **Frank Tittel**, J.S. Abercrombie Professor of
Electrical and Computer Engineering, joined the Rice faculty 45 years ago! You can read a profile of Frank here: [http://engineering.rice.edu/tittel/](http://engineering.rice.edu/tittel/). Julie Kudelka, a program administrator in BIOE, is celebrating her 25th year at Rice this month. Other September service milestones: Karen Lavellle, CS, 10 years; and 5 years: Laksono Adhianto, CS; Candace Carter, BIOE and Veronica Suderland, BIOE. Congratulations to all of you!

Congratulations to Tomasz Tkaczyk, assistant professor of BIOE, who has won first place in the 2012 Edmund Optics Higher Education Award competition. He was cited for his work developing “a variety of optical imaging and detection techniques targeting chemistry, applied physics, nanosciences, and advanced biomedical engineering.” There were 750 nominees for this award, so once again, Rice is the standout! Great job, Tomasz

Undergraduates in chemical engineering have until next Monday to sign up to have lunch with me on October 3 at noon in DH 1049. So many students have been signing up for these luncheons that we’re now limiting the number so we can keep the group small enough to have a good discussion. Don’t wait to sign up—just a few spots left! See [https://engrice.wufoo.com/forms/dining-with-the-dean-chbe-undergrads/](https://engrice.wufoo.com/forms/dining-with-the-dean-chbe-undergrads/) to RSVP.

Upcoming talk of note
Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science has an exciting speaker this week—Gila Stein, assistant professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering at the University of Houston. Her talk, “Nanopatterning with Thin Polymer Films” will be Wednesday at 4pm in room 128 of the Mechanical Engineering Building. You can find an abstract here: [http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18718](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18718). There should be a diverse bunch of engineers at this one—we materials people are in many departments!

LATE BREAKING NEWS!
This came from the ChBE Graduate Student Association: An invitation to a movie screening: SWITCH will be shown Friday, September 28 at noon in McMurtry Auditorium (Duncan Hall). Free and open to the public. RSVP by Wednesday September 26 ([ceses@rice.edu](mailto:ceses@rice.edu)) and you’ll get a free lunch. Afterward, a Q/A session with Dr. Scott Tinker, Energy Expert, Director of the Bureau of Economic Geology, and Professor and Associate Dean of Research at the Jackson School of Geosciences of the University of Texas at Austin. “Switch is an insightful look at our energy future and the challenge of transitioning to alternatives—told through a wild, globe-hopping road movie, that explores the world’s premiere energy sites for all resources, coal to solar, oil to biofuels, most of them highly restricted and never before seen on film.”

Hmmm. Could be interesting!
Here are the events scheduled for this week:

**TODAY**

**CAAM**
Enlu Zhou, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
“Gradient-based Adaptive Stochastic Search for Non-differential Optimization”
3 p.m. in 1064 Duncan Hall
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18246](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18246)

**CEE**
Ken Wunch, BP Exploration Operating
“Oilfield Biosouring Research & Development”
3:45 p.m. in 201 Ryon Engineering Building
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18316](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18316)

**TUESDAY**

**BIOE**
Ilya Levental, UT Health Medical School, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
“The Structure and Function of the Mammalian Plasma Membrane”
4 p.m. in 280 BRC
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18814](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18814)

**WEDNESDAY**

**MEMS**
Gila Stein, University of Houston
“Nanopatterning with Thin Polymer Films”
4 p.m. in 128 Mechanical Engineering Building
[http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18718](http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18718)

**THURSDAY**

**ECE**
Mike Davies, Rice University
“Co-sparsity: A new Concept for Redundant Analysis Signal Models”
4 p.m. in 1064 Duncan Hall
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18753

Richard E. Smalley Institute for Nanoscale Science and Technology
Paul S. Weiss, California NanoSystems Institute
“Cooperative Function in Atomically Precise Nanoscale Assemblies”
4 p.m. in 100 Keck
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18776

These events are scheduled in the coming weeks:

Dining with the Dean for Undergraduates:
Oct. 3: ChBE
RSVP by Monday, Oct. 1

Oct. 24: CEE
RSVP by Monday, Oct. 22

Nov. 20: CAAM
RSVP by Friday, Nov. 16

Oct. 4
Research SCREECH
http://rcel.rice.edu/screech

Oct. 10-14
Rice University Centennial Celebration
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

School of Engineering Centennial Reception
RSVP at https://engrice.wufoo.com/forms/rice-engineering-centennial-reception/

Oct. 15
ECE Distinguished Lecture
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18766

Oct. 23
“Self-Sensing Using Bio-Inspired and Multifunctional Thin Film Sensors”
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18642
Have a great week!
Ned

Edwin L. Thomas
William and Stephanie Sick Dean of Engineering