Welcome to another issue of the Petroleum Engineering Newsletter. Last issue I listed three basic challenges facing the department: (1) competition among all engineering disciplines for limited engineering-interest pool in NM (and three main NM universities); (2) non-Petroleum-BS dominated graduate program; and (3) extremely diversified culture/countries of student body. Let me review these challenges for this past year.

**Undergraduate Recruiting.** Recruiting is the most critical element in controlling our program’s destiny. On the bright side, we made great strides last year. Undergraduate enrollment increased from 23 this time last year to 45 currently. The petroleum industry remains one of the largest industries in U.S., and continues to produce the most valuable commodity (hydrocarbons) and pay the highest salaries. Furthermore, for the foreseeable future, oil and gas will continue to be the predominant sources of energy. Despite all the exciting career opportunities, one major concern in our industry is: “Where is the next generation (‘reserves’) to replace the fast retiring ‘baby boomer’ generation?” (I won’t argue with you if you say the above concern is not new, is a cycling issue, and we have seen it before!) This department’s “core business” will always be recruiting, educating, and producing the top young professionals. The challenges facing our program make this year no exception. The bottom line for us is that recruiting the younger generations to enter our program/industry is still an extremely tough task in NM. Nevertheless, we will continue to aggressively recruit for the industry. We will continue to work hard to make our students more marketable.

**Graduate Program.** Graduate enrollment increased from 16 this time last year to 20 currently. Students with non-Petroleum backgrounds are common to us. They have to take relevant prerequisite undergraduate courses and compete in a rigorous environment. They are excited about entering a “new” venture, which translates into the enthusiasms of learning. To me, they bring in different perspectives; they drive my teaching skills and knowledge in understanding toward the higher and better limits.

**Cultural Diversities.** The “cultural thing” is a “natural thing” of our industry. It used to be common in major companies’ research centers. Today, it is expanding into the field level. The cultural diversity, as I view it, automatically incorporates a “communication training” element to our program.

I appreciate the help from some of our alumni and current students in several planned and unplanned recruiting occasions (in and outside campus). We definitely appreciate the various scholarships financed by individuals and corporate. Scholarships are a critical element in freshman recruiting and in maintaining a stable program. I also want to acknowledge our faculties’ continued high energy and dedication under the current “faculty-shortage” situation.

In closing, while the future is bright, the facts indicate that the road ahead for us is still tough. We must continue to attract the best and brightest young people (in competition with many seemingly more glamorous fields). You can help us by spreading the word as to the importance of our industry and the excitement awaiting those who enter and can successfully help apply technology to achieve business success. I hope we continue to have a great recruiting season. I wish you a wonderful 2008!
This Issue
There has been a lot happening this past year and we didn’t want to compromise space by cramming news into the same size newsletter as done in the past. In fact, we want to make sure we have included as much news as possible, and have expanded this issue. If there is anything else you would like to see in the future, please do not hesitate to let me know.

-Karen

Future Communications
One of our goals is to increase communication between the department, alumni, and companies. In a technology driven society, we are hoping to keep in touch utilizing our newly designed website and through emails. This includes sending out annual newsletters also posted on our website. If you have an email address, or a change in email, please contact Karen to be added to the electronic database.

Department Needs
The department is in need of an equipment upgrade to better serve and educate the students, and to prepare them with the knowledge, skills and tools they will need in the professional field. Unfortunately, our budget does not allow us the capacity to upgrade and this is where we are asking for your help. Some alumni have donated funds (see alumni section of this newsletter) to help us begin upgrading, but this is only the beginning stage. Below are some estimated costs that will help us install/upgrade new technology in our classrooms:
1) Classroom (MSEC 367)- Ceiling mounted overhead projector. Completed
2) Computer Lab (final stage)-5 desktop computers and a ceiling mounted projector $6,000

*We are also looking for anyone willing to sponsor the Well Control School, April 4-6, 2008. The total cost for the school is $5000. Donations are also welcome. Please contact the office.

