



Dear friends,

In these extraordinary and challenging times I am pleased to share with you the inaugural newsletter of the Engineering and Computer Science department. I trust that you will enjoy reading about the acclaim our students, faculty and alumni are receiving and the impacts they are making in their respective areas of work. We also welcome our newest faculty member, Thejas Gubbi Sadashiva who joins us as an assistant professor of Computer Science.



Dr. Mircea Agapie, Department Head

## Program Expansion

June 5th we received approval to offer the *first Master's degree* in our department – the MS in Computer Engineering.

## Accreditation

Mechanical Engineering, which began in 2017, is now accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org>.

## STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tarleton's five-member student team comprised of John Lozano, Lucas Ringo, Josh Rangel, Shannon Lawless and Cruz Trujillo placed first in the 2019-20 WEAT [Water Environment Association of Texas] Student Design Competition held in April, beating teams from Texas Tech and Texas A&M, amongst others. They have accepted an invitation to represent all of Texas in the National Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition Conference scheduled to be held in New Orleans.

Tarleton students won several awards at the 2020 American Society of Civil Engineers [ASCE] regional symposium held in March at Arlington, TX, including:

- The Keith McBride Spirit of the Competition for the Concrete Canoe Competition
- Second place for the Surveying Competition
- Third place for the Concrete Bowling Ball Competition
- Third place prize (\$100) in the Student Research Poster Competition



Tarleton students, Jennifer Villareal (second from left), Tyler Tierce (center) and Taylor Polk receiving the award on behalf of the team.

Environmental engineering students Mia Schlicke and Riley Harris and civil engineering student Lera Henderson are researching the removal of algal toxins from water using biochar through a \$25,000 project funded by the EPA as part of its National Student Design Competition for Sustainability Focusing on People, Prosperity and the Planet - Safe and Sustainable Water Resources.

## STUDENT SOCIETY AND CHAPTER NEWS

- Tarleton's Texas Society of Professional Engineers Student Chapter, which was officially recognized in late 2019, held its first meeting in January 2020. Joe Dickinson from Langerman Foster Engineering Company, LLC and Tarleton alum Skylar Wierzbicki, PE, from Baird Hampton and Brown, Inc. helped kickoff the meeting.
- Tarleton State University received approval to form the Student Branch of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers [IEEE] in May 2020!

## NEW FACULTY

Thejas Gubbi Sadashiva, Assistant Professor in Engineering and Computer Science. Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Sri Siddhartha Institute of Technology, 2009. Master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Sri Siddhartha Institute of Technology, 2011. Ph.D. in Computer Science from Florida International University, 2019. His areas of research include Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Cybersecurity, Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), and Performance Optimization using parallel computing. Thejas worked as an Assistant Professor for five years at Siddhanga Institute of Technology (SIT), India before commencing his Ph.D. at FIU, and he also served as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) activities coordinator between SIT and Foreign Universities. His research has successfully produced one book chapter, 19 papers in top conferences and journals, and has secured an Indian Patent. Thejas has served as a mentor and resource person in National Science Foundation (NSF) supported program Research Experience for Teachers (RET) for three successive years 2017-19 at FIU.



## FACULTY NEWS

- Dr. Kartik Venkataraman (co-PI) and Dr. Eunsung Kan (PI) received a \$273,000 grant from the USDA titled "Enhancing environmental sustainability at dairy farms through bio-char technology".
- Dr. Lee was the inaugural recipient of Tarleton's McKenzie Endowed Research Professorship. The appointment is providing him with release time during summer 2020 to design, develop, and submit a federal-level proposal for external funding in the role of principal investigator. Dr. Lee is working on the proposal titled "Optimal System Design and Process of Biofuel Production Using Small-Scale Electric and Power Generation Applications".

## ALUMNI TALK



Allison Stamper (pictured to the left), a graduate of the Environmental Engineering program (2016) was named the Edmund Friedman Young Engineer of the Year by Fort Worth Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers in recognition of her contributions to public welfare through civil engineering. Allison is currently a hydrologist at Peloton Land Solutions in Fort Worth.

Gabe Johnson, a graduate of Tarleton's Hydrology program in 2000 and a member of the Board of Directors of the Tarleton State University's Alumni Association gave a guest lecture about professional practice to senior environmental engineering majors in March. He is pictured here to the right, having an informal chat with students after his lecture.



ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

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