Aspiring leaders turn ideas into reality where technology and business come together.
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on the cover

Alumnus Charles Hodanics (BS06) is a software developer for Quantum Leap Innovations. A new college center will help professionals like Hodanics harness their leadership skills and technical savvy to develop innovative solutions.
Cultivating leaders with entrepreneurial vision

Before becoming Capitol College graduates, Richard Zuschlag and Harold Stinger were much like any number of their fellow classmates. Zuschlag enrolled shortly after high school, looking for a way to transform his penchant for electrical gadgets into a lifelong career. Stinger came to Capitol following years of service in the Air Force, working with ground and air traffic radio control.

But it’s after their graduation that the two men set off on a path much different than many of their fellow graduates.

Zuschlag is now CEO of a private ambulance service in Louisiana that saved thousands of lives when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. Stinger is president of an aerospace-services company that NASA named recipient of its prestigious award for contractor excellence; only four companies in the nation received the honor.

They are two of a small number of Capitol graduates who have taken their engineering education, added their own innovative spirit and started and now operate multimillion-dollar businesses. And with a new institute at Capitol College, President Michael Wood envisions cultivating many, many more graduates just like them – leaders who commit their ingenuity to corporate and social good.

Shortly after starting his presidency in 2004, Wood began talking about how the college would meld technology and business education to develop leaders with technical savvy. Nearly three years later, beginning in early 2007, the college will launch its new Institute for Innovation and Leadership, a center that will accomplish just that.

“The institute is a way to blend the two fields and go beyond our roots in engineering and technology. We position ourselves as a college that prepares future leaders, especially in the technical fields,” Wood said.

Since its founding nearly 80 years ago, Capitol has trained and educated thousands of students in diverse fields: radio engineering, optoelectronics, electrical engineering, computer programming, telecommunications management, to name a few. But times have changed since 1927. The industry expects and demands more from today’s engineers and technologists. Companies want employees who can speak and write, as well as understand the business behind the process. Knowing the importance of budgets and schedules improves efficiency and competitiveness in the marketplace.

Engineers and technologists, Wood says, need to be able to see the bigger picture, influence other people, take risks, command
a following, see new solutions and organize efforts.

The first institute offerings will be more of the professional services nature – training designed for the mid-level technologist who wants to further develop his skills or advance his career. Initially, the institute will focus on the needs of students already with bachelor’s degrees or working at the graduate level and who are interested in professional certificates. Eventually, Wood said, he wants to create institute offerings appropriate for undergraduate-level students.

While structured education is one aspect, the institute will offer more than just courses. Plans include conducting practical applied research and publishing white papers and case studies to share best practices for government and private industry.

Wood wants to establish a mentoring program. Local business and government leaders would be matched up with students to help guide and advise them as they develop their careers and talents. He also wants to start a Leader-in-Residence program. Each semester or year an accomplished leader would be on campus to teach courses and serve as a general resource to students and faculty. While one major goal is developing the future leaders and innovators of tomorrow, the institute will also serve as a community resource, perhaps as a technology business incubator.

“We want to develop leaders who can take an idea from concept to marketing, and who then know how to spin off an idea into a new organization,” Wood says.

Capitol is not the first or only higher education institution to offer programs that marry the technology and business fields. But Wood believes that because of Capitol’s niche in the applied sciences and its reputation for practical, high-quality education, as well as its prime location in the Baltimore/DC region, it’s best suited to meet the needs of many local agencies and businesses.

“We have built and continue to develop partnerships with business and government for higher education,” Wood said. “Through these partnerships, Capitol students have a rare opportunity to blend theory and academic studies with practical, hands-on experience. With our niche focus, the new institute won’t get buried in a school, college or department of a larger university.”

A panel of industry advisors agree that Capitol is the ideal place for this new venture. Professionals from companies such as Booz Allen Hamilton and Motorola helped guide the development of the institute.

The students attracted to Capitol have a strong technical background and appreciate the college’s legacy and specialty within that area of study, said Steve Newhouse, vice president of business development for Atlantic Builders in Baltimore, who served on the institute’s advisory panel.

“The kind of students who come to Capitol are often very focused on the technical aspects of a project,” Newhouse said. “And I think they understand to be successful, they need to get the business skills to manage others and be able to lead.”

Newhouse said the demand for business acumen is necessary even in his industry – construction. Construction engineers often have the experience of designing, building and working on the sites. But they often lack the insight of managers who are tied to budgets and schedules. The business-experienced managers, Newhouse said, often lack the on-site experience and understanding of working in the trenches. Newhouse’s career has aptly moved between the technical and business arenas.
“Most of what I’ve done for 26 years is developing relationships with my clients,” Newhouse said. “Having the technical and business knowledge helps me sell construction projects. I have a high empathy for clients about the needs for their space.”

