2009 Women of Innovation Awards Include Rensselaer Alumnae

Four Rensselaer alumnae of the Hartford campus were named finalists, including one winner, in the 2009 Women of Innovation Awards: A Celebration of Connecticut’s Outstanding Women in Science and Technology, sponsored by the Connecticut Technology Council (CTC). In addition, Dr. Gina Colarelli O’Connor, Associate Professor, Lally School of Management and Technology, and Academic Director, Radical Innovation Research Program, served as the keynote speaker at the awards gala held January 29 in Southington.

The program celebrated and honored the energy, creativity and remarkable capabilities of 52 women working in Connecticut’s science, engineering, and technology communities. The event provided the opportunity to salute all the nominees and finalists – women who are innovators, role models, and leaders. This year’s list of 52 finalists included researchers, educators, managers, business owners and service providers who work in biotech, pharmaceuticals, telecom, software, computer hardware, electronics, alternative energy, nanotech, medical devices, and IT.

Diane Drew (’84 M.S. Mechanical Engineering, ’96 M.B.A.), Thermodynamic Analysis Engineering Manager, Hamilton Sundstrand, United Technologies Corporation (UTC) was honored as the winner in the “Large Business Innovation and Leadership” category. The nomination criteria for this award was defined as: A woman with at least three years of managerial or technical experience in technology, science or engineering who has managed a program, project, or business unit in an exemplary way in a large corporation or professional services firm. Nominees were judged on managerial skills, leadership, and innovation.

Drew has over 31 years of technical and managerial experience in system thermo/aerodynamics design at Hamilton Sundstrand, and has contributed greatly to the Air Management Systems organization. She holds a number of patents in aircraft system technology including an Independent Temperature Control System, an Integrated Environmental Control System, and an Aircraft Galley Chiller System. Drew is currently responsible for the design of complex aircraft thermal management systems and has direct reports ranging from entry level engineering associates to middle managers all the way up to Fellows, who are considered to be the elite among technical experts within UTC.

The very essence of her work is to invent systems that perform tasks according to each new airframe’s unique constraints. Drew’s staff is directly responsible for developing computer simulations, predicting system performance, providing turbomachinery aerodynamic design, performing acoustics analysis, and performing computational fluid dynamics and thermal analysis. Recently her team provided the Boeing Company with the designs and hardware needed to make the world’s premier more-electric airplane, the Boeing 787, a reality. Drew’s leadership has been critical to accomplishing the many technical achievements necessary to make Boeing’s vision a reality.

Nancy E. Beckwith (’86 M.B.A.) was also a finalist in the “Large Business Innovation and Leadership” award category.

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Alumni News

1960s

Peter N. Lopusznick ('66 M.S. Math) was among eight honorees at the 2008 Norwalk Old Timers Awards Dinner for his baseball athletic prowess. He had a long career with the AT&T Company, working at several branches along the East Coast. Lopusznick held various technical positions including computer programmer, systems analyst, and senior systems analyst.

1980s

Patricia “Paddi” R. LeShane (HGC ’83 M.S. Health Care Management), CEO, Sullivan & LeShane Inc., served as a judge for the “8 Remarkable Women in Business” awards by the Hartford Business Journal in March. LeShane is regarded as one of Connecticut’s top lobbyists.

Mary M. Fay ('88 M.B.A.) was named Executive Vice President at Actuarial Strategies Inc., Bloomfield. She will lead the marketing and strategy development and operations, as well as contribute to product and business development efforts. Most recently, Fay served as senior vice president and general manager of the annuities business with Sun Life Financial.

1990s

Karen J. Goyette ('96 M.B.A.) has been promoted to Vice President of Administration and Business Development for MidState Medical Center in Meriden. She has been with MidState for nine years.

Chandler J. Howard ('97 M.S. Management), President and CEO of Liberty Bank, was one of five prominent black leaders featured in the February issue of Hartford Magazine, discussing race relations, middle class emergence, and what it means to have a black president. He has had a career in the banking industry for over thirty years.

