

BLACK GOLD WV

Department of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
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Alumni Update Fall 2008

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Department of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering

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Fall 2008

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Serving as the chair of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering (PNGE) Department is an honor, a privilege, and a gratifying experience. The Department is among the strongest in the College, and perhaps in the nation. The success of the Department is attributed to the dedication and resourcefulness of our people. I am truly honored to lead such a team of professionals. Moreover, we are grateful to our advisory committee, to the oil & gas industry, to alumni and friends of the Department, and to Gene Cilento, the dean of our College, for all of their guidance and support.

We are fortunate to have an outstanding faculty. They strive towards development of the excellence that our profession requires and deserves. The faculty's diverse educational background, enthusiasm, dedication, and empathy have provided the department with requisite ingredients to have strong academic programs. One of our faculty members, Dr. Shahab Mohaghegh, was recently honored with a prestigious award from the Society of Petroleum Engineers for his outstanding research and development within the industry.

Our department continues to emphasize research to help boost oil and natural gas production. With a world-renowned faculty, we aggressively and carefully recruit students of high caliber so we can continue high-quality research. Moreover, scholarships are a vital asset, enabling us to entice some of the best students into the PNGE program. This permits us to provide the industry with a most valuable product: well-trained petroleum and natural gas engineers. The success of our efforts are reflected in our 100% job-placement rate of graduates.

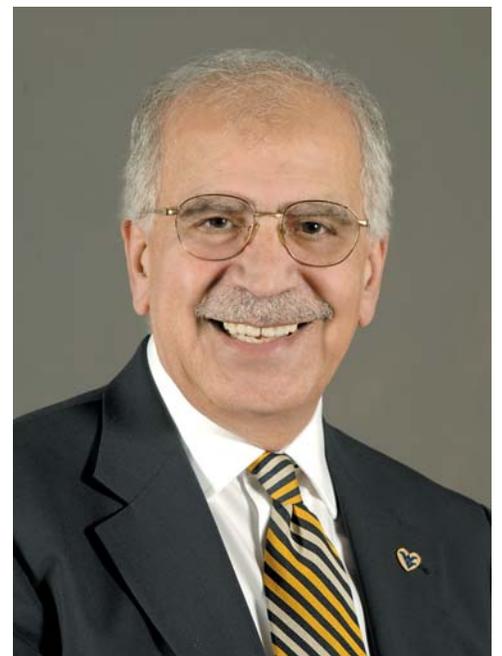
We remain grateful to our alumni and to our friends for their guidance and support. We are doing well primarily because of your loyalty and assistance. Both alumni and advisory committees' contributions allow us to build upon

the current levels of excellence in the department. However, I cannot emphasize enough how grateful and indebted we are to our advisory committee members. Our Advisory Board provides advice, direction, gifts, support, and direct assistance. This committee is of great value in achieving departmental goals.

Our Department is committed to doing our part to help meet the energy challenges facing our world today. Our main role lies in continuing to develop and train a cadre of highly qualified petroleum and natural gas engineers to manage the oil and gas industry of West Virginia and the nation. We look forward to the future with a vision to maintain and strengthen our leadership in developing cutting-edge extraction technologies and outstanding education and research for our industry.

Sincerely,

Samuel Ameri,
Professor and Chair





Saudi Aramco Officials Visit WVU

The Department extended its warmest welcome to the President of Saudi Aramco, Dr. Muhammad AlQahtani, and his delegation, during their January 30 visit to West Virginia University.

Saudi Aramco, one of the largest oil companies in the world, currently has 21 high-quality freshmen studying petroleum engineering and natural gas on scholarship at WVU.

The visit began with a tour of the WVU campus, followed by lunch with University officials. After lunch, the group discussed ways to promote closer interaction between Saudi Aramco and our Department.

Before concluding their visit, the Saudi Aramco officials held a private dinner with their students. Dr. AlQahtani said afterward that he was impressed with the high standards of excellence and education at WVU.

"I'm extremely pleased that Saudi Aramco officials accepted our invitation to visit WVU," said Sam Ameri, professor and chair. "It's an honor that they were able to take time out of their demanding schedules to tour the campus, meet with University officials and our faculty, as well as to interact with our students. I look forward to a continuous strong relationship between Saudi Aramco and WVU."

Engineering Professor Honored for Pioneering Research

WVU professor Shahab D. Mohaghegh was selected by his peers in the Society of Petroleum Engineers to receive the 2007 Reservoir Description and Dynamics Technical Award for his distinguished contribution in petroleum engineering in this area. In January, he received

this prestigious award for his groundbreaking research and development efforts in the area of intelligent systems (artificial neural networks, fuzzy logic, and genetic optimization) in the upstream exploration and production industry.