Website
As we look ahead to 2008, one issue we really started to question was the look and design of the Petroleum Engineering website. Our Advisory Board strongly encouraged us to change it, too. It wasn't until this past August when we received the manpower to make it happen. We employed Rich Clark, an undergraduate student who transferred to NMT from Michigan, to help us give the Petroleum and SPE websites a new facelift. With improvements in technology, we wanted to focus on every aspect for increased traffic: plenty of current information for our prospective students, increase utilization by our faculty and current students, increase alumni awareness and give them public recognition (Alumni of the Month), and a way for the SPE chapter to communicate to prospective and current students, alumni and other SPE student chapters around the world. Rich has done a great job and we are lucky to not only have him at NMT as a student, but also as our web designer. If you have any comments or suggestions, he would love to hear from you.
To the alumni...

You would think during these good times I wouldn't have anything to complain about. After all, enrollments are up, industry is active, graduating students get hired at ridiculous salaries, and so on. And yet, there exists a Petroleum Engineering faculty shortage nationwide and particularly here at New Mexico Tech.

Some background is needed here for your information. Over a year ago, an informal poll of the chairs of the U.S. Petroleum Engineering programs indicated over 40 faculty positions open nationwide. Also, two new programs, University of Wyoming and University of Houston, were started. At the ATCE in Anaheim this November, although most universities have hired new faculty, there still existed approximately 25 vacant positions to be filled. The faculty shortage issue is not unknown to industry. In fact, we had an industry/academia dialogue session in April 2007 to discuss this matter, and it again was a topic at the recent CPEE in the Woodlands in January 2008. Many good ideas came from these meetings to support the Petroleum Engineering programs; from using senior industry personnel as adjunct faculty to providing summer internships for new faculty to endowing professorships. In fact, it is possible SPE may get involved in this effort.

So what does this mean to New Mexico Tech? We are the only U.S. school who has not hired a new faculty member! Why? For several reasons and I am partly to blame for this. In our first search, we requested someone with drilling experience since Dr. Bill Lyons was retiring and we wanted to fill that void. No qualified applicants were submitted. The pool of young PhD talent from universities is small, and thus hiring is competitive with other universities as well as industry. A second search broadened the qualifications to any discipline in Petroleum Engineering. We received several good candidates, selected the best, but couldn't agree on salary compensation. Here is where summer support may have been beneficial. After failing twice, I first did some background work in encouraging several qualified candidates to apply before I requested a third chance to advertise for a faculty position. Successfully accomplishing this task I asked the administration to allow me to re-open our search, but to date has been put on hold. From my perspective, for the Petroleum Engineering program to flourish and to maintain a high quality of education for our students we need new faculty. In defense of the administration, they have limited resources with faculty requests and needs in multiple programs.

So what to do? A couple of options are available. One, I will continue to press the administration to open a search for a qualified candidate. We particularly need to hire now with several of our senior faculty nearing retirement and thus have a smooth transition. Second, an endowed professorship or chair would go a long way in ensuring the long term viability and success of this program. I did some research on this subject and learned that the majority of endowments are given by alumni donors not by industry. Industry likes to support students through scholarships and programs by offsetting recruiting costs and providing equipment/software; but they tend not to support faculty positions. As you see in the scholarship section of this newsletter, we have plenty of scholarships to go around. Alumni like to donate to their alma mater; whether that support goes to the students, to faculty development or to faculty positions varies depending on the donor. So my challenge to you is support your Petroleum Engineering Program any way you can. From visiting students or guest lecturing to providing scholarships to supporting an endowed faculty position, we need your support.

Some of you may say, "Tom, stop complaining, you're whining!" This is true, I admit it and apologize for it. However, my goal is to strengthen this program and continue its track record of developing quality students and research. Meeting this goal will require all of our efforts.

David Asher, senior, talks to a group of MESA students visiting the department
Scholarships

Chevron Scholarship

We would like to thank Chevron and Abel Lobato ('83) for providing scholarships to these students for the 2007-08 academic year, from left to right: Devin Meluso, Jesus Barraza, Assiya Bekniyazova, Jakub (Kuba) Bednarz, Luis Casanova.