Linda C. Chamberlain ('99 M.S. Management) of Avon, has been named head of Prudential Connecticut Realty’s Wethersfield office. She was a top producing agent in Prudential Connecticut Realty’s Simsbury office for the past eight years. Previously, Chamberlain worked as both a registered nurse and an educator.

Rensselaer Faculty Media Appearances

S. Ratnajeevan H. Hoole, Ph.D., Clinical Professor, Department of Engineering and Science, had his opinion piece entitled, “Tamil People Crushed Between Rebels, Military” published in the Hartford Courant on February 6. Dr. Hoole was previously Vice Chancellor and University Grants Commission member in Sri Lanka. He fled Sri Lanka after receiving death threats from the Tamil Tigers for his stand on human rights.

Louis W. Gingerella, Jr., Clinical Associate Professor, Lally School of Management and Technology, had his opinion piece entitled, “Danger of Making Stimulus Debt Permanent” published in the Hartford Courant on February 3 and in The Providence Journal on February 12, titled, “Louis Gingerella: A stimulus must: Repay debt.” To read his commentary, please see: www.projo.com/opinion/contributors/content/CT_debt12_02-12-09_EJD8QM1_v14.67caf8.html.

Lastly, James P. Stodder, Ph.D., Clinical Associate Professor, Lally School of Management and Technology, was a guest on “The Corner Show” with Phil Mikan on WDRC-AM 1360 The Talk of Connecticut on February 4. Dr. Stodder discussed recent events in the economy during the nearly 45 minute program. To hear the audio segments, please visit: www.talkofconnecticut.com/audio/phil_mikan.shtml.

Cole Library Introduces Two New Programs: A Book Drive and a Book Swap

The Cole Library is conducting an open-ended book drive. All types of books will be accepted for donation.

- Business and technical books will be evaluated for the collection.
- Leisure books will be evaluated for the Book Swap section.
- Books that are not kept will be passed on to a reseller and the library will get a small percentage of any sales.

Please bring books at your earliest convenience. The new Book Swap program offers an interesting selection of fiction, non-fiction, mystery, and more. The process is simple: take a book; bring in a book. When you are finished, please bring the book back so that someone else can enjoy it. There is no specific due date. While you are browsing, remember that all of the shelves pull up, and there are other books under the shelves for your perusal. The Rensselaer Hartford Book Club will be donating copies of their monthly selections to the swap. Other donations are always welcome. For more information about these programs, please contact Carol Flynn, Acquisitions Librarian, The Cole Library, at (860) 548-7874 or e-mail: flynnr@rpi.edu.

In Memoriam

Alumni

William Andrew Blecher ('60 M.S. Mechanical Engineering) of East Hartford, died on March 24. He was employed for over 30 years as a mechanical engineer at Hamilton Standard, retiring in 1988. While at Hamilton Standard, Blecher worked on the Apollo 11 project and received the Apollo Achievement Award and the Apollo 11 Medallion Award from NASA for his work on the project.

Michael L. Mazurick ('80 M.S. CSCI) of Avon, died on January 15. He worked at Cigna for nearly 30 years as a telecommunications manager, and prior to that was employed at the Hartford Insurance Co.

Stephen R. Sasala II ('85 M.S. Management) of Woodbury, died on February 27. He was President and CEO of the Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce since 2003. Previously, he was President and CEO of Prosperity New Jersey Inc., an economic development entity.
The Rensselaer Alumni Association (RAA) Hartford Chapter will host the 8th Annual Alumni Career Networking Evening in Seminar Hall at the Hartford campus on May 28, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The event features an outstanding lineup of guest speakers and is extremely timely given the current workforce environment.

Representatives from career management firms, government agencies, and technical organizations will be present to provide information and answer questions related to the job market. A discussion on how to identify and approach opportunities, and the tools necessary for career advancement in today’s job market will be held.

