

SPRING 2009

# Capitol Chronicle

## Investing in Our Students

Propelling students forward in tough financial times



# Capitol Chronicle

SPRING 2009  
volume 3, number 4



CAPITOL COLLEGE

1927

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#### Mission

The mission of Capitol College is to provide practical education in engineering, computer science, information technology and business that prepares individuals for professional careers and affords them the opportunity to thrive in a changing world.

#### Alumni Update, Class Note

Update your information or send us a class note in the Alumni & Friends section of our website at [www.capitol-college.edu](http://www.capitol-college.edu). Or you can mail your name, class, address, phone number, email address, note and new employer/job title if relevant to the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations, Capitol College, 11301 Springfield Road, Laurel, MD 20708.

#### Career Assistance

Alumni are welcome to use the services of the Career Center. Call the Office of Student Life, at 301-369-2800 ext. 3046 to make an appointment for career counseling or for information about hiring a co-op student. See our website for career services available to students and alumni.

The **Capitol Chronicle** is published quarterly by Capitol College for alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends.

It is printed on paper containing 50% recycled content including 15% post consumer waste.



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As a William R. Hearst Scholarship student, De'Nitra Terrell is free to become involved in oncampus activities without worrying about student debt thanks to Sellinger funds. See her in action on page 6.

# Need for scholarship support on the rise

**B**y now, the news is considered old and the consequences are apparent. Due to the economy, the state of Maryland has cut financial support significantly for higher education, the Joseph A. Sellinger Aid Program taking a big hit. And Maryland's independent colleges and universities, and their students, are paying the price.

At the same time that endowments across the board in higher education and other nonprofit organizations are not generating the revenue as they did in years past to provide financing for scholarships, state aid to students at private colleges through the Sellinger Program has been reduced, placing an even greater burden on in-state students relying on this resource to pay for tuition. And, to escalate the problem, lending institutions are becoming less and less likely to offer student loans.

So just what is the Sellinger Program? Established in 1973, the program is the modern version of the 200-year partnership between the state of Maryland and its independent colleges and universities. It awards financial aid to these colleges through a self-adjusting formula linked to the per-student appropriation at certain public institutions, and continues to be a national model that



Justin Gronert (above), an astronautical engineering major and member of the Capitol Balloon Experiment Club, earned a generous scholarship from an anonymous benefactor. An electrical engineering student, Nina Acree (left) is a recipient of the William R. Hearst Endowed Scholarship Fund for Women and Minorities.

encourages cooperation and collaboration among the different segments of higher education.

The main goal of Sellinger funds is to provide financial aid to financially needy students, accounting for 75 percent of all allocated money. But, the program also helps to support projects and initiatives that respond to workforce shortages, bring about new academic programs, and assist minority outreach programs. Unfortunately, the well of Sellinger has all but dried up for many colleges including Capitol, and could stay that way throughout fiscal year 2010.





Despite the turn of events, Capitol College is in a unique position to provide students the education they need for careers in industries who are hiring employees, not laying them off. In the science, technology, engineering and math industries, a large segment of the workforce is approaching retirement age, leaving a gap that will not be filled unless

educational institutions prepare students, especially women and minorities, for success in those careers. For more information on how Capitol contributes to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, now and in the future, read Dr. Michael G. Gibbs's editorial on page 3.

Capitol is also forging ahead of the rest of suffering Maryland colleges and universities, choosing to cut tuition during the summer months to encourage students

to take more classes while saving money and time. At the same time, a job guarantee called the Capitol College Commitment remains in effect, along with a tuition lock program that keeps tuition down for a student's four long years at college.

In order to continue to offer programs like these and offer up the best STEM education possible, Capitol College needs to make up the gap in funds from the Sellinger cuts. The Spring Fund Drive is a way for all of Capitol's key constituents— alumni, friends, local and regional business partners, faculty, staff—to make an investment in our students.

Take the case of senior management of information technology major, Doug Daniels. At last year's commencement ceremony, Daniels was presented with the Avrum Gudelsky Memorial Scholarship award by President Michael T. Wood, who dubbed him "an outstanding student; a true artist and scientist." Without this scholarship, made possible by Capitol's scholarship funds, Daniels might not have been able to continue his education.

Each donation to the college during the upcoming fund drive can make a huge difference in the pockets of students who have been so threatened by the state of the economy. For those who have even a little extra to give, Capitol urges you to think of how your support can help students achieve success. ■



Above left: Electrical engineering student Blair Bowen can continue working while going to school with the help of the Charles & Helen DeVore Memorial Scholarship and the Northwest Iowa Telephone Co. Inc. Scholarship.

Above right: A junior information assurance major, Rochelle Colvin received the Verizon Foundation Scholarship.

Below left: Doug Daniels was recognized as the 2008-2009 Avrum Gudelsky Memorial Scholarship recipient.



## In a Unique Position: How Capitol College is educating the future workforce



**E**ven during these challenging economic times, there is one sector within our economy that seems to continue to expand. This job sector consists of employment in science, technology, engineering and math, commonly known as STEM. Capitol College is the only independent college in Maryland dedicated to engineering, computer science, information technology and business and is uniquely positioned to provide an educated workforce to both the government and corporate community.