L to R: Dr. Mohaghegh and Joe Koperna, SPE Director for North America

Royce J. Watts Inducted Into Coal Hall of Fame

WVU alumnus Royce J. Watts will forever stand honored at his alma mater after being inducted into the West Virginia Coal Hall of Fame this past May. Currently the associate dean of the College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, Watts' résumé includes almost 50 years of service to the University as a faculty member and administrator.

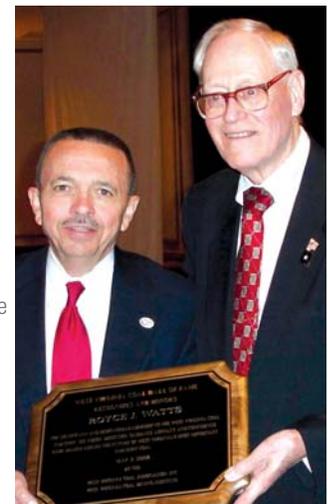
The Coal Hall of Fame award is bestowed upon those who have contributed to the growth and development of coal mining in the Mountain State, and who have been concerned with West Virginia coal for a large part of their lives. Recipients of this award must have owned, operated, engineered, taught, or been involved as some major contributor to the industry in some degree for at least five years.

Born in Randolph County to a coal mining family, with a father who died in a coal mining accident, Watts has been surrounded by the coal industry his whole life. An army veteran, he served in both World War II and the Korean War before finding his home at WVU. Since then, Watts has been recognized as a Distinguished West Virginian by Governor Cecil B. Underwood; was honored through the renaming of the Mining, Petroleum, and Natural Gas Museum at WVU; received the Erskine Ramsey Gold Medal from the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers (AIME), and was recognized as WVU's Most Loyal Faculty Mountaineer.

Watts said that he was honored to be inducted into the Coal Hall of Fame, as it recognizes his

Watts (right) Receives Coal Hall of Fame Plaque from Bill Raney (left).

contributions to the education of the mining community. He continues to play a vital role on campus, and also stays active within the community. Watts resides in Morgantown with his wife Caroline, of 58 years. They have one son, Royce J. "R.J." Watts, II, also a WVU graduate, who lives with his wife, Maureen, in Dallas, Texas, where he practices law.





Great Beginnings for WV Well #1

Last year, a student-oriented oil and gas well project began taking shape to benefit WVU both financially and academically. Kenneth R. Mason, founder and president of Drilling Appalachian Corporation (DAC), plans to drill a gas well in the state that will encourage practical application of student knowledge. Mason also plans to donate a portion of the money made from the active wells back to WVU.

Through his company, Mason established the project so that DAC would provide the capital investment to drill the well. The well has been drilled and named "WV #1," which signifies the close ties his company has to the University. This endeavor allows students from the Department to

participate in studying different natural gas bearing formations and their future gas productions. Consequently, the students can find much more field practice and application, which supplement their classroom experience through this project.

Mason and current employee, Lance Hickman, put together a presentation for our students on the status of the well. Hickman explained the process from conception of the idea through the completion of "WV #1." Hickman, a former student of our Department, brought the project to life, allowing for a question-and-answer segment at the end of the presentation to help the students fully understand the project.

DAC is donating half of the revenue generated from the gas well to WVU, of which half will be donated to our Department, with an equal share being donated to the Athletic Department.

Incorporated in 1984, DAC has designed, drilled, and helped produce more than 300 wells in north central West Virginia. Mason has been involved with the oil and gas industry for more than 25 years since his graduation from the WVU School of Forestry in 1975.

PNGE is immensely grateful for this project, as it has already benefited our Department and our University in many ways, and promises to continue to offer significant rewards in the future.

Energize West Virginia Representative Meets with Students

A seminar was given in February with the main focus on Energize West Virginia. Kim Lawrence, executive director of Energize WV, spoke to students and provided them with information and training about the natural gas industry.

Energize WV is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2006. The organization focuses on educating students and the community at large about the importance and significance of the natural gas industry. Working through higher education programs, Energize WV also promotes programs to help train prospective employees for the industry.



By using real-world issues, the program allows teachers to better educate their students about the professional field of natural gas. Students not only learn how to be successful in their future career, but are also introduced to employment opportunities in this growing field.



Wayne Doverspike

Alumni Profile: Wayne Doverspike

Wayne Doverspike grew up in Western Pennsylvania, and began his petroleum career working for his father

as a roughneck on a cable tool drilling rig. After graduating from high school, Doverspike came to WVU in 1975, and enrolled in the School of Mineral and Energy Resources. He was granted a Gulf Oil scholarship and joined the Petroleum Engineering Department. During summer breaks, Doverspike worked as an intern in Appalachia on drilling rigs for oilfield service companies and Gulf Oil Thermal Operations in California. While at WVU, Doverspike was active on campus, joined the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), and was president of WVU Student Chapter of the SPE.