The evening will begin with a light dinner and a brief welcome and introduction by Tom Tarantelli, Director of the Career Development Center, and Jeff Schanz, Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations, both from Rensselaer’s Troy campus; along with David Turner ('05 B.S. Management), President of the RAA Hartford Chapter. A networking session will follow and the event will end with Q&A. In addition, there will be a business card drop for a chance to win Rensselaer-imprinted items. Admission is $10 for dues-paying Chapter members and $20 for guests and non dues-paying members.

Guest panelists include:
• Jack Antonich, Connecticut Career Choices Program Manager, and Mike Scricca, Membership Director, Connecticut Technology Council (CTC)
• Jean Blake-Jackson, Director, The Entrepreneurial Center, University of Hartford
• Brianna Blaser, Project Director of the Outreach Program, Science Careers and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)
• Ron Clinton, Career Counselor, University of Hartford
• David Hobbs ('67 M.S. Mechanical Engineering, '83 Ph.D. Mechanical Engineering), Chairman, Connecticut Section, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
• Deborah Krawiec, Vice President/Lead Consultant, Lee Hecht Harrison
• Anthony DiMarco ('80 B.S. Electrical Engineering), President and Founder, NavAgility, Inc.
• David Palmer ('78 M.S. Engineering), Director, Hartford Sector, American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)
• Maytelin Herrera-Batista ('06 M.S. Management), President, and Shakira Ramos, past president, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) Connecticut Chapter
• Mark Stankiewicz, Office of Research, Connecticut Department of Labor (CT DOL)
• Joel Wolff, Branch Manager, Manchester and Chapter Chair, SCORE – Counselors to America's Small Business

For more information and to register, please visit: https://arpinet.rpi.edu/default.aspx?Page=EVNETEventDetail&EventID=1570.

Career management in today’s environment is complex. This is not a market where you can only count on your experience or your education to attract attention. Job seekers need to be prepared and proactive to promote themselves. Whether you seek to improve your current position, are looking for career opportunities, or are actively seeking a job, the Hartford Alumni Chapter can help!

Alumni Career Networking Evening

Rensselaer at Hartford
Recognized for Twenty-Year Partnership with CCL

Rensselaer at Hartford, the only certified network associate of the internationally renowned Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)® in the northeastern United States, was presented with an award “Recognizing 20 Years of Excellence as a Partner in Leadership Development” by CCL. Carole D. Charles ('08 M.S. Management), Program Administrator, accepted the award on Rensselaer’s behalf at the Annual Network Associates Conference held in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Founded in 1970 as a nonprofit, CCL helps clients around the world to cultivate creative leadership—the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting beyond boundaries. Rensselaer offers two CCL programs: Foundations of Leadership (FOL) and Leadership Development Program (LDP)®. These programs teach developing managers as well as seasoned executives how to improve their leadership styles and to be better leaders and team builders.

FOL is a three-day leadership development workshop designed to assist the development of emerging leaders and managers by increasing their personal awareness, interpersonal effectiveness, and managerial abilities. LDP is an intense, five-day program designed to improve the effectiveness of upper-middle to senior-level managers by helping them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses as leaders.

Public offerings of both the FOL and LDP are scheduled three times per calendar year through Rensselaer Executive and Professional Development. The next LDP will run May 11-15, while the FOL will be offered June 16-18, both at the Hartford campus. For more information and to register, please visit: www.eup.rpi.edu/hartford/rcpd/ccl/index.html.

Carole Charles (center) receives Rensselaer’s 1998-2008 partner award from CCL President John Ryan (right) along with Don Prince, Group Director, Networks and Affiliates, CCL.
Student Satisfaction Survey Winner Announced

Brian E. Barde (’03 B.S. Information Technology) of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, who is working toward a Master of Science in IT, won the $100 Amazon.com gift certificate for participating in the online 2009 Student Satisfaction Survey sponsored by the Office of Student Services. Barde is a Principal Systems Engineer at General Dynamics in Pittsfield. He is currently leading a team to transition the Pittsfield engineering department to a new Change Management and Configuration Management tool in coordination with their customer site. Speaking about his Education for Working Professionals (EWP) experience, Barde said, “The EWP program allows me to expand my knowledge, professional and academic career while working full-time and raising a family. The EWP is a great program. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.” He is considering using the gift certificate to purchase textbooks for next term. Now that’s a true example of lifelong learning. Congratulations, Brian!

