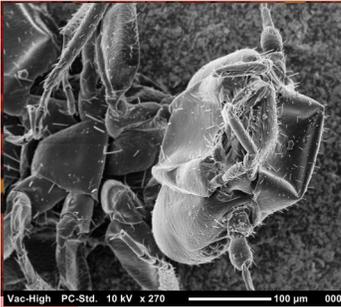


October 6, 2011



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From the Dean's Desk

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Ioffe Interviews President of Belarus

As part of an invited group of eight American analysts visiting Minsk to talk with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenka and members of his administration, geospatial science professor Grigory Ioffe was eager to ask a question of Lukashenka.

Sitting with the group around a huge table, Ioffe and the group heard remarks from the president before a question-and-answer session. Ioffe, with a microphone in front of him, waited for his turn, but his patience began to wane as time ran out.

Ioffe, who is writing a book about Lukashenka, knew there was only one thing he could do. "I thought, well, I'm not going to be arrested, and I pressed the button after they said time was up. I said, 'Mr. President, I am writing a book about you.' (Actually I wasn't writing anything yet.) 'Would you agree to give me an interview?'"

Lukashenka's chief of staff passed a paper to him. "Apparently each of us was characterized somehow," Ioffe said, smiling. After reviewing the paper, the president looked at Ioffe and said, "With a title like

this, how can I say no?" Lukashenka was referring to the professor's 2008 book, "Understanding Belarus and How Western Foreign Policy Misses the Mark," which contains a chapter about Lukashenka.

Ioffe (right) with Lukashenka



Less than a week later, Ioffe's joy turned to disappointment when the president was proclaimed the victor in what many international monitors say was a flawed and fraudulent election. Lukashenka's January inauguration was boycotted by Western countries.

However, several months later the persistent professor made a call to Minsk to repeat his request for an interview. He was pleasantly surprised by the answer he received. From there, Ioffe, whose mother was born in Belarus, journeyed to Minsk twice for interviews with Lukashenka.

Ioffe tossed some tough questions to Lukashenka during their two meetings

this summer, asking him about the Dec. 19 elections, the disappearance of four people from Belarus in 1999 and 2000, and about his relationships with other leaders. "I extracted all of the controversies in different stages of Lukashenka's political career," Ioffe said. "There have been quite a few dark spots, situations that have never been highlighted and explained."

In addition to interviewing Lukashenka, Ioffe talked with the president's chief of staff and his deputy chief of staff, as well as Belarus's foreign minister, deputy foreign minister, economics minister and state property minister. He also interviewed several people who oppose Lukashenka and met with Michael Scanlan, the top U. S. diplomat in Minsk.

Numerous books have been written about Lukashenka, but Ioffe's will be the first in English. The professor said the focus of the book is on the president, but much of it will be about Belarus.

"You have to understand his country if you really want to assess him as a leader," Ioffe said.

-Chad Osborne, University Relations

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Upcoming Events:

- Fantasy Worlds: Exploring the Limits of Life, Oct. 6, 11 and 13, 7:30 p.m., RU Planetarium
- MES Lecture Series, Bugs and Burials: How forensic entomology assists grave investigations, Nov. 1, 7 p.m. in Bonnie Auditorium

Alumni Offer Advice During Meeting and Presentation



The College of Science and Technology Alumni Advisory Council met with the dean, program coordinators, chairs, director, and members of the Center for the Sciences building committee on Friday, September 30.

Alumni attending included:

- Mr. Rob Mancini, Chief Technology Officer for Washington, D.C.
- Dr. Earnie Paylor, President of WorldTech International
- Dr. Racquel Collins-Underwood, cancer researcher, St. Jukes Children's Research Hospital

- Mr. Mark Hanna, Research and Development Manager, Johnson & Johnson
- Mr. Chris Flor, Director of Consulting, Southwest Virginia Center of Excellence, CGI Federal
- Mr. Seth Peery, Senior GIS Architect, Enterprise GIS Research and Development Administration department at Virginia Tech

The group discussed the latest college accomplishments, changes and the planning for the new building. Distinguished alumni from many college programs offered insight into the needs of companies with employees in science, technology and math. In addition to proficiency in the STEM disciplines, they also emphasized the need for students to be able write effectively.

After the meeting, the alumni spoke with interested students about their experiences upon graduation and job search tips.

The CSAT Alumni Advisory Council will

meet again in October 2012.



IT Professor and Students Receive \$15,000 Grant for Research

Information technology faculty member Hwajung Lee, information science and systems major Nancy White and computer science majors Chloe Norris, Catherine Greene and Eileen Hindmon will build on previous wireless sensor and wireless electricity (witricity) research with a \$15,000 grant from the 2011-2012 Collaborative Research Experience for Undergraduates (CREU) program. The students are gaining undergraduate research experience while adding to the knowledge of potentially lifesaving technology.



Last year, Lee, 2011 graduate Bretny Khamphavong, White, Norris and Greene presented their research in omnidirectional sensors with a stationary base station that

can share energy wirelessly throughout the network based on the sensors' distance from each other and current energy level at Richard Tapia Conference 2011 in San Francisco, Calif., and the RU Undergraduate/Graduate Research Forum. Their research poster is currently displayed prominently beside the CSAT Dean's Office.

This year, the group will start the programming for their sensor algorithm and build upon it to be able to also incorporate movable sensors in the network.

"Although we are not actually doing experiments of transferring energy, the research we are doing could help with these experiments. We are trying to find a solution to help minimize energy leakage which

would make witricity even more effective," says White.

