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# DEANotes

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## NIVENS NOTES

~~Kudos~~ Change Edition

"It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change." -- *Charles Darwin*

So, normally the last DEANotes of the year is a Kudos edition. This year, in the spirit of change, I thought we'd move the Kudos to the presentation and reserve this space for what is on everyone's mind, the "C" word. It's a word of never-ending happiness, where you can always see the sun, day or night....oh, wait those are the incorrect words to a Prince song that actually describes how the "C" word has made many of us feel this semester.

Things are moving quickly on the "C" front. OWGs, CICs, FAs, sub-OWGs and *IBSDs (ha ha)* are keenly focused on the OWG leadership documents and OWG trackers and they are holding meetings to produce monthly and weekly reports that detail the information that will be later distributed to the campuses through additional paperwork in the form of consensus recommendations that are individually listed on a single sheet of paper with an explanation no longer than seven full lines. (intentional run-on sentence) I do wonder though what will happen to that wayward OWG that submits their explanation and it has an extra word on the 8th line. Be certain that I will work hard to make sure that research is done and I will report back to you the consequences. In the interest of science, of course!

In all seriousness, everyone involved is working hard to complete the process and preserve the Armstrong CST identity, programs, and culture. At this time, we do expect that our college will be split into 3 separate colleges, but we are not yet sure how and when that will happen or how the new colleges will function on this campus.

I can honestly say that this semester, and quite frankly this past year, has not been what I expected when I returned to the college in June. It is not just the effects of the "M" word (Matthew) and the "C" word that were unexpected. The level of involvement, perseverance and creativity I witnessed from our faculty, staff and students has impressed me greatly. I have seen many wonderful accomplishments from our students, our faculty and our staff. We have much to be proud of and we will always be close-knit colleagues sharing a dedication to our students, a commitment to the teacher-scholar model of excellence and a deep love for the campus and college we have built over the years. These core values will not be altered no matter the change that may come to our day to day operations.

"Change is hard because people overestimate the value of what they have and underestimate the value of what they may gain by giving that up" – James Belasco and Ralph Stayer

I wish you each a great, productive, restful and quiet summer!

# Community Outreach and Student Success

The end of an academic year is always a bit of relief mixed with a realization that the next one will soon be upon us. It is also a good time to consider our role in the community and how this involvement can go beyond service and benefit students as well. The Engineering Studies Program (ESP) would like to discuss a few endeavors we feel have been beneficial to our students, our program, and the community at large.

**Engineering Design Challenge**

On Saturday, April 29, 2017, the Engineering Studies Program hosted its 4th annual Engineering Design Challenge (EDC). This year, nine local high school teams, with the help of Armstrong student coaches and local engineering professionals, designed, built, and competed with electric-powered go-karts. The teams were given design constraints, course designs, a motor kit, and a limited budget. Local businesses acted as sponsors, supporters, and even team mentors that provided expertise to the high school teams. As Dr. Priya Goeser notes, "The 2017 EDC challenged teams to not only sharpen their engineering design skills but also encouraged creativity and developed soft skills, such as team building and communication. These skills are essential for success in all STEM disciplines, which are a critical part of today's education."

This competition has allowed students and faculty in the ESP to be involved with our local high schools and their students at a hands-on level, as well as with industry professionals and their companies. This has created a number of mutually beneficial relationships to develop locally, but more importantly, gives both Armstrong and high school students real-world engineering and teamwork experiences.

This year's winner was Savannah Christian Preparatory School, which took home the $500 cash prize for Best Overall Design. For more information, please visit: http://engineering.armstrong.edu/edc/

**Engineering Learning Center**

Many of the Armstrong student coaches also serve as student workers in our Engineering Learning Center (ELC). Located in UH 240, the ELC contains three whiteboards and six computers, with all of our course software, funded through Tech Fee requests. The room is staffed using a combination of International Work Study Program (IWSP) student workers and Supplemental Instructors (SIs), funded through the CST Dean's Office. In collaboration with the STEM Success Center, the ELC provides engineering-specific tutoring for students.