That understanding helps many leaders build and expand their businesses. For ambulance company owner Zuschlag, that understanding allowed him to take confident risks during the devastating hurricane. There were numerous times in the ensuing days of chaos that he told his medics and other employees to do whatever it takes to get the job done, even if it meant bending the rules as dictated by FEMA and other governing agencies.

But first and foremost, Zuschlag understood the technical demands of his business.

“Part of the success of our evacuation of the hospitals was because of my communications background and my determination to have back up systems in place,” Zuschlag said. “There is no question that some of the engineering courses I took at Capitol helped me in our communications. I believe that our communication system was the only one still working after the storm passed through.”

Zuschlag took a risk, and according to Wood, that’s the spirit the institute needs to cultivate to help society advance.

“Young adults will develop social and technical skills,” he said. “Working adults will acquire expertise to succeed in business leadership careers. The college will build a cadre of alumni with the integrity and knowledge to inspire the future of America’s technology enterprise.”

Capitol college students can access the Internet at wireless hotspots in the William G. McGowan Academic Center, an award-winning facility built by Atlantic Builders. Newhouse, Atlantic’s vice president for business development, credits his career success to a combination of technical and business experience.
Students explore options at Career Day

The headlines say it all – the technology used by the FBI is severely antiquated, and that’s why the bureau needs students just like those graduating from Capitol College, said an FBI special agent at Capitol’s annual Career Day.

During his hour-long presentation on Sept. 26, FBI Supervisory Special Agent David Musgrove explained to students several career options, including the training and work of special agents, and emphasized the need for information technology professionals.

“I’m sure a lot of people here have read about how bad our computer systems are,” Musgrove said. “They are a disaster, and we need people such as yourselves who can fix these systems. We need good people to come in and build databases so we can better share information.”

Capitol College has been hosting Career Day since 1998 as part of the job guarantee program offered by the college. Along with a keynote address, students attended seminars and panel discussions to hear more about career options and how to plan for life after graduation.

This year the sessions included how to obtain security clearances, maximizing career options and internship programs with the federal government.

Senior-level students attended a special networking and etiquette lunch. During the catered luncheon, they received advice and tips from Michelle Pollard Patrick, director of National Protocol. Patrick, a consultant on professional social etiquette, demonstrated several techniques for successful networking and interviewing while dining.

Wood speaks at state workshop

President Michael Wood gave a presentation on the critical infrastructures affecting higher education in Maryland's metropolitan areas at a workshop in October sponsored by a statewide anti-terrorism advisory group.

At the inaugural Maryland Regional Critical Infrastructure Interdependencies Workshop, Wood discussed the concerns and issues that academic institutions need to address to prepare for natural and manmade disasters. Experts from all over the state discussed the roles of vital areas such as communications, health care, transportation, energy and law enforcement, and Wood was the representative of higher education.

Through its recently launched Critical Infrastructures and Cyber Protection Center, Capitol College is one of only a few colleges in the region that specializes in training and educating professionals in the areas related to infrastructure protection and security.

“Protecting our nation is a national and state priority, as well as a complex and critical challenge; one that requires a true partnership between all stakeholders – government, public, private and academia,” Wood told the crowd.

During his presentation, Wood focused on various emergency management needs of colleges and universities, and addressed institutions’ challenges, such as how to train the faculty, staff and students to respond and how to develop standards so that colleges can maintain operations during an emergency. Some of his recommendations included colleges adopting an all-hazards approach and improving partnerships with other campuses and within the community.

The event brought together experts from various essential public and private organizations to collaborate and identify the critical infrastructures needed to keep Maryland and the nation secure in disaster times. The workshop preceded the Mid-Atlantic All-Hazards Forum and marked the first step in state and regional initiatives to identify critical infrastructure interdependencies.
SOI project gets boost from NASA grant

NASA awarded the Space Operations Institute a two-year research and development grant on one of the satellite missions controlled by Capitol students, faculty and staff. SOI participants are using the grant to analyze the requirements of the Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission ground system, research updated technology and develop a prototype system compatible with the Goddard Mission Services Evolution Architecture. The upgraded prototype will most likely be the next generation of the satellite’s ground system.

“We envision this system as the next generation of the TRMM ground system,” said Ken Dolan, deputy director of operations for SOI. “An upgrade is needed to ensure the system will be sustainable for the next decade.”

The TRMM satellite monitors and studies tropical rainfall. TRMM has been used to track hurricanes and other weather phenomena, such as El Nino. A recently released survey based on its data has helped meteorologists pinpoint exactly where Earth’s hotspots for intense thunderstorms are: the American Midwest, Argentina, and some semi-arid regions like the edges of the Sahara desert.

