A Message From the Director

“Sustainability” is one of the hottest words in today’s lexicon. Whether we are talking the environment, construction, or even health care, the term is in full force. I suppose you could say that co-op has also been “sustainable”. We are beginning our 23rd fall season of new co-op recruits, and for many years the program has continued through economic peaks and valleys. Although we are beginning our season with much anticipation for our students and employers, the last year has brought many challenges and changes to the program. First, we must mention the retirement of Janice Brown, who, after 20 years of service in the co-op program, has moved on to enjoy the fruits of her labor! I know that many of you will surely miss her prompt and dedicated service to students, university personnel, and employers. It will certainly be strange to begin this fall term without Janice, and we wish her the absolute best!

Sweet Opportunities at Hershey’s!

Come to The Hershey Company’s information session on September 28 at 6 p.m. in 310 William Pitt Union. Learn all about how YOU can land a co-op or internship with Hershey’s! You know some of their iconic brands—Hershey’s Milk Chocolate, Hershey’s Kisses, Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups—but did you know that Hershey’s employs chemical engineers to improve the production of those products, develop new products, design new production lines, and ensure the highest quality is maintained? The Process Optimization group (part of the Continuous Improvement department) is looking for hard-working, motivated chemical engineering students for co-op and internship positions. At Hershey’s, co-ops and interns contribute to real projects—running tests in the plants alongside their mentors, heading up pilot plant trials, and designing experiments to perform in the lab. During your time at Hershey’s, you’ll be responsible for a project and will get to see just how sweet a job can be. Want to hear more about co-ops and internships with Hershey’s? Beth Tirio (bttirio@hershey.com), an associate engineer with the Process Optimization group, will be at Pitt this fall to detail the opportunities available to chemical engineers at Hershey’s. Stop by an information session in 310 William Pitt Union at 6 p.m. on Monday, September 28, 2009! You won’t want to miss it!

Cooperative Education Fall Job Fair

Tuesday September 29, 2009
William Pitt Union
8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Job Fair Recruiting Event
8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Students and employers meet informally. Employers will answer questions and review and collect student resumes. Employers may set up interviews for the afternoon or contact students later in the term.

1-5 p.m.
Optional interviews
Employers may conduct one-on-one interviews, which they have scheduled during the job fair recruiting event.

Our next job fair will be held in the spring 2010. Future fair information and online registration can be accessed through our website at www.engr.pitt.edu/coop.
The Pitt Co-Op Program at McNeil Consumer Healthcare

by Rayna Nola

The McNeil Consumer Healthcare co-op program offers a number of excellent opportunities for students to learn about a manufacturing environment where they can utilize a broad range of skills. McNeil is a Johnson & Johnson company, the maker of very popular OTC brands such as Tylenol®, Motrin®, St. Joseph’s®, and Zyrtec®. Employees feel that they get the small-company environment while still having a large-company impact. The opportunities McNeil offers span many departments: for example, engineering, planning, supply chain, marketing, finance, research, and sales. Even if placed in a certain department for a specific co-op rotation, students may get involved in projects outside of their department or utilize their own skill sets to advance the current knowledge or technology in their area of the company.

One of the main pillars that Johnson & Johnson bases its business on is talent development. This means that not only can students excel at their specific job role, but also learn business techniques that will help them in their future endeavors. “Lunch and Learn” programs are offered on a monthly basis to educate employees about key initiatives driving the business forward.

McNeil’s student-run co-op program also incorporates weekly or bi-weekly meetings that enhance co-op personal and professional development. There are interview, resume, and job search workshops where recruiters come in to give advice to co-ops on what employers are looking for. There are also speakers from various areas of the company to talk about their career paths, corporate philosophies, and what they do at J&J to give co-ops a better sense of the business world.

ACUTRONIC USA Inc. Grants Opportunities to Pitt Students

ACUTRONIC USA Inc., located in Pittsburgh, Pa., is recognized as the global leader in the production of motion simulators for the aviation, space, defense, and automobile industries. ACUTRONIC produces custom and standard products used to test gyroscopes, inertial navigation systems, missiles, smart munitions, and electro-optical systems. Motion simulators accurately reproduce roll, pitch, and yaw motions in the laboratory. Products range from small single-axis rate tables and simulators to three-axis simulators for flight motion profiling to five-axis simulator systems for the missile-test industry. Students participate in and learn from the design, development, evaluation, and testing of electro-mechanical motion control systems, specifically inertial guidance test systems or flight motion simulators. Inertial guidance test systems are used to test and calibrate navigation instruments and sensors, whereas the flight motion simulators are used to emulate missile flight via hardware-in-the-loop simulations.