Denver SPE Scholarship

This year 13 students were each awarded the Denver SPE Scholarship, and included graduate students. The recipients are: Luis Casanova, Depesh Patel, Saif Uddin (behind), Ibrahim Hassan, Nathan Bingham, Assiya Bekniyazova, Babajide (Jide) Ayangade (behind), Sandro Santos, Maung Aung (behind), Kuba Bednarz, Ghislain Fai-Yengo (behind), Solomon Ampim, Kwame Oppong.

Dallas SPE Scholarship

The recipient of this year’s scholarship was awarded to Maung Aung, a senior. Maung has also started working towards his MS in Petroleum Engineering, so he won’t be leaving us any time soon.

John M. Kelly Scholarship

Every year incoming freshmen have the opportunity to receive a $1000 scholarship that they use in the fall they arrive, and the spring semester. For freshmen this scholarship is renewable the following year if a certain GPA is maintained. This year’s recipients are: Lois Kamga-Ngameni, Jay Geist, Bart Hegarty, Rich Clark, and Ethan North (right).

Not pictured: Jacob Whiddon
**Robert Schwering Roughneck Scholarship**

Robert Schwering ('81) donated $750 for a second year towards a scholarship for an undergraduate with roughneck experience prior to beginning his/her education. The recipient of the scholarship is Nathan Bingham. Nate’s experience includes working as a pusher for a roustabout crew in Bloomfield, NM, a Flowback Technician, and assisting a rig crew, as part of his Drilling Engineer training, in Farmington, NM. Nate is graduating this May and is being employed by PathFinder.

**Desk & Derrick Club of Roswell**

The Desk & Derrick Club of Roswell awarded Matthew Higgins and Devin Meluso $400 each, as they continue to pursue their education in Petroleum Engineering. Matt is a junior and Devin is a sophomore.

**Desk & Derrick Club of Farmington/API**

Corina Sedillo, a senior, was awarded a $1,500 scholarship. Corina transferred to NMT from San Juan College in 2005, and will pursue her MS degree at NMT beginning Fall 2008.

**RPSEA/Strata/Murphy Scholarship**

Two transfer students, Jesus Barraza and Rich Clark, were awarded $5000 scholarships. Both students joined the department this past fall. Jesus transferred from New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) and Rich from Michigan.
I. Grace Gorham Memorial Scholarship

This endowed scholarship is designed to fund a Merit Scholarship for an undergraduate student in Petroleum Engineering, have a 3.0 GPA, and be a full-time regular student. Financial Aid and the Petroleum Engineering Department work together to select the student(s). This year’s recipients were Maung Aung and Devin Meluso.

Robert Moran Scholarship

This endowed scholarship is designed to fund a Merit Scholarship for an undergraduate student in Petroleum Engineering, have a 3.0 GPA, be a full-time regular student, and be a New Mexico, Texas, or Oklahoma resident. Robert Blakney, a sophomore, was selected.

Earl Debrine/Capitol Bar Scholarship

To be eligible for this scholarship, a student has to be a resident of New Mexico or New York. The Capitol Bar/Earl DeBrine Scholarship is made possible by the generous support of Joanne and Earl DeBrine, Jr. in memory of their father Earl DeBrine, Sr.; Tech Alumnus (Petroleum Engineering, 1963) and former owner of the Capitol Bar. The scholarship is given to support a student who exhibits exemplary scholarship and character. Josh Lugo, a freshman from New York, was the recipient of this year’s scholarship.

If you are interested in setting up a scholarship program within the Petroleum Department, please contact us.
We feel it's extremely important to recognize our alumni and extend this recognition by expanding the alumni section of this newsletter. We want to keep you up-to-date with donations made to the department and what we are doing with them.

Charlie Birnie ('73) recently donated $7,500 to the Petroleum Department for discretionary use. These funds allow us to start upgrading our computer lab, also used as a classroom. Four new computers are replacing older ones, along with a more economical printer. As we continue to upgrade the computer lab we will be able to acquire and utilize software that enhances our students' education. Look for Charlie's bio on our website, as he is featured as the Alumni of the Month in May!

Doug Pecore ('83) donated $1,000 to the department and was matched by ConocoPhillips. This donation is being used to purchase a projector to be mounted from the ceiling in a classroom that is used often.