Upon graduation in 1979, with a bachelor of science in petroleum engineering, Doverspike joined Gulf Oil in Bakersfield, California, and worked in various technical and operations positions as a young engineer. In the mid 1980s, Doverspike progressed through several leadership positions, and always visited WVU and other eastern universities to recruit summer interns to become future Chevron engineers. In 1988, he went overseas as the petroleum engineering manager in Shekou, China, on an assignment that lasted six years. During that assignment, Doverspike was instrumental in designing the down-hole well completions for the first offshore oil production in the South China Sea. The project was expected to be a one-field development, lasting only seven years; however, it was so successful that today it includes four offshore platforms, an FPSO, and is still producing oil after 17 years.

Doverspike returned to the United States in 1994, moving to Houston, Texas, as a field support superintendent, managing new well completions and facility installations for Midcontinent Business Unit. After three years, he returned to Bakersfield, as the portfolio enhancement manager. The Chevron-Texaco merger occurred shortly after Doverspike returned to Bakersfield, and he assumed the role of West Coast coordinator during the merger. From 2001 to 2004, Doverspike was instrumental in the integration of Chevron and Texaco assets for the San Joaquin Valley Business Unit.

In 2004, a new organization was developed to address optimization and reliability of the oil and gas business. Doverspike became a part of this new organization and was named manager of operations, standardization and improvement, focusing on Chevron's West Coast assets. A critical part of the job was to share details of the best practices across North America and international business units. In June 2007, he returned to Houston, assuming his current role as gas area manager, MCABU, managing assets that produce over 80,000 BOEG oil and gas across Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Samuel Ameri Named the 2008 Mineral Resources' Outstanding Alumni

Sam Ameri, professor and chair of the Department of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering, feels a new sense of motivation and pride after receiving an award as the Outstanding Alumni of the Year, presented by the WVU Mineral Resources Alumni Chapter.

With more than 30 years of distinguished service in both industry and academia, and in-depth experience in oil and gas production, Ameri has compiled an outstanding record of publications across a wide spectrum of oil and gas issues.

This award is given to a deserving alumnus chosen by the Alumni Chapter. Of the winners, Ameri is the first to be chosen from the academic side – all other awards have been given to accomplished businessmen and women with remarkable records of accomplishments in industry.

Professor Ameri received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Petroleum Engineering from WVU; he is an active member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE); he has served as the chair for several petroleum and education-based organizations; and he has also served as one of the past COMERAC Alumni Chapter presidents. Ameri is currently serving on the (2007-2008) Advisory Board for World Oil Awards, and is the incoming chair of the Northern WV Section of Society of Petroleum Engineers.

In 2007, Ameri was named WV "Oil and Gas Man of the Year" by the West Virginia Independent Oil and Gas Association. In addition, he was also chosen as the recipient of the "2007 WVU Society of Petroleum Engineers' Student Chapter Outstanding Teacher's Award."

Ameri remains modest about his accomplishments, saying, "There is no deadline or timeline for a dream come true. This award has given me a sense of pride. I am forever grateful."



Samuel Ameri



Water Flood Project & Presentation

WVU Petroleum & Natural Gas Engineering grad and undergrad Students

Members of the WVU Student Chapter of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (WVU-SPE) regularly attend Northern West Virginia sectional meetings. These meetings allow students to obtain insight on technological advancements, in addition to opportunities to meet industry professionals.

In February of this year, the SPE held a sectional meeting in Morgantown. Micah Spencer, a junior in our Department, gave a presentation on a water flood project at the meeting. Spencer explained ideas of field optimization and re-completion opportunities to an audience of industry

professionals, faculty, graduate students and undergraduates. Spencer has already completed two summer internships for Chevron in New Mexico and California, and plans to graduate in May 2009.

SPE Conference in Anaheim, California

In November 2007, WVU students, alumni, and faculty traveled to Anaheim, California, to participate in the Society of Petroleum Engineers' (SPE) Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition. This conference is significant in size and has many activities in which our students participate.

The conference has the latest in computer technology available worldwide on display for students to view. Opportunities to attend technical-paper-writing presentations are also offered throughout the event to help students further their skills and knowledge. Other functions offered during the course of the event allow students to interact with alumni.