ACUTRONIC has placed several students from the University of Pittsburgh in its co-op program, some of them having received full-time positions upon graduation. ACUTRONIC is looking for Pitt students in the fields of electrical, mechanical, and computer science engineering. ACUTRONIC offers a diverse and innovative work environment that encourages creativity, mentoring, and teamwork. To explore available career opportunities, contact the co-op office or visit www.acutronic.com for more information.

Co-op Student of the Year, Co-op Employer of the Year

It is time once again to think of nominations for both Co-op Student of the Year and Co-op Employer of the Year for 2009. We appreciate any and all nominations.

The criteria for Co-op Student of the Year are:
1. Excellent academic record
2. Outstanding work contributions with a co-op employer (students must have three rotations completed)
3. Volunteerism or contributions to co-op or University community. Ideally, we would like to have one nominee from each department. The University of Pittsburgh can select one candidate to represent us in the National Co-op Student of the Year competition, which is sponsored by the Cooperative Education Division of the American Society for Engineering Education. The winner will be sent to Palm Springs, CA in February 2010 to receive recognition at our annual conference along with a plaque and check for $500. We have won this award twice and have had many outstanding finalists.

The criteria for Co-op Employer of the Year are:
1. Sustained commitment to cooperative education at the University of Pittsburgh
2. Quality of projects and assignments

The Co-op Employer of the Year and all Pitt Co-op Student of the Year nominees will be honored at our annual dinner scheduled for Friday, December 11, 2009, at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association.

We look forward to accepting your nominations. Nominations must be received by Thursday October 15th, 2009.

Please contact Maureen Barcic at paub2m@pitt.edu if you are interested in submitting a nomination or if you have any questions about the nomination process.
A Valuable Experience With Eaton Corporation

Matt Hussey took part in Eaton Corporation’s co-operative learning program in spring 2009 and will return to the program in the fall. Throughout the program, Matt was able to take part in several projects, contributing to their success while gaining valuable experience in the mechanical engineering field. Robb Zurek, a marketing manager at Eaton, had the opportunity to talk with Matt about his experience.

Robb Zurek: Good morning, Matt.

Matt Hussey: Good morning. RZ: Tell me a little bit about your background. Where are you from originally?

MH: I’m originally from Monroeville, and my decision to go to the University of Pittsburgh was influenced by my family to a certain degree. My siblings stayed in-state, and I followed the same path. My college choice came down to Pitt vs. Penn State—obviously both state schools. I ultimately chose Pitt because it felt like the right fit.

RZ: How has that decision worked out?

MH: Well, high school was relatively easy for me, and college challenged me right away in terms of a larger workload and the need for more personal responsibility. I struggled in my first year but realized I had to step up and accept the challenge presented to me. Fortunately, I had had a similar mentality to academics and completed my junior year at Pitt with a strong GPA, and I’m pretty proud of that.

RZ: What is your field of study at Pitt?

MH: Mechanical engineering. I was steered toward engineering by my high school teachers, and I already enjoyed math and science. Engineering was a natural fit. Like I said, though, it was certainly a large jump from high school to a university engineering class load.

RZ: What were you looking for in a co-op opportunity?

MH: I was looking for an opportunity to get exposure to the “working world” of engineering. Eaton turned out to be a great fit because of its engineering pedigree and commitment to co-operative education programs.

RZ: What is your field of study at Eaton?

MH: I started in May 2008, working in the Residential Products Division. That was really where my knowledge base of circuit breaker technology took root. I then transitioned into working with the low-voltage molded-case circuit breaker group, and it was neat to see the similarities between that and miniature breakers. After that, I had the opportunity to work on a design team with other engineers for a new product release. I really appreciated and enjoyed the product R&D process. I was able to be engaged in the process thoroughly, only stopping at the prototype stage.

As my time at Eaton went on, I was amazed at how much overlap there is between different areas of the business.

RZ: How will the time spent at Eaton assist you in your future studies?

MH: Eaton taught me about the need for balance between the traditional engineering and professional interaction components of a career. The hands-on engineering and “tinkering” was great, but I had the chance to meet and work with many different people, make presentations, and work on teams. It showed me that there’s more to being an engineer than just sitting in a lab all day.

RZ: What was the most enjoyable part of your Co-Op?

MH: As stressful as it was, I’d say it was the chance to work on the evolution of a product from its infancy through to the prototyping stage. I gained a new respect for the complexities of engineering project management.

