

Environmental Engineering Department News

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Special Points of interest:

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Kim D. Jones
Professor, Chair
Environmental Engineering

Office: 361-593-4330
Fax: 361-593-2069

Email: allen@tamuk.edu
Website: <http://www.even.tamuk.edu>

EVEN Highlights



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Student Achievements

Excitement filled the air on **December 16th— Commencement Day!** Environmental Engineering had the most students ever graduate in one semester— two Doctoral and ten Masters! **Doctorate of Philosophy** were: *Dr. Celina Camarena* and *Dr. Josue De Lara Bashulto*. **Masters of Science** were: *Marcelo Arreola, Ashutosh Deshpande, Revathi Eti, Nereyda Facundo-Torres, Juan Garcia, Kiran Kembhavimathada, Jose Leal, Hernan Lugo, Martha Muniz, and Adebayo Oyediran.*

Nereyda Facundo-Torres is continuing her education to obtain her PhD in Environmental Engineering with us.

Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri, Director and **Rose Rodriguez, Assoc. Director** of **CREST-RESSACA** held a “*Congratulations on Graduating*” party for all December Graduates! December 5, 2011.

The department held a “*Welcome Luncheon and Orientation*” for new Fall/Spring graduate students for six doctoral and six master students. January 26, 2012.

BS students **Natalie Rocha** and **Eric Faust** took part in a meeting with the Provost and Task Force personnel to work on improving the time for students to achieve their degree. January 27, 2012.

Undergrad News

A big Welcome goes to two new students who transferred in this semester—**Randy Ibanez** and **Sebastian Winkler!**

The Environmental Engineering department is actively collecting data from the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters to submit to the **Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)** Committee with expectations of being accredited by **Fall 2013.**

Organizations

The **American Academy of Environmental Engineers (AAEE) Organization** is very active with meetings, group participation and community service. If interested in joining the **AAEE** please contact **Jonathan Gorman** (BS) the President at jlgorman13@yahoo.com. **Dr. Lee Clapp** oversees this organization.

The **Air & Waste Management Association (AWMA) Organization** is also active with 24 members and growing. They have monthly meetings, group participation, and play a large part in community service. If interested in joining the **AWMA Organization** please contact **Nereyda Facundo** (MS) President at neyney_2005@yahoo.com. **Dr. David Ramirez** oversees this organization.

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Dissertation / Thesis / Project Presentations

Juan Jose Garcia (MS) successfully defended his Project titled "Microalgae Extraction from Salt Green Water Aquaculture Using a Sonication and Extraction Process for Biodiesel Production". Advisor: Dr. Kim D Jones. December 7, 2011.

Vinod Balakrishnan (MS) successfully defended his Thesis Proposal titled "Evaluation of Nutrient Removal from Urban Stormwater Runoff in a Semi-arid Coastal Region Using a Coanda-Effect Screen". Advisor: Dr. Kim D Jones. December 7, 2011.

Obianuju "Hilda" Ifesiokwu (MS) successfully defended her Thesis Proposal titled "Effect of Particle Aggregation on Metal Exchange Between Streams and Streambeds". Advisor: Jianhong Ren. December 12, 2011

Ayokunle Falade (MS) successfully defended his Thesis Proposal titled "Evaluation of Tire Bale Performance as Fill Material for Roadbed Construction in Semi-Arid Texas". Advisor: Dr. Kim D. Jones. December 12, 2011

Brandon C. Klim (MS) successfully defended his Thesis Proposal titled "Optimization Model for the Management of a Horizontal Sub-surface Flow Constructed Wetland Planted with the Halophyte *Salicornia bigelovii* in the Treatment of Shrimp Mariculture Effluent". Advisor: Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri. December 14, 2011.

Alumni News

Chengjue Li (MS EVEN Class of '10) is an Environmental Engineer with *Weston Solutions Shanghai, Ltd., Co.* in China.

Dr. Muthu Kuchanur (PhD EVEN Class of '06) is a Geology Supervisor with Division Services—Land Quality Division, *Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality* in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Don't forget to check out the Javelina Alumni Association website.

Alumni & Friends: www.alumni.tamuk.edu

Javelina Alumni Association: www.javelinaalumni.com

*****LinkedIn** is a great way to stay in touch with our Alumni—please connect with Cathey Allen when you can

Faculty / Staff News

Dr. Alvaro Martinez traveled to Medellin, Columbia and presented results from his [U.S. EPA Project](#) on **Education and Research** as well as his research on **Mercury Control**. **Dr. Martinez** also met with several potential graduate students who are considering applying to TAMUK. November 30—December 2, 2011.

Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri and **Dr. Kartik Venkataraman** traveled to San Francisco, CA to present at the [AGU Fall 2011 Meeting](#). They presented a paper titled "Impacts of Sea Level Rise caused by Climate Change on Saltwater Intrusion into the Gulf Coast Aquifer of South Texas". **Dr. Lee Clapp** also attended, presented a poster, and met with people from [Pacific Northwest National Lab](#) to discuss collaborations on an NRC-funded project. December 5-9, 2011.

Dr. Lee Clapp served on a one-day [Private Lands Advisory Committee \(PLAC\)](#) panel focusing on the **Impact of the Eagle Ford Shale Development**. January 12, 2012.

Dr. David Ramirez participated as a judge at the [Regional Science Fair](#) held in Corpus Christi. January 21, 2012.

Six doctoral and six master students attended the department's "[Welcome Luncheon and Orientation](#)" for all new Fall/Spring graduate students.

Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment (ISEE) News

ISEE and the **LRGV Stormwater Task Force** sponsored five **ASCE Training Webinars** in which both undergraduate and graduate environmental engineering students attended:

- “*Analysis of Green Infrastructure*” held at TAMUK. December 6, 2011
- “*Updating Local Codes to Cultivate Green Infrastructure and More Rapid Sustainable Stormwater Management*” held at TAMUK. December 13, 2011
- “*Engineered Rain Gardens and Bioretention Facilities for Sustainable Stormwater Management*” held at TAMUK. January 12, 2012
- “*Sustainable Stormwater Hydrology: Concepts to Reduce Hydrologic Footprint*” held in Edinburg. January 24, 2012
- “*Webcast MS4 Audit Preparation*” held in Harlingen. January 25, 2012

Two new project submissions were selected for funding by the **Border 2012 U.S.—Mexico Program, Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC)**. Projects titled “**LRGV NPS Pollution Awareness—Sign Development and Installation Program**” for \$30,000 and “**Waste Tire Reuse Technology for Heavy Duty Road Bed Construction Applications**” for \$15,000. January 19, 2012

Dean’s Corner

Texas A&M—Kingsville snares \$25,000 **AT&T Technology & Environment Award**. University research team developed integrated air pollution alert system that delivers air quality alerts to users of location-aware smartphones. The air pollution alert system for which the prize was awarded was developed by **Dr. Kuo-Jen Liao** (Env Eng) and **Dr. Nuri Yilmazer** (Comp Sc / Elec Eng).

The new **Javelina Engineering Innovation Center** for the Frank H. Dotterweich College of Engineering, located downtown in the old True Value Wilson Building, was open for visitors to view displays during the La Posada festivities in December.

Upcoming Events

Coastal Impacts Technology Program—Technology Roadmapping Workshops will be held at the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Center at Texas A&M University-Kingsville on February 28, 2012.

Morning Workshop (8:30—12:00): Reducing Air Emissions—What research is needed to develop cost effective methods to reduce air emissions?

Afternoon Workshop (12:30—4:00): Restoring Well Sites—What research is needed to develop cost-effective methods to restore ecosystems affected by energy production operations? For more information you can contact :

Texas A&M University - Kingsville

Dr. Lee Clapp
361-593-4007
lee.clapp@tamuk.edu

The CREST-RESSACA Environmental and Energy Sustainability Conference will be held at the Intercontinental Houston, Houston, Texas on April 26-27, 2012. For more information regarding abstract deadlines and poster presentation please contact :

Texas A&M University - Kingsville

CREST-RESSACA
Rose Rodriguez, Assoc. Director
361-593-5556
Rose.Rodriguez@tamuk.edu

The Lower Rio Grande Valley 14th Annual Stormwater Management Planning Conference will be held at Pearl South Padre, South Padre Island, Texas on March 28—March 30, 2012. For hotel information go to: www.pearlsouthpadre.com

For more information regarding abstract deadlines and poster presentation please contact :

Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment (ISEE)

Abel Garza
361-593-4326
kaapg00@tamuk.edu



Texas A&M University - Kingsville

Monica Hernandez
361-593-3904
kumah012@tamuk.edu