August 8, 2016

Dear members of the Hajim School community:

Twenty incoming freshmen interested in engineering, many of them first generation or underrepresented minority students, have been working in our labs the last two weeks, learning the essentials of machine shop, 3-D printing, electronic fabrication, and computer aided design. This is part of their four-week college preparation through the University’s Early Connection Opportunity program. Offered by the Office of Minority Student Affairs, this program prepares students for classes, informs them about services they can use when they need help, and introduces them to social life on campus. Monsurat Fabanwo ’17 of electrical and computer engineering, knows full well the benefits of ECO. She participated as an incoming freshman, and says the program helped her identify some of her strengths and weaknesses, gave her a taste of the structured engineering classes she would be taking, and introduced her to engineering labs. “It allows you to connect with the campus and faculty before starting as a freshmen,” she says. Now, for the second summer, she's helping to mentor ECO students, showing them how to read schematics, solder, and build circuit boards. This program nicely aligns with our efforts to recruit and retain first generation and underrepresented minority students. Thanks to Monsurat and all the other Hajim School faculty, staff and students who have been helping out this summer.

Congratulations to Douglas Kelley, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, who has received a $273,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to collaborate with Antoine Allanore, assistant professor of metallurgy at MIT, on overcoming the challenges to using ultrasound to provide real-time imaging and flow measurements of molten metal during metal casting. Compared to other methods, ultrasound could provide a much more detailed monitoring of fluid flows and solidification patterns, which would improve the efficiency of the process and the quality of its products. Seeing that more than 90 percent of U.S. manufactured goods contain cast metal components, this research could have a major impact. Read more here.

Thanks to our department chairs, senior leadership team members and University colleagues Scott Steele, Greg Gdowski, Lewis Rothberg, Michael Campbell, Steven Manly, Joseph Testani and Jane Gatewood for participating Friday in our day-long Department Chairs’ Retreat at the Laboratory for Laser Energetics. This was immensely helpful as part of the process of mapping out key research and education initiatives for the Hajim School. We covered a lot of ground. I am very appreciative of the input that they and so many others have been providing this summer as I get settled in as dean.

Have a great week!

Your dean,
Wendi Heinzelman