Vignesh Veer Proddaturi ('06), Veronica Stevenson ('79), and Brett Wendt ('92) helped us out by attending the SPE-GCS Petroleum Engineering Recruiting Fairs this past fall in the Houston area. We sent them a new t-shirt, along with materials for the recruiting table. We received replies from students in the area, who have expressed interest in pursuing their education at New Mexico Tech.

Jeff Corey ('84) and ConocoPhillips has been one of the biggest supporters for the SPE student chapter. Erik Estrada ('05) has also worked with the SPE in helping them set-up a field trip to the Farmington area late March.

Steve Trujillo ('83) and Samson, Inc. donated towards the alumni reception during this year's ATCE in Anaheim, California.

Abel Lobato and Chevron specified a certain amount of yearly funding to be used for high school recruiting. Last summer, we were able to provide a small scholarship to students during Mini-Course, a one week program offered at NMT where high school students stay on campus, attend classes, and receive one credit hour.

JJ McGlasson enjoys his afternoon on the golf course during the SPE 49'ers Gold Rush Golf Scramble.

2007 Mini-Course students in Petroleum Engineering. Pictured with Dr. Chen
Alumni of the Month

October 2007– William Marble

Bill believes "Tech provided the educational basis that challenged [him] to think beyond the norm, and to explore new and better solutions to problems encountered in oil and gas operations. This ultimately led to our successful completion of improvements in the Barnett Shale of the Fort Worth Basin. Our work ultimately contributed to the addition of 11 counties to what was a 3 county play. Frac designs changed dramatically. Well performance improved dramatically, and our investors who risked $6.2 million on a few test wells ultimately realized over $450 million in profit in 43 months. As a result of this I was able to establish a scholarship fund at Tech.

The purpose of the fund is to provide a permanent scholarship fund for out of state students who wish to study petroleum engineering at Tech. It is open to additional contributions and its ultimate use is directed entirely by Tech staff. Scholarships are to be granted out of the earnings within the fund." Bill has been a continuous supporter of New Mexico Tech. Most recently, he and his wife, Kate, established the W.H. Marble Scholarship Endowment, which benefits petroleum engineering students from out-of-state. As students in our department start to receive this scholarship, we will be announcing them on a year basis.

Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering (BS): 1973

November 2007– Abel Lobato

Abel was born in Blanco, New Mexico and grew up in the middle of the San Juan Basin oil and gas industry. His father was a field specialist for El Paso Natural Gas and he gave [him] my first taste of the oil patch. He joined the U.S. Navy after graduation from Bloomfield High School. After the Navy he returned to the San Juan Basin. His first job in the oil and gas industry was working as a roughneck on drilling rigs. Abel began working for Chevron after he graduated and adds, "I've been with Chevron 15 years and spent that time as the PE for various fields spread through out the Permian Basin and Rocky Mountain regions."

Abel says, "I owe a sizeable portion of my good fortune to the knowledge and experience I earned from New Mexico Tech, so a goal I've set for myself is to pass along my experience and help my New Mexico Tech alumni succeed in their careers. I started recruiting for Chevron at New Mexico Tech in 1998 and have been the Chevron Recruiting Team Leader for New Mexico Tech since 2003. I truly enjoy returning in the fall to Tech to visit with Dr. Chen, Karen, faculty and all the students, old and new. Some recruiting years have been better than others but that's the way life is. What I think is important is that we choose to enjoy and make the best of today and continue to look forward with faith."

Abel has been a continued supporter for the program. We enjoy seeing him around campus and in the department when he's here during Career Fairs.

Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering (BS): 1992
February 2008– JJ McGlasson

After Graduation, JJ went to work for BJ Services in Farmington, Artesia, and Hobbs with emphasis on fracturing, acidizing, and cement (January 2001 to March 2006). He left BJ Services to Join Ely and Associates based in Houston as a QA/QC consultant focusing on Primary casing cement and fracturing QA/QC, then joined Superior Well Services in August 2007 to create/start up a new facility in Artesia.

JJ likes to keep in touch with the department on a regular basis. Last year, he joined us at the Dr. Chen Classic to help form an alumni team. The undergraduates couldn't thank him enough when he offered to pay for 20 meals at the 2007 Langdon B. Taylor Banquet - the number of undergrads we had in the department last spring. JJ's huge contribution made an even bigger impact on the SPE student chapter. More students became involved after his donation.

Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering (BS): 2000

March 2008– Veronica Stevenson

Veronica is a regular attendee during 49'ers weekend. She always joins the SPE at the golf course to catch up with students, faculty, and other alums. Some of her favorable moments during her years at Tech include being the first student to receive the Langdon Taylor Award, and working with Tom Engler in Field Camp. "We were partners with 2 others," she explains, "mapping the highest peak of the pick near Taos." Veronica also played a role in the organization and creation in honoring "Lang," as Veronica calls him. "And then they turned the tables on me and made me the first recipient."

Be sure to visit the website for pictures and more about Veronica.

Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering (BS): 1979

April 2008– Jim Linville    To be posted on the website early April.

May 2008– Charlie Birnie    To be posted on the website early May.
SPE Fall BBQ. Solomon Ampim (MS) and Assiya Bekniyazova grill burgers

Dr. Chen and students unwind at the driving range

Ghislain Fai-Yengo, Pinyok Koisuith, and Maung Aung stop discussing an assignment to look at the camera

Michael King, Kevin King, Matt Higgins and Chris Charron at the 49'ers Golf Scramble

SPE Students doing community service for a breast cancer fundraiser on campus. They won a pizza party as the student club with the highest donations. The PRRC received prizes for the department with the highest donations

Dept. Halloween Costume Contest winners-PE students Jay Geist, Josh Lugo and Bart Hegarty

Mike Kelly and JJ McGlasson at a recent recruiting dinner in Artesia, NM
The 5th Annual SPE 49’ers Gold Rush Golf Scramble was another success! We had more players on the golf course and want to thank...

**Yearly Donations (Department)**
Brian & Cheryl Luginbill
Robert Schwering (Scholarship)
Abel Lobato, Chevron
Veronica Stevenson
J. Michael Kelly
Doug Pecore
Jim Linville, Devon
JJ McGlasson
Tom and Nancy Engler
Dacun Li, BP Alaska
Julie and Josh Cruse

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**49’ers Golf Tournament Sponsors**
Chevron
ConocoPhillips (lunch)
PathFinder (brunch)
JOA Oil & Gas (student team)
NonDarcy Oil & Gas (goodie bags)
Devon
BP Alaska
Roswell Insurance Company (student team)
Overright Trucking
Characo Corporation
Synergy Operating, LLC
Extreme Coil Drilling Corp

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**Other Sponsors**

**NMT:**
Dr. Van Romero, NMT R&ED (appetizers during awards)
Office of Advancement & Alumni: iron wedge
Auxiliary Services: student team
Cheryl Pulaski: student team

**Local Businesses:**
Randy’s ACE Hardware
Bubble Machine Dry Cleaners
The Capitol Bar on the Plaza
Sundance Gifts

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The 6th Annual SPE 49’ers Gold Rush Golf Scramble will be held on Friday, October 24, 2008. More information will be posted on the website as it becomes available.
First, I would like to welcome everyone back to another semester and wish you all a Happy New Year. To our new students, on behalf of the SPE NMT student chapter, I bid you all a warm welcome. We are glad you have joined our finest community and hope you grow with us. The new year promises even greater achievements and fun events ahead for SPE. Our previous year proved challenging with myriads of activities but all in all was a success.

The previous year started with election of new SPE officers, who made the year a success; dutifully attending to their responsibilities and carrying everyone along.

With gratitude to our sponsors and donors, we were able to carry out our activities without glitches; from field trips to hosting golf tournaments; from orientation for new students to the annual SPE ATCE conference; from community volunteer services to improving career gratification of our students. Once again without the support of companies like Chevron, Devon, BP Alaska, ConocoPhillips, PathFinder, NonDarcy Oil & Gas, JOA Oil & Gas, Synergy Operators, San Juan Compression, Characo Corporation, Oversight Trucking, Roswell Insurance Company, key alumni, and our fundraising events, this would not have been fully realized. Financially, the previous year was something to be proud about; as there was no deficit in our account. We look forward to building a strong financial base, so at the end of the year, SPE NMT student chapter has a cushion for future events.

