Seize the Day (or Night)

Every now and again it’s a good thing to step outside of what is familiar to you (like your major, or your study group or your weekly routine). You might just get some inspiration from an unexpected place. That happened to me on Thursday last week when I went to see Alan Bean—the fourth man to walk on the moon—speak in McMurtry Auditorium. It was a superb talk to a full auditorium. My guess is that a good number of people in the crowd left that place pumped about innovation and the future—about stepping up their game.

The moral of this story? Don’t pass by an opportunity like hearing an Alan Bean or a Norm Augustine or anyone else who has helped shape the world we live in. This is an important part of your engineering education—listen to the Lions!

Aiming High!

Congratulations to Tyler Wiest, senior mechanical engineer, who is one of Rice’s 14 Scholar Athlete Award winners. Tyler is a high jumper on the track and field team. Here’s a photo of him with the two faculty members he invited to the ceremony, Yildiz Bayazitoglu, the Cameron Chair in Mechanical Engineering and Dave McStravick, professor in the practice in mechanical engineering. Great job, Tyler!

Calling all Entrepreneurs!

There’s another 3-Day Start-up event coming—this weekend, March 29-31. This event is for those who are interested in starting a technology company. You’ll get to network with other Rice students and Houston area investors and mentors. If you want to participate, you need to sign up by tomorrow, March 26th at 5pm. Find more information at http://rice.3daystartup.org.
If you’re the entrepreneurial type with an idea to turn into any kind of commercial product, this is for you: OwlSpark, Rice’s Startup Accelerator, is taking applications for this summer. If accepted, you’ll be given space to work, a stipend to cover your living costs, and support in developing your idea or product. The final deadline for their rolling applications is April 15th, so go to the OwlSpark web site and apply: http://owlspark.com/. Along those lines, here’s a good 3-minute video of John Doerr talking about entrepreneurship: http://www.internmatch.com/company/kpcb-fellows-program. You can read more about this program here: http://engineering.rice.edu/OwlSpark/.

Cool Summer Internships!

Speaking of John Doerr, the venture capital group of which he’s a partner, Kleiner Perkins Caulfield Byers, has accepted 34 fellows for this summer and three of them are Rice engineers. Out of 1,500 applications from 120 universities, these Owl Engineers were selected: Nelson Chen, Matthew Johnson and Salvatore Testa, all computer science majors. Congratulations to all of you! We are looking forward to hearing about the highs and lows of your Silicon Valley experiences when you return in the fall, so your homework is to prepare a 15-minute presentation on the topic! You can read more about what these guys will be doing this summer here: http://engineering.rice.edu/KPCB_Fellows/.

More Kudos for the MOOC Team!

Thursday last week I had the pleasure of presenting to Rice’s Board of Trustees a group of computer science faculty—our “MOOC Masters”: Joe Warren, Scott Rixner, John Greiner and Stephen Wong. This group was recognized for their contributions to the university through the hard work and excellent job they did on presenting Rice’s first massive open online course (MOOC). They had a peak enrollment of 80,000 and this course is the highest ranked on several MOOC rating sites. Thanks to all of you!

Innovate Challenge!

Last week’s winners of the OEDK Innovate Challenge happened to be the only team that scored on the challenge. They had to build a ping pong ball launcher and then hit targets to score. They had 8 balls and 60 seconds to
launch all of them. Congratulations to Melanie Clear Rigdon, Corporate Relations Resource Development, Stephen Yan (4x Innovate champ!) and Kyle Adams, computer science. The next (and last) open Challenge will be Friday, April 5 at noon in the OEDK. See http://oedk.rice.edu/innovate/ for more info.

Here are this week’s scheduled events:

**TODAY**

**CAAM**  
Florian A. Porta, University of Maryland  
“Equilibria and Weighted Complementarity Problems”  
3pm in 1064 Duncan Hall  
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19968

**ECE**  
Jochen Feldman, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universtität  
“The Nano-Gold Rush”  
4pm in McMurtry Auditorium, Duncan Hall  
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19755

**STAT**  
Ji Zhu, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
“On Consistency of Community Detection in Networks”  
4pm in 1070 Duncan Hall  
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19015

**MEMS**  
Aycan Yurtsever, California Institute of Technology  
“Visualizing the Near-Fields of Nanoplasmonics with Ultrafast Electron Microscopy”  
4pm in 128 Mechanical Engineering Bldg  
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20079

**TUESDAY**

**ECE**  
Jochen Feldman, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universtität  
“Photocatalysis with Semiconductor Nanocrystals”  
3pm in 1064 Duncan Hall  
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19756

**WEDNESDAY**

**MEMS**  
Frank C. Sup, University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
“Augmenting Human Mobility with Robotics”  
4pm in 128 Mechanical Engineering Bldg
THURSDAY
ECE
Shiv N. Vitaladevuni, Raytheon BBN Technologies
“Efficient Sparse Projection with Application to Scene and Video Classification”
4pm in 1070 Duncan Hall
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19653

FRIDAY
CS
Etienne Vouga, Columbia University
“Correct by Construction: Simulation with Discrete Differential Geometry”
4pm in 1070 Duncan Hall
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19973

These events are scheduled for the coming weeks:

Lunch with the Dean
April 18, CAAM Undergraduates
Register at: https://engrice.wufoo.com/forms/q7p0x3//

Wednesday, April 3
ECE Annual Affiliates Meeting
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=18780

Thursday, April 4
K2I Distinguished Lecture
“What’s So Special About Science and How Much Should We Spend on It?”
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19580

Tuesday, April 9, 2013
Professional Engineering Master’s Seminar Series
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20001

Thursday, April 11, 2013
2013 Engineering Design Showcase and Poster Session
http://oedk.rice.edu/events

K2I Lecture Series
“Building Rice’s Human and Organizational Capital: A Draft of the Senate Working Group on Research and Scholarship—Request for Comments”
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=20012
Thursday, April 11 – Friday, April 12
“Space Exploration and Human Imagination: Space Futures”
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19612

Saturday, April 13, 2013
REA/School of Engineering End-of-Year Picnic
http://events.rice.edu/index.cfm?EventRecord=19657

Have a great week!
Ned

Edwin L. Thomas
William and Stephanie Sick Dean of Engineering