The College of Science and Technology hosted its first Student Achievement Ceremony on Monday, April 27 at 6 p.m. in Muse Banquet Room. Ms. Nancy Artis, a 1973 biology alumna, vice rector of the RU Board of Visitors and friend of the college offered the keynote address. The purpose of the ceremony was to honor outstanding students such as Dean’s Scholars, scholarship recipients, student scientists and their research, honors society members and the Dean’s Student Advisory Council. Each department had the opportunity to honor their own award winners and faculty. During the ceremony, Dr. Jeff Pittges was honored for excellence in teaching. The Excellence in Teaching award recipient was nominated for and voted on by the college’s student leaders.

(right) Ms. Nancy Artis offers the keynote address.

(left) Dean J. Orion Rogers and Dr. Art Carter honored the CSAT Dean’s Scholars during the ceremony. (left to right) Dean Rogers, Brian Prall, Trevor Twyford, Amanda Neighbors, Kory Wayne Koch, James Stanley Gilbert, Gabrielle Miles Ness, Laurel Purdum and Dr. Art Carter.

Chemistry Students Receive University Honors

(left to right) Brittany Christian receives an Outstanding Student Award, Chris Estes is named to Who’s Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities, and Amanda Neighbors receives an Outstanding Student Award during a recent university-wide award ceremony.
The CSAT college faculty and students represented the college well during the 18th Annual Undergraduate/Graduate Student Engagement Forum on April 19 – April 23 on campus. The forum offered faculty and students an opportunity to publicly discuss the results of their collaborative research.

CSAT students and their faculty mentors presented close to 50 research projects during the week-long forum. Project faculty mentors include Donna and Cliff Boyd, Bob Sheehy, Rhett Herman, Hwajung Lee, Cassady Yoder, Georgia Hammond, Mark Cline, Christine Small, Tara Phelps-Durr, Cindy Burkhardt, Joe Wirgau, Justin Anderson, Karen Franci, Tim Fuhrer, Gary Cote and Jeremy Wodjak.

(top left) Faculty/Student Collaborative Grant recipients Jason Greenway, Tyler Jamison and Megan Beaton discuss their research Arsenic Resistance Genes in Bacteria from Arsenic Mine. Their faculty mentor is Georgia Hammond.

(top right) Faculty/Student Collaborative Grant recipients Derrick Matthews, Beth Meyer and Christine Small discuss their research Sustainable Harvesting of Black Cohosh, a Southern Appalachian Medicinal Plant.

(bottom center) Faculty/Student Collaborative Grant recipient Angela Via discusses her collaborative research with Tara Phelps-Durr titled Determining if HIRA and ASF1 Physically Interact in Arabidopsis Thaliana During Development.
College Commencement Ceremony at Noon in Cupp Stadium

The CSAT Commencement ceremony will be Saturday, May 9 at noon in Cupp Stadium, immediately following the Main Ceremony. Faculty should gather for line-up on the ground floor of Cupp (soccer stadium) under the stadium seats. There will be a stage on the track and graduates and faculty will be seated on the track.

The procession will begin with the graduates, followed by the faculty and will process down the steps to the track. The faculty will process down the middle aisle (between the students) to the front to their chairs. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the faculty will form two lines by the steps exiting the track. The students will process in between the faculty lines, similar to what the college did last year. As is stated in the Faculty Handbook, all faculty are expected to attend Commencement unless they have been excused by the Dean.

For more information on Commencement, including the severe weather plan, please go to the web page:
http://www.radford.edu/~registra/web_2009/commencement/spring_09/commencementspring09.htm

Software Engineering Students Create Website to Help Incarcerated Youth

Dr. Tracy Lewis’ senior software engineering students Jared Eskey, Gregory Sosa, Jason Welch and Matthew Hayes created a website for Pen Pal Mentors for Incarcerated Youth to match mentors with youth behind bars. The website also provides training materials for mentors.

Schnavia Bronson, Founder and Executive Director of Pen Pal Mentors traveled from Atlanta to be on campus for the presentation. Students began the project in January. Bronson said that the first step in the creation process was to sit down and list all of the functions that she wanted included in the site. “I was clear about what I wanted and the students were very easy to work with and professional,” says Bronson.

“I’m most excited about the matching feature in which you can match a potential mentor with a mentee based on skills and interests,” says Bronson.

Pen Pal Mentors’ vision is to inspire, encourage and empower youth of the Department of Juvenile Justice to achieve their fullest potential by providing them with adult mentors, tools and tangible resources that will help prepare them for a brighter productive future.

The software engineering students enjoyed working on the project because it was a culmination to all of their hard work in classes throughout their time at RU. “We are able to see it come together in the end,” says Eskey. We applied everything we learned into this project and knowing how to work within a team, with clients and by deadline will help us in our future career,” adds Eskey.

The project did have its challenges. “We learned how to overcome obstacles by thinking creatively. For example, we figured out why some of the application would work on one server and not the other. It was frustrating, but we solved the problem,” says Sosa.

Welch was the project manager and has already used this experience during a recent job interview. “I was asked if I had any leadership experience. Because of my role in this project, I had a place to start the discussion about leadership,” says Welch.

The students said this project was unlike any other. “It was a lot of fun presenting this project to the client. It was motivating because I knew it was for a good cause,” says Welch.

“You feel like a better person after completing it because it is actually charitable, you know that you will be helping kids,” says Eskey.

“This is a different type of project. With a project like this you’ll think about it even after you turn it in. We’re not doing it just for a grade,” adds Sosa.

Says Eskey, “we’re doing it to help out.”

(1-r) Jared Eskey, Jason Welch, Schnavia Bronson and Gregory Sosa (Matthew Hayes not pictured)

“…”This is a different type of project. With a project like this, you’ll think about it even after you turn it in. We’re not doing it just for a grade.”
— Gregory Sosa, senior software engineering student
CSAT Faculty Receive Summer Research Grants

Information technology faculty member Hui Wang and geography department chair Bernd Kuennecke were recently awarded 2009 Summer Research Grants from Radford University.

Wang will conduct exploratory case study research on People-to-People lending, “a relatively new e-commerce phenomenon that has the potential to radically change the structure of the loan segment of the financial industry,” says Wang in her proposal.

Kuennecke will research land use and land tenure in Salinas de Guarana, Ecuador by mapping from remote sensing data and verifying the mapping on the ground in that country. He is testing the hypothesis that sustainable economic development in agricultural regions has the least negative impact on land. He is investigating an agricultural region that began the development of sustainable agriculture four decades ago.

Students Create Web Application for Pulaski County Hospital

Information technology students Brandon Shaver and Jason Welch created a project for Pulaski Hospital nurses to help them provide the correct dosage of medication for patients. This project was created for Dan Spillman’s ITEC 485 class. It is a decision support application in conjunction with hospital pharmacists to create an Aminoglycoside dosing program that pharmacists and nurses can use in administering medications to treat aerobic bacterial infections.

“I think they have a rather unique project that is community outreach. I like to have students be creative and discover ways that they can give back,” says Spillman.

“The pharmacists wanted an application that was small, lightweight, portable, uncluttered and dead simple to use. We think we've done it,” said Shaver and Welch.

(left to right) Brandon Shaver and Jason Welch present their project during Spillman’s ITEC 485 class.