SOI staff expect to have up to six students working on the TRMM research project. NASA has granted SOI control of the satellite through 2009.

This isn’t the first time students have taken a lead in helping NASA design and upgrade a ground operating system. Two recent graduates developed the upgraded ground system for the Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer-Earth Probe satellite. NASA, impressed with the students’ efforts, put the system into place. In February, SOI was named the primary ground control system for the satellite with a control center operating out of the William G. McGowan Academic Center.
Agreement with College of Southern Maryland

Capitol College and the College of Southern Maryland have signed an articulation agreement that makes it easier for CSM students to complete a Capitol College bachelor’s degree in astronautical, computer or electrical engineering.

Eligible CSM students can seamlessly transition to Capitol College once they complete an associate degree in the CSM engineering consortium program. College leaders at both institutions signed the pact Oct. 3 at CSM’s campus in Leonardtown.

“Southern Maryland is becoming an ever-more important contributor to the entire mid-Atlantic region through its technologic and economic growth,” Capitol President Michael Wood said at the agreement-signing ceremony. “We look forward to continuing to work strongly with CSM and the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center. We are proud to serve southern Maryland and CSM as they grow and diversify.”

Alumni association survey

Alumni of the undergraduate and graduate programs are being surveyed to gauge their interest in a Capitol College alumni association.

Many alumni have been sent an email about the survey, which can be completed on the Capitol College website. The survey is posted in the Alumni and Friends section. Among other things, the survey asks about what alums would like to see the association offer as membership perks and services. Some suggestions include group trips, community service activities, family activities, networking workshops and workplace alumni receptions.

Offerings to members include lifetime capitol-college.edu email accounts, privileges to check out materials from the library and discounts at the campus bookstore.

Alumni are currently invited to serve on the Alumni Advisory Board, a committee that develops programming and outreach to keep alumni connected to the college. The association, however, would be open to all interested alums.

Celebrating 80th anniversary

The year 2007 marks the 80th anniversary of Capitol’s founding. To help celebrate eight decades of learning, teaching and collaborating, Capitol is offering a variety of events and presentations throughout the year. The celebration begins in January with the launching of a special anniversary-themed logo.

Other activities include a signature event in February and a display of the college’s history. Events will be formally announced as plans are finalized. Joy Johnson, director of advancement and alumni relations, said the goal is to make many events into new annual traditions, such as a Founders Day celebration on June 1.

The Capitol Radio Engineering Institute was founded on June 1, 1927, in Washington, DC. As the school grew in enrollment and offerings, it moved to a larger facility and renamed itself Capitol Institute of Technology. The college then relocated to its permanent Laurel campus in 1983, and changed its name to Capitol College in 1987.
Recruiting new students

The Capitol College admissions staff is working in full force during another heavy recruiting season. Representatives have been attending college fairs and high schools, as well as hosting two fall open house events on campus.

The open houses let high school students and others interested in Capitol tour the facilities, meet faculty and get to know more about the college.

Open houses and other events help introduce students to Capitol and work to increase enrollment. This fall marked the second consecutive year that more than 100 new students made up the entering class.

Students relax at fall events

Students found ways to put down the books, step away from their computers and have fun with friends and even their professors during a variety of special events held this past fall.

Movie nights, coffeehouses and an all-day Saturday paintball outing kept students living on campus and nearby busy with activities, most sponsored by the Student-Leadership Advisory Board and the Office of Student Life and Retention.

Two special events brought out a larger group – the fall carnival and casino night. Students at the carnival bounced around on an inflatable sumo wrestling ring and dodgeball court, while others played carnival-style games and munched on cotton candy, popcorn and other playful foods.

Later in the fall, professors and college staffers dealt the cards during the glow-in-dark casino night. The lights went out in the Campus Center as students wearing glow sticks tried their luck at blackjack, poker and slot machines. Students used their winning chips to bid in an auction at night’s end.

Student named IEEE fellow

An electrical engineering student has been named a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers for his work in the private and educational sectors in application-specific communications design.

Joseph Januszewski was nominated due to his work with firms such as COMSAT, Hughes Network Systems, Sprint and Objective Communications, as well as pioneering efforts in electronic commerce and Internet technology during the early 1990s. Januszewski, who is working on his BS in electrical engineering, is an information technology specialist with the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda.

Wireless access on campus

Capitol has gone wireless. Students, faculty and staff can now access the network on their laptop computers without the tangle of wires plugged into network ports.