Of the many events, a yearly favorite continues to be the PetroBowl. This competition is set up as a fun tournament that tests students' knowledge of the engineering and petroleum industries, as well as their knowledge of the SPE. Our students challenged teams from other schools, proving their knowledge in a dueling fashion, repeatedly triumphing over their competitors.

During the group's stay in California, Chairman Ameri treated the students to a welcome dinner out on the town. During dinner, the students were able to interact with faculty members, discussing both their future and their experiences at the conference



Left to Right: Chris Allen, Allan Lee, Yasaman Khazaeni, Greg Baron

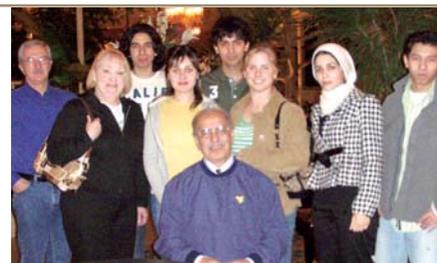


Students and faculty share a dinner at the SPE Conference in California. After dinner, Professor Sam Ameri jokingly said he was broke.

IOGA 2008

The Independent Oil and Gas Association (IOGA) held its annual winter conference February 4 -5 in Charleston, West Virginia, at the Embassy Suites Hotel. Many industry members, along with several students and faculty from our Department attended this meeting.

The first evening, Department Chair Sam Ameri invited all of the WVU attendees to dinner. This provided a relaxed atmosphere for students to interact with each other and with the faculty.



Left to right, Dr. H. Ilkin Bilgesu, Beth Ameri, Hossein Belyadi, Ozge Sunal, Abbas Belyadi, Meagan Klebb, Zeynab Belyadi, Nagi Lam, and Dept. Chair Sam Ameri.

The next day everyone participated in a variety of technical sessions that provided a great out-of-classroom learning experience for the students.

Overall, the IOGA Conference was a huge success. Students were given the opportunity to learn from leading professionals, become acclimated with their classmates and faculty, and prepare for entry into the industry.

WVU Snowboard Team takes 5th at Nationals



Ross Schweitzer in action

The West Virginia University Snowboard Team recently competed in the Collegiate Snowboard National Championship. The event was held in Sunday River, Maine, from March 3 through 9. The team competed in a variety of events, including Slopestyle, Boarder-X, and Giant Slalom. The team finished fourth, fifth, and eighth in each of the event, respectively. These scores were enough

to give the team fifth place in the overall competition. This is an improvement from last year's sixth place finish at Winter Park, Colorado. This is the team's second trip to nationals, in its second year of eligibility. The team looks to improve its finish next year in Colorado, and hopes to win first place.

The team consists of 15 riders total, six of whom are engineering students. Ross Schweitzer is a first-year graduate student in our Department who was selected as First Team Academic All-American, along with other students from WVU.



Every year the Department hosts a banquet in recognition of students with outstanding academic achievement. This year's banquet, on April 13, honored those students who excelled academically, as well as those who have taken part in extensive volunteer work within the

Recognition Banquet Honors Students and Faculty

community and the realm of petroleum engineering. Dr. H. Ilkin Bilgesu was also recognized during this time for his exceptional endeavors as a professor, receiving the award as the Outstanding Teacher of the Department for the 2007-2008 academic year.

The banquet was one of the many held throughout the campus and recognized both undergraduate and graduate students. Each student recognized received a plaque as a certificate of recognition by Dean Cilento and the Department's chair, Sam Ameri.



Faculty and B.S. recipients, May 2008 (left to right): Dr. Bilgesu, Tommy Joyce, Pete Nickel, Manuel Johnson, James Odum, Chair Ameri, Chesie Hupp, Allan Lee, Chris Carter, and Greg Baron.

100% Job Placement for WVU PNGE Graduates

Another year, another graduation... or so it may seem. For PNGE graduates, success is close at hand. With a 100% job placement, our graduates find themselves sailing into the world, starting lives of their own.

Students of the 2008 graduating class will travel as far away as California, or stay as close to home as Jane Lew, to pursue their careers. Most of our students find job searching to be easily within reach as alumni, friends of the Department, and oil and gas companies come to WVU to interview and, as a result, make summer and permanent job offers to students.

The faculty and chair continue to invite oil and gas companies to interact with and interview students in order to maintain this success rate.

"Our Department continues to develop and train a force of highly qualified petroleum engineers that man and manage the oil and gas industry of West Virginia and our nation," said Sam Ameri, professor and chair. Because of this, our Department has developed a strong and positive relationship with the oil and gas industry. In turn, the industry supports our work, providing direction, guidance, and financial support.

Ameri also emphasized that the Department's Visiting Committee provides advice, direction, gifts, support, and direct assistance in these ventures with the students.