Academically, we also have cause to be happy for our students who achieve their career goals, either by securing gainful employment or receiving merit-based scholarships.

The new year promises to be even more exciting than last year. We intend to enlist the participation of more students in our activities, embark on educational field trips, host social events to encourage networking, involvement in community services, fundraisings, organizing career events, and hosting our annual Langdon Taylor Banquet. With all of these events lined up, we look forward to the unalloyed support of our donors!!! Once again, welcome back from the winter break. We hope that this semester brings all round success with your participation in SPE NMT student chapter.
Langdon Taylor Banquet

The 2008 Langdon Taylor Banquet is being held at Macey Center (NMT) for the third year.
This year's banquet is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2008, Upper Lobby.

**Time**

5:00  Social Hour  
6:00  Dinner  
7:00  Guest Speaker-Jim Linville

Awards to follow. Raffle ticket drawing held.

**Awards**

F. David Martin: Outstanding freshman student

Langdon B. Taylor: Outstanding undergraduate student who committed time and effort to the SPE student chapter

Joe Taber: Outstanding graduate student who committed time and effort to the SPE student chapter.

Distinguished Faculty: For their support of the SPE chapter

A special award will be given to Dr. Joe Taber for his 50 years of service as an SPE member.

Invitations are enclosed in this newsletter.

**RSVP by Friday, April 18, 2008.**

2007 Graduates at last year's banquet.  
Mike Kelly and Dave Martin catch up
Dr. Chen’s Classic Golf Tournament—April 26, 2008.

Spend the day before the banquet playing 18 holes and enjoy catching up with veteran and new Alumni, students and faculty. Last year we had an alumni team, a faculty team and a student team and there were a lot of laughs involved. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards are presented during the Langdon Taylor Banquet later that evening.

Registration and lunch is at 10am. 11am shot gun start
The fee is $25 and includes lunch, green fees, and a golf cart. RSVP by Friday, April 18th.

You can send in your payment or bring it with you the day of the Tournament. Checks & credit cards accepted—please do not send cash.
Meet Some Of Our Students

Some of our current students were asked a few questions, including their decision to seek an education at New Mexico Tech, and a little about their experience as a petroleum engineering student. Here is what they have to offer...

Assiya Bekniyazova is a senior from Kazakhstan. While working at an oil company, a friend and her manager recommended New Mexico Tech. The size of the school, tuition cost for an out of state resident was appealing, and learning about the Petroleum Recovery Research Center were factors in her decision to attend. She also heard about NMT being a “Best Value” (Princeton Review 2005). As a petroleum engineering student, she enjoys studying within her major and is pleased to know the professors are always available to answer questions.

Jay Geist is a freshman from La Junta, Colorado. He first learned about Tech through a bulk flyer he received in the mail. The low-cost tuition, diversity in student population, a Petroleum Engineering degree program, and discovering Tech’s #2 ranking in the Princeton Review is what helped him decide to attend. Within the Petroleum Engineering Department, Jay finds the student fun and active. He likes the fact that the students help each other with homework assignments and are willing to answer questions about classes.

Robert Blakney is a sophomore from Albuquerque, New Mexico. He had a cousin who attended Tech. Robert attends NMT because of the price and it is close to home. Robbie, as he is known by his fellow classmates, enjoys being a petroleum engineering student. He comments, “the Petroleum Department is fun! The barbeques are a blast, everyone is really friendly, and the entire faculty is very helpful.”

Sara Corman is a sophomore from Idaho. She discovered New Mexico Tech when she moved to New Mexico and was looking at various schools. She chose Tech because she feels it is a good school with a good reputation. She also believes “the Petroleum Engineering Department at Tech is great. Everyone I have met in the department has been very helpful and friendly.”

Loron Ashcroft is a junior from Farmington, New Mexico. As a resident of New Mexico, he already knew about NMT and likes that Petroleum Engineering is offered in-state. Loron adds, “nice professors recruited me.” Since his first day on campus, Loron feels he has had a good experience, has learned a lot and is progressing through his education. Loron believes “[NMT] is a good place to learn and get an education.”