The college set up several wireless hotspots around campus, including the William G. McGowan Academic Center, the Campus Center, the breezeway, the Gudelsky Auditorium and the Puente Library.
‘98 Joan DeSantis, MS, earned the e-PRO certification, a designation offered by the National Association of Realtors to bring real estate professionals up-to-date with current technology. Only one percent of Realtors in the country are e-PRO certified agents. DeSantis writes: “So many seasoned professionals are intimidated by the vast array of new tools available to them. Formerly an IT consultant, I never realized how relevant my degree in systems management would be to my real estate marketing career.” DeSantis, who lives in Ashburn, Va., is an agent with Keller Williams Realty in Potomac Falls, Va.

‘00 Fred Childress, MS, recently moved from Northern Virginia to East Tennessee where he is working on a home renovation project. A former economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Childress took an early retirement from the agency in 2005. He lives in Oak Ridge with his wife, Marcia. He writes: “My goal is to begin looking for an opportunity after the beginning of next year, but for the immediate future, I am enjoying the change from the rat-race lifestyle of Northern Virginia.”

Michael Dunbar, MS, spoke at the 6th Annual Federal Information Assurance Conference in October at the University of Maryland University College Inn and Conference Center. Dunbar is Eastern U.S. and federal operations vice president for Configuresoft, a Colorado Springs-based systems management technology company. Dunbar presented “Shift, Drift and Infrastructure Management.” Dunbar previously served as the deputy chief information security officer for the U.S. Space and Marine Corps Information Technology and Network Operations Center. In 1998, he received the Copernicus Award as one of the top information technology professionals in the federal government.

‘01 Nicole Jackson, BS, is an executive assistant with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Washington DC. Jackson writes, “Word of advice for incoming and students that are about to graduate: Cherish your college years, and once you graduate, the degree, to give you leverage for jobs. College prepares you for real world responsibilities and ‘self independence.’” She lives in Laurel.

‘03 Eric Kareem, MS, traveled to the Mojave Desert for a research trip to the Goldstone Deep Space Communications Complex. Kareem is pursuing a doctoral degree in information systems from Nova Southeastern University in Florida. He is focusing his dissertation on communications and data transfer from terrestrial stations and facilities on Earth to facilities and network architectures and devices in space. He writes: “The Capitol experience completely prepares you to expand and grow into many possibilities professionally and academically. Capitol continues to educate, innovate and inspire, and I’m a witness.”

Kareem is deputy division chief within the Network Threat Operation Center of the Department of Defense at Fort Meade. He lives in Southern Maryland with his wife and four children.

‘06 Sean Thompson, MS, is an information security analyst with Micron Technology, a Boise-based company that develops flash, DRAM and Cellular RAM memory. Thompson writes, “I know my degree made the difference because I interviewed among a large group of candidates for one position in a department of four people. I am very confident that my degree from Capitol College helped open many doors for me and the opportunities just rolled in. Many of the topics I learned in my degree program are exactly what I am working on in my new position and it was definitely worth the investment.” Thompson lives in Meridian, Idaho, with his wife, Mary Jane.
Allan Berg, director of the Critical Infrastructures and Cyber Protection Center, spoke Sept. 11 at West Chester University in Pennsylvania on the “Strategy for the War on Terrorism.” Berg was invited to speak by the Information Assurance Center there as part of their Lunch Bytes series and in tribute to the 5th anniversary marking the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Ken Dolan, SOI deputy director of operations, has been named to the board of directors of the Maryland Space Business Roundtable from 2007 through 2009. The roundtable promotes the growth of space-related businesses and educational initiatives in the state.

Adjunct Professor Jeff Volosin spoke in August at NASA’s Next Generation Exploration Conference, a gathering of emerging space leaders interested in the future of space exploration. The conference was held at the Ames Research Center in Mountain View, Calif.

Professor of Practice David Ward gave two presentations in the fall. In September, Ward spoke at Management Concepts in Washington, DC on FISMA and the changes to government information assurance contracts brought by recent Department of Defense regulations. In October, he spoke at the Sterling, Va., campus of George Washington University as part of the IP3 lecture series “Strategy to Reality.” Ward, an FCC attorney, discussed when information technology security becomes law.

Submit your class note on our website at www.capitol-college.edu under the Alumni & Friends section or mail the form below to Capitol College, Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations, 11301 Springfield Road, Laurel, MD 20708.

Let your classmates know what you’ve been doing. New job? Spouse? Baby? Degree?

Name ____________________________________________________________

Surname before marriage (if different) ______________________________________

Degree ______________________________________ Year ______________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City __________________ State ______ Zip ______________

Work phone __________________ Home phone ____________________________

Fax __________________ Email ___________________________________________

Employer __________________ Title ________________________________

Note ______________________________________________________________

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Each issue of Capitol Chronicle, including class notes, is posted on Capitol College’s website.