

Environmental Engineering Department News

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Special Points of interest:

- December Commencement
- A&WMA Awards
- Student Achievements
- Student Organizations

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EVEN Highlights



Volume 7 Issue 3

November 2016 —
April 2017

Student Achievements

December 2016 Graduates—**Doctorate of Philosophy:** Dr. Sauritha Karnae and Dr. Anuradha Nagaraj **Master of Science:** Didier Gonzalez (pictured right) **Congratulations!!!** 🙌👍



Dr. Karnae is a Research Assoc. II with the EVEN department. She assists with teaching several classes, mentors UG and MS students and works with the City of Corpus Christi perform air quality monitoring.

PhD Student, Shooka Khoramfar received the **Dave Benferado Scholarship** in the amount of **\$4000** from **The Air & Waste Management Association** in recognition of her academic excellence and professionalism for the 2017-2018 academic year. Shooka presented her research work entitled “*Design and Implementation of a Field Test for Biological Based VOC Emission Control for an Oil and Gas Production Facility in East Texas*” at the **2017 SPE Regional Student Paper Contest**, held at **Rice University**, Houston, TX on April 1, 2017.

MS Student Olufemi Oladosu received the **Waste Management Research and Study** award in the amount of **\$2500** from **The Air & Waste Management Association** for his academic excellence and professionalism for the 2017-2018 academic year. Olufemi was a recipient for the **ASSIT Travel Grant** in the amount of **\$2000** for participation in the **43rd NSBE Annual Convention** in Kansas City, MO in March 29 through April 2, 2017.

PhD Student, Geraldo Pinzon received **2nd Place** for his oral presentation at the **A&M University System 13th Annual Pathways Student Research Symposium** on Nov. 3-4, 2016, held at **Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU)** for Engineering or Computer Science discipline. PVAMU hosted nearly 900 students for this event.

Student Organizations

AAEES and **AWMA Student Chapters** joined forces for the “**Can You Build It?**” contest. The organizations collected a total of **274 cans** throughout the EVEN department. With such a large donation of cans, it was clear that the environmental engineers of TAMUK care about those in need, and recognize their ability to help. Their design won **2nd place** overall among some stiff competition! Members of both **AWMA** and **AAEES** spent 6 hours of their Sunday building the **Pokémon Diglett** out of the donated cans.



AWMA Student Chapter will be participating at the Texas Adopt-A-Beach on Saturday, April 22, 2017. They will be busy picking up trash and cleaning up our beaches in Corpus Christi, TX.

If you are interested in joining the **AAEES Student Organization** please contact **Christina Williams** (BS), President at tamuk.aees@gmail.com. If interested in joining the **AWMA Student Organization** please contact **Kristen Hernandez** (MS), President at AWMA.tamuk@yahoo.com. If you are a PhD student and interested in joining the **Association of Doctoral Students (ADS)** please contact **Johnson Ajedegba** (PhD), President at adstamuk@gmail.com.



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[http://www.tamuk.edu/
engineering/departments/
even](http://www.tamuk.edu/engineering/departments/even)

Student Achievements (cont.)

Olusola Fasae and Tolulope Fasae (MS Students) performed outreach on **Stormwater Management** at the **Fiesta de la Feria** on February 25, 2017. Olusola and Tolulope conduct research for *Lower Rio Grande Valley Low Impact Development* under the direction of **Dr. Kim D. Jones**. Alumni Augusto Sanchez attended representing the *Stormwater Task Force* from **University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley**.



Publications:

Qing Song, Jieming Chen, Adeshile Ajayi, **Francisco Haces-Fernandez**, Kai Jin, Hua Li. *Social Attitudes of College Students toward Wind Farm Development in South Texas*. **International Journal of Sustainable and Green Energy**. Vol. 5, No. 5, 2016, pp. 103-110. doi: 10.11648/j.ijrse.20160505.13.

Haces-Fernandez, F., Martinez, A., Camacho, L., Ramirez, D., Su, H., Li, H. *GIS Based Tool for Analyzing U.S. Wind Farms Development*. **2017 Industrial and Systems Engineering Conference** Abstract ID: 2114. (to be presented and published on May 20-24, 2017)

Haces-Fernandez, F., Martinez, A., Ramirez, D., Li, H. *Characterization of Wave Energy Patterns in Gulf of Mexico*. **2017 Industrial and Systems Engineering Conference** Abstract ID: 2960. (to be presented and published on May 20-23, 2017)

Dissertation/Thesis Defenses:

Francisco Haces Fernandez (PhD) successfully defended his Dissertation Proposal titled “Assessment, Characterization and Layout Optimization of Wave Energy in the Gulf of Mexico Through Data-Driven Methodologies”. Advisor: **Dr. Hua Li / Dr. David Ramirez**.

Johnson Ajedegba (PhD) successfully defended his Dissertation Proposal titled “Coastal Dune Vulnerability Indices and Modeling Dune Ecological Restoration and Resilience for South Padre Island, Texas”. Advisor: **Dr. Kim Jones**.