The students know that their research could eventually make a huge difference on the battlefield.

"I think it is fascinating to think that you don't have to actually plug an object in in order for it to charge. This technology can be life-changing, especially for military usage," adds White.

"It could potentially save a lot of lives in the battlefield because these sensors could be programmed to sense cars or something and send the information to the platoon. They would be able to move accordingly to stay safe. The benefit of the technology is that they would not have to risk their lives to change the batteries, the sensors would just be able to continuously charge themselves," says White.

Biology Student Researches Inflammatory Diseases

During the summer after biology major Dylan McDaniel's freshman year at RU, he was offered an opportunity to investigate the molecular mechanisms that cause inflammatory disease at Massachusetts General Hospital, the research hospital of Harvard University. He was a member of RU assistant biology professor Peter Christmas's laboratory there investigating immune responses to inflammatory diseases.

The Pulaski County High School graduate and first-generation college student wants to be a physician one day and serve rural communities like his hometown. After this summer experience, he may add one more goal to his list of dreams, "maybe I can help people through research in addition to being a physician. Maybe I can do both."

Christmas offers outstanding undergraduate students this opportunity each summer, many of the students can work up to three months in the lab. He co-

vers the student's expenses so that affordability does not become an issue. McDaniel benefited from the lab experience and the life experience, as the city environment was quite different from what he was accustomed to.

McDaniel is one of several RU students who have worked with Christmas at Massachusetts General Hospital over the years.

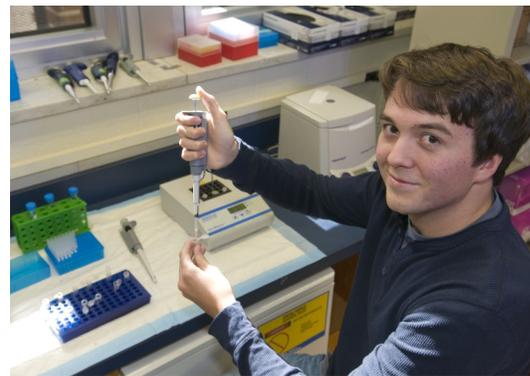
Before and after his time in Boston, McDaniel volunteered at the Pulaski Free Clinic. He was able to learn from the staff and observe patient care. His summer experiences strengthened his resolve to seize more research opportunities with medical implications.

Many of the MD researchers at the Massachusetts General Hospital do not have a Ph.D., but they combine seeing patients while running a research lab.

As a sophomore, McDaniel will take

advantage of many more research opportunities in the laboratories of his professors.

"I have to get undergraduate research experience if I'm going to medical school. I didn't know I'd be able to get this experience as a freshman. I'm very grateful to be able to learn from my professor in the classroom and while doing research," says McDaniel.



Math Alumna Gabby Ness Shares Research and Experience



Gabby Ness, a 2010 applied statistics graduate, recently discussed statistical research in biology with students in the college.

Ness took courses in biology, participated in research

with biology faculty members Christine Small and Jeremy Wojdak, and served as a "statistical consultant" for their ecology courses. She is now working on a Ph.D. in statistics at the University of Kentucky.

This past summer, Ness was an intern with the U.S. Forest Service on Small's Appalachian medicinal plant (black cohosh) conservation research. She helped to design a new field experiment and de-

velop a predictive model to better understand wild harvest impacts on black cohosh, a southern Appalachian medicinal plant.

During her time at RU, Ness was a Dean's Scholar in 2009 and 2010 and received the Artis Outstanding Student Award in 2010. She also served as the founding president of the CSAT STEM Club.

Computer Programming and Physics Competitions Slated for Spring

Faculty members in information technology and physics are planning high school and community college competitions for Thursday, March 15—Friday, March 16, 2012 on campus for students interested in testing their skill in computer programming, game programming and physics.

Competitions include a high school programming competition, community college programming competition, high school and community college game programming competition and high school physics competition.

More information about the competitions will be available on the college website in November.

CSAT Fall Picnic

Tuesday, October 11 from 4—7 p.m. in the Stuart Hall Patio Area

The College of Science and Technology STEM Club invites faculty, students and staff to a celebration of the new academic year with food and fun.

Faculty please bring your favorite picnic item to share.

From the Dean's Desk

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Innovation Inspired

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Enjoy fun and food at the Fall Picnic!



CSAT STEM Club News

The CSAT STEM Club participated in the Highlanders Festival on Saturday, October 1. For the Highlanders Festival, the club offered many activities, such as: making dyed notecards with shaving cream, planting seeds (marigolds and morning glories), and a trivia board.

The Club will be having a picnic on Tuesday, October 11 from 4-7 p.m. in the Stuart Hall Lounge/Patio area for all the majors in the College of Science & Technology. Please attend the picnic. There will be hamburgers and hot dogs, and we would love to see people from all the different majors.

The Club is currently holding a food drive for the Radford Fairlawn Daily Bread. The food drive will run until Thanksgiving break. Collection boxes are located in Young, Davis, Reed, and Walker Halls.

On Tuesday, October 18, during the CSAT STEM meeting, the club will be going to the Covington Center at 6 p.m. to view the Linda Mitchell Exhibition on Animal Imagery. We will be holding a game night in the Bonnie Game Room on November 8 and a Game night in the Stuart Hall Lounge on November 15. Please plan to attend and have some fun!

Jasmine Jackson

Secretary of CSAT STEM Club

CSAT STEM Club participates in the Highlanders Festival