President Jackson Honored as One of “25 Great Public Servants of the Past 25 Years”

Shirley Ann Jackson, President, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, has been recognized as one of the “25 Great Public Servants of the Past 25 Years” by the Council for Excellence in Government. She was cited for her “remarkable service to the nation as Chair of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and a leader in the advancement of science.” The 25 Great Public Servants were selected by a committee of Council Trustees, for their “outstanding leadership in government at all levels and the example they set for up-and-coming public servants across the country.”

PE/LS Licensing Exam Review Programs Open House

A free open house will be held at the Hartford campus on May 6, from 6 to 8 p.m., for Rensselaer’s licensing exam review programs for Professional Engineers (PE) and Land Surveyors (LS). The open house will include a review of the application process led by the State of Connecticut Exam Administrator. The schedule for Rensselaer’s licensing exam review programs will be announced and refreshments will be served. Rensselaer has prepared thousands of engineers to pass the standardized examinations offered by the National Council of Engineers for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). Courses are offered to prepare for the Fundamentals in Engineering, Civil, Mechanical, as well as the Land Surveyor Exam. To learn more about the October 2009 exam and Rensselaer course descriptions and registration information, please visit: www.ewp.rpi.edu/pe. To reserve your seat at the open house, please contact Sue Kramer at (860) 548-2472 or e-mail: krames2@rpi.edu.

Upcoming Program Start Dates

Classes begin soon for several cohorts, and there is still time to apply. Spaces are filling up fast, so contact a Program Manager today!

May 11: Leadership Development Program (LDP)*, Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)*
May 11: M.S. Management with a concentration in Innovation and Technology (INTE)
May 12: M.S. Engineering Science with Lean Six Sigma Black Belt Certification – Industrial Process Management (IFPM) program
May 31: International Scholars Program (ISP)
June 1: Southeastern Connecticut M.B.A. (SEMBA – meets at Rensselaer’s Southeastern Connecticut Site)
June 16: Foundations of Leadership (FOL), Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)*
July 13: Licensing Exam Review Programs for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors
September 11: Executive Master’s Program (EMP) Class XXX

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2009 Women of Innovation Awards

and Leadership” category. She is the Manager of Supplier Quality at General Dynamics Electric Boat. Beckwith presently directs the efforts of two engineering supervisors and thirty-five team members who are responsible for the quality and certification of approximately $750 million dollars (per annum) of vendor procured components and raw material.

Finalists in the “Small Business Innovation and Leadership” category and “Entrepreneurial Innovation and Leadership” category were Heidi S. Douglas (’87 M.B.A.) and Li Zhao (’02 M.B.A.), respectively. As President and CEO of MysticMD Inc., Douglas has been critical in building the company’s business model. She developed the relationship with its first licensee, Nanomix, and negotiated that license. Previously a principal with Deloitte, Douglas managed some of the firm’s largest technology projects. Zhao, President and CEO, Fabric Trends International, LLC, has taken the Connecticut textile manufacturing company in a new direction operating two facilities on two continents to broaden its markets. Prior to her acquisition of the company, she was a consultant advising on Lean manufacturing. Zhao spent most of her career developing electric power and distribution in the United States and Asia.

Rensselaer’s own Dr. O’Connor spoke to the nearly 500 attendees during her keynote address, highlighting her research of the innovation process at large companies including IBM, Intel, and DuPont. She celebrated the accomplishments of current women innovators and urged the women attendees to continue developing the leadership, technology, and business management skills needed to build the innovation function. To learn more about the awards program, please visit the CTC Web site at: www.ct.org.