Qianjin Zheng (MS) successfully defended her Thesis titled “Investigation of No₂ Air Pollution over Shanghai, China Using Satellite Remote Sensing and Ground-Level Observation”. Advisor: **Dr. Kuo-Jen Liao**.

Alexandra Juarez (MS) successfully defended her Thesis titled “Optimizing Process Parameters of a Pilot-Scale Ammonia Recovery System”. Advisor: **Dr. Lucy Mar Camacho**.

Trent Pinion (MS) successfully defended his Thesis titled “Design of Polysulfone-Graphene Oxide Mixed Matrix Membranes for Direct Contact Membrane Distillation”. Advisor: **Dr. Lucy Mar Camacho**.

Department News

ABET Advisory Board Members reviewed the **Environmental Engineering BS Program** on December 5, 2016. The Program Educational Objectives and the Student Outcome Assessments were reviewed and no changes were necessary. It was strongly encouraged that all students take the FE exam during their junior or senior years. The EVEN Curriculum and Program Topics were discussed and minor suggestions made.

Recruitment: Our faculty, staff and students are supporting the Environmental Engineering department with recruiting to area high schools such as CITGO Innovation Academy, Moody H.S., Driscoll College and Career Day at Driscoll ISD, Javelina Bound—McAllen, Girl Scouts of South Texas at TAMUK, West Oso H.S., Science Academy of South Texas at Mercedes, Bishop H.S., H.M. King H.S., Veterans H.S., Calallen H.S., Academy H.S. in Kingsville, Ricardo H.S., Riveria H.S., Tuloso-Midway H.S., Miller H.S., Odem H.S. and area Valley High Schools. If you would like us to visit your school and give a presentation on our Environmental Engineering Program, please contact Ms. Amanda Moody at amanda.moody@tamuk.edu or 361-593-4971.

Environmental Engineer #1 in Best Engineering Jobs by **U.S. News**: <http://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/ranks/best-engineering-jobs>. Environmental Engineers are often thought of as environmentalist, however what really needs to be focused on are the regulations and what requirements are needed to meet those regulations while at the same time keeping the cost and timeline on track. Environmental Engineers focus on topics like waste disposal, erosion, water and air pollution and more. Please visit the website above if interested in more details given by Mr. Dan Wittliff, Managing Director of Environmental Services with GDS Associates in Austin, Texas.

Faculty News

Dr. Kim D. Jones was named **Regents Professor** by [Texas A&M System Board of Regents](#) on November 15, 2016. On February 8, 2017 Dr. Jones and his wife Carol attended the *Regents Professor Banquet* at College Station. The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents recently designated eleven faculty members from seven agency service, extension or research professionals with the A&M System as Regents Professors and Regents Fellows for **2015-2016**. Representing Texas A&M University-Kingsville was [Dr. Kim Jones](#), professor and director for the [Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment](#) in the [Department of Environmental Engineering](#). He is the **15th Regents Professor** at [Texas A&M-Kingsville](#). Dr. Jones joined the faculty in 1999 as an Asst. Professor, prior to coming here he was a consulting engineer for Camp, Dresser & McKee Inc., research associate for the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology; district engineer for ARCO International Inc, in Jakarta, Indonesia; area operations engineer for ARCO Oil and Gas Company; research engineer for ARCO Production Research; and research assistant at the University of Texas. Dr. Jones earned his **BS** in general engineering from [U.S. Military Academy in West Point](#) achieving the rank of captain, **MS** in petroleum engineering from [University of Texas](#) and **MS** and **PhD** degrees in environmental engineering from [Georgia Institute of Technology](#).



[Stephan J. Nix](#) was recognized April 4, 2017 at a ceremony in Corpus Christi as a **Life Member of ASCE**. Dr. Nix was also recognized as the **Founding Chair of the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatics Engineering** at the **15th Anniversary Celebration** of its founding (Fall 2001). The celebration was held on August 27, 2016.

Proposal Awarded to [Lucy Mar Camacho](#) titled *“EAGER-SUSCHEM: Rate Earth Elements Recovery from Geothermal Waters Using Novel Electrodialysis Metathesis Process”* from [National Science Foundation](#) in the amount of **\$70,018** for the performance period of 09/01/16—08/31/2020.

[Thomas J. Lynn](#) received the **2016 ASCE Outstanding Reviewer** in recognition of his outstanding service as a reviewer for the [ASCE Journal of Sustainable Water in the Built Environment](#). April 2017.

Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment (ISEE) News

ISEE entered into an agreement with [U.S. EPA Region 6](#) and co-organized and led the **18th Annual Region 6 Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System (MS4) Conference** which was held in Oklahoma City in 2016 with over 350 water professionals attending from throughout the region. This was an additional continuing opportunity for TAMUK faculty, staff and students to present research and analytical results and conduct outreach activities for ISEE and TAMUK engineering programs.