The intent of the ELC is to use all of our workers both inside and outside of the classroom to avoid the stigma of "needing a tutor" or "seeking help." Our students are actively involved in lab sessions alongside faculty where they assist students. They additionally hold small or one-on-one peer mentoring and tutoring sessions on a walk-in basis every Monday-Thursday during the semester. The ELC is also used as a peer learning room, providing a central hub for students to collaborate with classmates who are often in the same courses. This has allowed students to increase both their work ethic as well as their academic success.

As one former student noted, the ELC "… had a huge impact on my ability to successfully complete the RETP [transfer] program at Armstrong. My freshman year I struggled through classes, since I tried to do things on my own. I did not know how to study effectively, and what it took to succeed. During my sophomore year I was in the tutoring center [every day]. I met some of my closest friends. And my grade[s] significantly turned around. I was able to complete my program on time, and now I'm a semester from graduating from a top ranking institution."

For more information and testimonials, please visit: http://engineering.armstrong.edu/elc/

**Thanks**

Special thanks to our local businesses, high schools, and everyone else involved with the EDC since 2013; without the collaborative efforts of everyone, these endeavors would not nearly be as successful as they have been.

# Thomas Reams
# Armstrong Alum, 2014
# dual degree in Biology & Chemistry
# "Immerse yourself in all that Armstrong has to offer"

Thomas Reams spoke to me by telephone between his patient rounds at Mercer University School of Medicine. He is a third year medical student at the Savannah campus and plans to pursue residency training in Anesthesiology. He graduated from Armstrong in 2014 with a dual degree in Biology and Chemistry and he recently returned to speak at the Student Scholars Symposium.

Growing up in Andersonville, Georgia, his mother ran a dairy farm and his father worked in construction. The family moved to Kansas for ten years, and returned to Georgia where Thomas completed high school in Effingham County.

"I heard good things about Armstrong's science programs and it didn't take long before I figured out that I had a passion for biology and chemistry."

In his junior year at Armstrong, while doing online research, he came across the early admission process that many medical schools offer. He applied through this process at Mercer University School of Medicine and was accepted.

He remarked that for many students, pursuing medicine is not easy. They may not have the guidance they need to succeed and must rely on the faculty mentors and advisors that Armstrong provides.

"I am a first generation college graduate who had no connections to the medical field. It was the mentoring by Dr. Feske, Dr. Weiland and Dr. Brofft that gave me the advice and support I needed and kept me on track. In many cases, if you don't connect with faculty members, you won't know what it takes to get admitted to medical school."

Thomas elaborated on the importance of his participation in the Emerging Leaders Program, which taught him how to develop skills and come out of his shell. He describes himself as somewhat of an introvert. He took the advice of Bill Kelso and managed to get involved with the Navigate Orientation program. This experience helped him grow as a person and appreciate his college experience even more.

"Students need to immerse themselves in everything Armstrong has to offer. Don't just look at the end goal of getting a degree, grow and develop as a person."

I asked Thomas what advice he could provide to Armstrong students just starting out with the intention of applying to medical school, this is what he had to say:

- Getting good grades almost goes without saying; a good MCAT score stems from good grades in school.
- Get involved in a variety of different activities, research, and leadership opportunities; specifically, the mentorship associated with research is extremely helpful.
- Don't be afraid to bounce new ideas off your mentors.
- Letters of recommendation are huge. Someone who knows you really well has the ability to write you a stronger letter.
- It's a good idea to have a backup plan.

We talked about his backup plan and he did remark that a backup plan can't hurt if medical school does not work out. He knew that if it didn't work out the first time he applied, he would have continued to do research and reapply the following year.

"Armstrong did a fantastic job preparing me for medical school and I encourage students to take advantage of all it has to offer."


May 6th—Graduation
May 8th—First week of Summer Research Session
May 9th—Maymester Begins
May 29th—Memorial Day
June 5th—First Day of Class (Full & Minimester I)
July 3rd—Minimester II Begins
July 4th—Independence Day
August 7th—Last Week of Summer Research Sesson
September 15th—SRS Final Report Due

## New Tenure and Promotion Deadlines

*August 18th—Application due to Dept. Head
September 22nd—Dept. Head due to Dean
November 10th—T & P committee due to Dean
*Please check if your Dept. Head requires a different due date