RZ: And the toughest?

MH: Same thing, actually. It was my first chance outside of a classroom environment to take responsibility for management of a project, and that was an enormous challenge. Reviewing competitors’ products, comparing and testing different concepts, even mocking up test versions of the product—all done on a tight schedule. I became well acquainted with my whiteboard calendar, that’s for sure!

RZ: You’re going to be back at Eaton this fall for another co-op, right?

MH: Yes, I will be back this fall, although I don’t know what I’ll be doing just yet. I’m looking forward to continuing my education here.

RZ: Of what you learned this year, what will you be able to use in your career?

MH: My answer to this question is different than what it might have been a year ago. I have become very interested in new product development, and I know that I want to be as well-rounded a professional as possible. Therefore, it’s the project management skills that will probably be most beneficial. I hope I can manage more projects and participate in the Leadership Development Program.

RZ: What were the top three things you learned during your co-op with Eaton last spring?

MH: First, without a doubt is the engineering knowledge I gained. There’s an awful lot you can’t learn from just a textbook. Second, it was the revelation of a career’s building blocks. I was able to see the path that a rookie engineer might take throughout his or her career. Third, it was the chance to grow my networking and presentation skills. Eaton really gives you the chance to interact with many different people, and I’m grateful for that.

RZ: In closing, is there any other information you’d like to share?

MH: Only that I am lucky to have been encouraged to identify different ways to cultivate my leadership traits. Since the start of my second rotation at Eaton, I have become interested in being a part of community outreach activities like returning to my high school to speak to physics students, becoming treasurer of the Pitt’s American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and coordinating corporate programs for them as a Professional Liaison. I’m even set to work during Pitt’s “Arrival Survival,” which is our new-student welcome days. I was never engaged in those kinds of activities before my time at Eaton.
Interview Skills Presentation

*by Tony Mobley*

We are pleased to announce that Tony Mobley (from ANSYS, Inc.) will be presenting his interviewing skills workshop again this fall Wednesday September 23rd, 5-7:00pm in 1175 Benedum Hall (Kresge Auditorium). Mobley always has many valuable interviewing suggestions for students who are interested in obtaining co-op positions through our office. Also, Mobley gives our students a company prospective regarding the merits of co-op. Students who wish to attend may contact Maureen Barcic at paub2m@pitt.edu

New Addition to US Airway’s Recruitment Team

Recently, US Airways has had a new addition to the Human Resources Recruitment Team: Alison Nail, Senior Recruiter. Alison has more than 14 years of recruiting top talent for several Fortune 500 companies nationwide. She specializes in matching college students to their desired career paths and goals, within the organization, through internships and co-op programs.

“I am excited to enter into the airline industry after several years in healthcare. US Airways is quickly becoming an “employer of choice” because of the amazing employee benefits and mission to be reliable, convenient and where appearance (looks right, works right) is important and so grateful to be a part of this amazing team! I am looking forward to partnering with University of Pittsburgh and connecting students who desire to be the next leaders and professionals in our organization.”

US Airways is the fifth largest domestic airline employing nearly 34,000 aviation professionals. US Airways, US Airways Shuttle, and US Airways Express operate approximately 4,000 flights per day and serve more than 230 communities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, the Caribbean, and Latin America. US Airways is a member of Star Alliance, which provides connections to 841 destinations in 157 countries worldwide. Additional information can be found at www.usairways.com.

Junior and senior engineering students may apply for co-op programs with US Airways in September 2009 for the spring 2010 rotation in Pittsburgh, Phoenix, or Charlotte. You may e-mail your resume and cover letter to Alison.nail@usairways.com for consideration or call Alison at 480-693-8630 for further information.

My Co-op Experience with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute

Nicole Benoit, a chemical engineer, is filling a 2L carboy with surface seawater on a ship just south of Bermuda. The water will be filtered, and the DMS (dimethyl sulfide) gas produced by the collected bacteria will be measured.

In the ocean, DMS is quickly released to the atmosphere and contributes to cloud formation, making it climatically important.

Nicole is recovering a rosette after a deep sea cast off the coast of Argentina. The rosette consists of twelve 30 L bottles filled with seawater from various depths at one location. An attached instrument measures data such as pressure and temperature, and sends the information back up to the ship in real-time.

“This is an amazing opportunity to supplement classroom learning, to develop career goals, and to meet a company and its employees. The employees at LMI are all eager to help me learn more about the company, my field work, the necessary software, and the area. Everyone has been understanding and approachable.”

—Rebecca Terry

LMI