ISEE will hold its **19th Annual EPA Region 6 Stormwater Conference** at the Hilton Palacio del Rio in San Antonio, TX on September 17-21, 2017. [The EPA Region 6](#), in partnership with the [Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems \(MS4s\)](#), and [States in Region 6](#) and co-sponsored by [Texas A&M University-Kingsville Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment](#) are inviting stormwater professionals to participate in the **19th Annual Stormwater Conference**. **EPA Region 6 Outstanding Green Infrastructure & Low Impact Development Project Competition** will be held on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. Deadline for abstracts is May 29, 2017. For more information please visit: <http://submissions.mirasmart.com/TAMUK2017/Login.aspx>

[Eman Ibrahim](#), [Kim Jones](#), [Patrick Mills](#) and co-authors published an article in the *Biotechnology for Biofuels Journal* about enzymes expressed by modified E. coli bacteria and their potential for biofuel production. 2017.

Proposal Awarded to [Kim D. Jones](#) titled *“Laguna Madre Estuary Program Strategic Plan”* from [Texas General Land Office CMP](#) in the amount of **\$99,956** for the performance period of 10/01/2016—03/31/2018.

[Johnson Ajedegba](#), [Wisdom Oghenerurie](#), PhD students, and [Dr. Kim Jones](#) were invited to submit a proposal for funding from the [Texas Sea Grant Program](#) in 2017 entitled *“Development of Ecological Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Decision Support System for Improved Sustainable Coastal Development at South Padre Island and the Lower Laguna Madre”*.

Feel free to visit our website: <http://tamuk-isee.com>

Alumni News

Kaveh Farhadi Hikooei (MS Class of '16) received the **1st Place Award** of \$500 for his Master Thesis from [The Air & Waste Management Association](#). His accomplishment will be recognized at the [110th Annual Conference & Exhibition](#), to be held in Pittsburgh, PA at the Student Awards Ceremony and Reception on June 7, 2017.

Joshua Robbins (MS Class of '16) is working with [Canadian General Towers \(CGT\)](#) in New Braunfels, TX as an **Environmental Engineering Manager**.

Didier Gonzalez (MS Class of '16) is working with [On-Site Analitica](#) in San Diego, CA as an **Environmental Consultant**.

Leo Trevino (MS Class of '95) is working with [Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program](#) in Corpus Christi, TX as the **Deputy Executive Director**. Leo was the EVEN 6102 Grad Seminar guest speaker on April 7th. It was so nice to hear from our Alumni!

Swapna Patil (MS Class of '09) is working with the [Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry \(FICCI\)](#) in New Delhi, India as the **Senior Assistant Director, Water Division**.

Jose Santiago Roque (BS Class of '15) was selected a **U.S. Department of Energy DOE Scholars Intern** funded by the [Federal Energy Management Program \(FEMP\)](#). He will be assigned to a project in Washington DC.

Christina Saldivar (BS Class of '16) is working with [EPA Region 5](#) in Chicago, IL as an **Environmental Engineer** with the **Chemical Management Branch**. Christina is involved in the enforcing lead-based paint safety program.

Juan Martinez (BS Class of '16) is working with the [Railroad Commission of Texas](#), in Austin, TX as an **Engineering Specialist I**. Juan is planning on return this Fall as an MS student with Environmental Engineering. Welcome back Juan!

Kai Williams (BS Class of '14) is working with [Los Alamos National Laboratory \(LANL\)](#) in New Mexico as an **Analytical Chemist/Post-Masters student**.

Ajia Fielden (BS Class of '16) is interning at the [City of Corpus Christi Utilities Department](#) in Corpus Christi, TX as an **Engineer I**.

Aiyswarya Parthasarathy (MS Class of '14) is working with [Georgia Pacific/Koch Industries](#) in Corvallis, OR as an **Environmental Engineer—Halsey Operations**.

***[LinkedIn](#) is a great way to stay in touch with our Alumni—please connect with Catherine Allen when you can. ***

Upcoming Events

May 1, 2017 [Texas A&M University-Kingsville](#) invites you to attend a Reception Honoring **Dr. Kim D. Jones Regents Professor 2016** in the Founders Room Lewis Hall at 3:30PM.

May 11, 2017, [Workforce Solutions](#) is having their annual **Career Expo** held at the [American Bank Center](#) in Corpus Christi, TX. Over 1200 students have signed up but more are expected. The College of Engineering will host tables for departments to participate in this recruitment event. **Dr. Tushar Sinha** will be on hand to represent Environmental Engineering. Anyone interested should try to attend this Career Expo!

May 13, 2017 Commencement will be held at **10 a.m. for Undergraduates** and **2 p.m. for Graduate Students**. Environmental Engineering students graduating are: **MS Students:** *Chisara Anoruo, Alexandra Juarez, Trent Pinion, Bavand Sadeghi, Gurupreet Siddhu and Qianjin Zheng*; **BS Students:** *Richard Buckalew, Eduardo Lopez, Shelby Loveland, Tabata Lua Cervantes, and Jennifer Paiz*.

Congratulations Graduates!!!



Go Javelina's !!!!