

Increasing the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers

Upcoming Events Spring 2006

AdvanceVT Faculty Lunch with Visiting Scholar Dr. Theresa Mayer

April 21, 2006, noon – 1:30

Location TBD

Join Dr. Theresa Mayer

for lunch and informal networking.

Dr. Mayer is a professor of electrical engineering at Penn State University. Dr. Mayer's research and teaching interests are in the areas of electronic materials and devices with an emphasis on III-V compound semiconductors for high-speed and opto-electronic circuit applications. Dr. Mayer received an NSF CAREER Award for the fabrication and characterization of photonic crystals. She is an active member of the IEEE Electron Device Society, the Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society, and the American Society of Engineering Educators. Lunch will be provided. [Registration is required.](#)



Transforming the Professoriate Conference Registration Opens April 10th!

Virginia Tech will host a national conference for graduate students and post-docs preparing for faculty careers July 20-22, 2006, at the Skelton Conference Center. The goal of this conference is to provide female graduate students in science and engineering with the tools to plan for a successful career in academia. With a special emphasis on women of color, the conference will also serve as a preliminary faculty recruitment effort by providing a forum for exposing nationally-competitive senior female doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers from around the country to Virginia Tech's science and engineering programs. Graduate students must first apply and be selected to attend. Please visit http://www.advance.vt.edu/2006_Conference/conf.html for the preliminary agenda and for more information.

Please visit www.advance.vt.edu for more information on upcoming events!

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National Science Foundation Site Visit

On June 8 & 9, 2006, the National Science Foundation (NSF) will visit the Virginia Tech campus to assess the progress of the *AdvanceVT* program. Virginia Tech is the recipient of a five-year ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant from the National Science Foundation designed to increase the participation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers through comprehensive and creative strategies aimed at changing institutional culture and practices. As this is year three of the Advance grant, the review committee will interview university leaders, *AdvanceVT* program participants and others on campus to assess Virginia Tech's progress.

2006-2007 *AdvanceVT* Seed Grant Recipients

AdvanceVT research seed grants provide funding to support junior faculty developing a successful proposal for external research funding. The grants may support graduate students to acquire data needed for writing a more competitive proposal, development of new research skills, development of research collaborations, or travel to visit funding agencies.



Dr. Linda Dahlgren, Assistant Professor, Large Animal Clinical Sciences

Dr. Dahlgren proposes to lay the groundwork necessary to establish an expertise in the application of stem cell technologies to tendon healing.



Dr. Zhiliang Fan, Assistant Professor, Biological Systems Engineering

Dr. Fan's research is focused on developing biocatalyst and biocatalytic strategies to economically convert abundant renewable resources into valuable products with a minimal impact on the environment.



Dr. Linda Kennedy, Assistant Professor, Geography

Dr. Kennedy's research addresses the emerging field of paleotempestology, which aims to reconstruct past hurricanes from geological proxies found in coastal lagoons and wetlands.



Dr. Tanya LeRoith, Assistant Professor, Biomedical Sciences

Dr. LeRoith's proposed research addresses characterization of the protective immune response to hepatitis E virus (HEV), an extremely understudied cause of hepatitis, especially in pregnant women.

"The seed grant allowed me to gain new knowledge and make contact that I would not have had otherwise."

-2005-2006 Seed Grant Recipient

2006-2007 AdvanceVT Seed Grant Recipients, Continued

Starting this summer, the U.S. Education Department plans to conduct in-depth investigations of whether selected colleges and universities are complying with federal anti-bias laws in their treatment of women in math and science. The planned investigations on how women are treated in science would mark a huge expansion of federal enforcement activities on behalf of women in science. A Government Accountability Office report in 2004, which criticized enforcement as inadequate, found that in the previous 11 years, the Education Department had conducted a total of three compliance reviews with regard to how colleges and universities handled science and gender equity.

*"Federal Inquiry on Women in Science"
InsideHigherEd.com
March 28, 2006*



Dr. Jennifer Ryan, Assistant Professor, Mathematics
Dr. Ryan's proposed research will focus on effectively modeling shocks using the discontinuous Galerkin numerical method.



Dr. Dorothea Tholl, Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences
Dr. Tholl proposes to explore the function of volatile compounds in plant defense against soil-borne pathogens and insect pests by employing plant molecular and genomics tools, root-volatile metabolite profiling, and olfactometer assays.

2006-2007 AdvanceVT Ph.D. Fellows

AdvanceVT Ph.D. fellowships support students in science and engineering who aspire to pursue an academic career in fields in which women are underrepresented in faculty positions. In addition to financial support, the recipients receive intensive mentoring to help them prepare for a faculty career.



Jessica Homyack , Ph.D. Fellow

Fish & Wildlife

For her dissertation research, Jessica is investigating the experimental effects of forest regeneration methods on salamander populations in Virginia and West Virginia.



Michelle Soupier , Ph.D. Fellow

Biological Sciences & Engineering

Michelle is currently researching the transport of fecal bacteria from pasturelands to determine if cells are transported to surface waters in the planktonic or attached phase.

2006-2007 *AdvanceVT* Leadership Development Program Participants

The *AdvanceVT* Leadership Development Program selects a small cohort of women faculty from across the university who demonstrate an interest in and potential to assume leadership roles to participate in an assessment and follow up activities designed to build specific leadership skills. Based on a self-assessment and input from colleagues, participants develop individualized plans to enhance their strengths and minimize their weaknesses. In addition, they participate in seminars and workshops with current leaders at Virginia Tech and outside experts.

Dr. Kim Ellis

Associate Professor
Industrial & Systems Engineering



Dr. Shannon Jarrott

Associate Professor
Human Development

Dr. Eva Marand

Associate Professor
Chemical Engineering



Dr. Vicky Soghomonian

Associate Professor
Physics

Dr. Brenda Winkel

Professor
Biological Sciences



"The program has prepared me to pursue positions and I have started to look. I feel like I am coming from a place of strength in pursuing a leadership position."

-2005-2006 Leadership Development Program Participant