

NOTES

FROM DEAN CLARK

May 16, 2016,

Dear members of the Hajim School community:

Thanks to the continuing generosity of Edmund Hajim, we are able to honor our outstanding Hajim School faculty members with a new award. No one is more deserving of this award than **Nick Vamivakas**, Assistant Professor of Quantum Optics and Quantum Physics, who was announced as the **inaugural recipient of the Edmund A. Hajim Outstanding Faculty Award** at yesterday's undergraduate diploma ceremony. Nick is being honored for his excellence in teaching, research, and service to The Institute of Optics, the Hajim School, and our University. Recent examples include the [G. Graydon '58 and Jane W. Curtis Award for Nontenured Faculty Teaching Excellence](#) he received last year; the prestigious [NSF CAREER award](#) he received this spring, and his ongoing involvement in the highly successful Photon Camp that brings high school students to The Institute each summer for an introduction to optics.

Ed is also endowing our annual **Outstanding Staff Award**, which will henceforth be named in his honor. This year's recipient, also announced at the diploma ceremony, is **Bob Marcotte**, our communications project manager, for "excellence in the art of communication and commitment to community building" within the Hajim School and the University. Through this weekly memo, our Full Spectrum Newsletters, our recruitment brochure and stories at our web sites, Bob has worked hard to tell the story of our educational programs, our research, and our faculty, staff and student achievements to our Hajim School family and beyond. Please join me in congratulating both Nick and Bob.

And congratulations as well to our **Class of '16** graduates and to all of our faculty and staff members who guided them along the path to a diploma. You can read more about yesterday's diploma ceremony [here](#). Of the 340 seniors who were eligible to receive diplomas yesterday, **29.1 percent are females, 9.1 percent are under-represented minorities, and 21.8 percent are international students**. I am especially encouraged to see that **20.8 percent of our seniors studied abroad**. We're getting closer to our 25 percent goal!

For the first time, the Department of **Computer Science led in the percentage of total diplomas awarded**. That breakdown is as follows: Computer Science 20.8 percent, Mechanical Engineering 19.6 percent, Biomedical Engineering 18.8 percent, Chemical Engineering 15 percent, Electrical and Computer Engineering 12 percent (including Audio and Music Engineering 1.8 percent), and The Institute of Optics 10.3 percent. Engineering Science, an interdepartmental degree, accounted for 3.5 percent. This reflects the **more even distribution of students across departments** that we have seen in the last few years.

Congratulations to these **winners of the tenth annual Mark Ain Business Model Competition**. First Place -- \$10,000 cash prize and space in the UR Student Incubator at High Tech Rochester -- goes to the OLimits team and their write-virtually-anywhere smartpen. Members are **Facundo**

Ciancio, Ian Lin, Alvise Pallaro and David Thomas, all '16 (MS in Technical Entrepreneurship and Management or TEAM). Second place -- \$2,500 cash prize – goes to the StimSense team with a medical device that objectively quantifies depth of anesthesia throughout surgery. Members are **Martin Gitomer** '16 (MS in Biomedical Engineering), **Alin Ponici** '14 (BS in Biomedical Engineering) '16 (MS in TEAM), **Shwe Pyie** '16 (MS in Biomedical Engineering), and **Jia Shi** '16 (MS in TEAM). Third place -- \$1,000 cash prize – goes to Endogenesis and its label-free, real time, in-vivo cancer detection. Members are **Aaron Allen** '16 (MS in TEAM), **Ryan Dawes** (PhD candidate in Neuroscience), **Benjamin Feifke** '15 (BS in Optics), '16 (MS in Data Science), and **Anchal Sharma** '15 (MS in Optics).

This week, about two dozen graduate students and young faculty members will have three minutes each to present their ideas for changing the world. The winner of this, our **second annual Falling Walls competition**, which **starts at 2 p.m. this Wednesday in Sloan Auditorium**, will earn an all-expenses paid trip to the international Falling Walls conference in Berlin, Germany, this fall. Please plan on stopping by to support these young researchers and scholars; it will be an exciting opportunity to hear about cutting edge ideas that may very well change our world.

As always, keep me updated, and have a great week.

Robert L. Clark
Professor and Dean



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