Despite our current economic difficulties, the United States continues to be one of the leading economic markets in the global economy—an economy with a growing dependence on a skilled STEM workforce. The U.S. Department of Labor, in their report for Employment and Training Administration by Jobs for the Future (2007), states that “STEM fields have become increasingly central to U.S. economic competitiveness and growth. Long-term strategies to maintain and increase living standards and promote opportunity will require coordinated efforts among public, private, and not-for-profit entities to promote innovation and to prepare an adequate supply of qualified workers for employment in STEM fields.”

Through a partnership program with higher education and the federal government, Capitol College, through the Space Operations Institute (SOI) in partnership with NASA, is able to give our students real-life learning experiences. Astronautical engineering majors can focus on areas such as propulsion, orbital dynamics and remote sensing. At the very core of the SOI program is a special opportunity for Capitol College—to control a satellite and assist scientists in obtaining data in the fields of global warming and ultraviolet radiation from ozone depletion.

SOI is but one example of providing direct learning opportunities for undergraduate students. To assist students in their quest to be leaders, Capitol is developing the Innovation and Leadership Institute. The Institute offers specialized programs to build and develop technical and social skills so students will succeed in technology entrepreneurship and leadership careers. Through the integration of Capitol’s two academic divisions—Engineering with Business and Information Sciences—one of the primary goals for the Institute is to create collaborative programs which provide students the necessary skills to be leaders in a technology-based global economy.

“STEM fields have become increasingly central to U.S. economic competitiveness and growth.”

By examining current topics in leadership through the President’s Forum, such as the recent presentation “Dawn, New Horizons and the Great Planet Debate,” by Dr. Mark Sykes, director of the Planetary Science Institute, students can learn from the clash between science, personalities and politics and experience the debate first hand.

How are these hands-on and innovative educational experiences able to occur? They are made possible through partnerships with the government and industry, and the support from our friends and benefactors. While everyone is experiencing a level of difficulty during this recession, it is with the continued financial support to our scholarship fund that Capitol College is able to not only continue current programs, but expand for the future. Please consider making a gift to the Capitol College Spring Fund Drive to support the student scholarship fund so that we, together, can make a Capitol College educational experience affordable and accessible to so many deserving students. ■

Dr. Michael G. Gibbs is the vice president for advancement and assistant professor at Capitol College and can be contacted at [mggibbs@capitol-college.edu](mailto:mggibbs@capitol-college.edu).

## What is Pluto? Planetary debate comes to Capitol

On Wednesday, January 14, 2009, Dr. Mark V. Sykes, director of the Planetary Science Institute, presented “Dawn, New Horizons and the Great Planet Debate,” a lecture for the Innovation and Leadership Institute’s President’s Forum series at Capitol College. The lecture drew a large crowd of students, particularly those who are a part of the Space Operations Institute.

Dr. Sykes’s talk featured a humor-ridden march through the history of the planets and their discoverers, and the process of how the categorization of planets and other space objects has evolved over time. His focus was on the clash of science, personalities and politics, and how these and other elements have fueled the debate on what constitutes a planet, an argument sparked by the International Astronomical Union’s decision to define a common term.

Dr. Sykes believes the process of defining a term, resulting in the “demotion” of Pluto, was chaotic and resulted in public controversy; he argues that a paradigm shift may be underway from IAU’s classical perspective about planets, rooted in ancient times, to a modern perspective in which those roots are finally cut.

Dawn and New Horizons, two NASA missions that are currently traveling to the most historically disputed celestial objects (Ceres and Pluto), will provide important additional facts for the debate once they reach their planetary destinations in 2015. The data collected, according to Dr. Sykes, could provide the final nails in the coffin of the classical perspective.

He also believes that the Pluto debate offers wonderful access to the public about science as a process. Of the debate, Dr. Sykes says, “The value of this debate is not whether there are winners and losers, but that the clash of ideas and challenging the usefulness of those ideas in explaining the universe are central to science. When teachers ask what they should teach children about Pluto, I tell them to teach the debate itself. It is a means of introducing them to science as something dynamic - not just a list of facts.”

“This was an exceptional opportunity for Capitol College to host Dr. Sykes,” said Dr. W. Vic Maconachy, Capitol’s vice



president for academic affairs. “With our Space Operations Institute’s satellite activities, our partnership with NASA, and excellent astronomical engineering program, Dr. Sykes’ lecture was of great interest to the entire Capitol College community.”

Dr. Sykes is nationally and internationally noted for his leadership in opposing the IAU’s decision regarding the reclassification of Pluto. He is director of the Planetary Science Institute, a private nonprofit corporation dedicated to the exploration of the solar system with scientists in 16 states, the UK, Switzerland, Russia and Australia with corporate headquarters located in Tucson, Arizona.

Dr. Sykes’s scientific research includes the study of Pluto, asteroids, comets and interplanetary dust, using both ground-based and space-based telescopes, primarily in the thermal infrared. He is the discoverer of cometary dust trails and rings of dust around the inner solar system arising from asteroid collisions within the zodiacal cloud. ■



Left to right: Vice President Michael Gibbs, Dr. Sykes, President Michael Wood, Vice President W. Vic Maconachy.



## Spring marks the launch of the new website.

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In today's technology-oriented world, a website often serves as the true face of a company, an online version of the brand. A website says a lot about a business, portraying the corporate climate as well as services and products that it offers. It is often the first thing people see when they hear of the company, even if they are simply logging on to find the phone number.

Capitol is proud to be launching its own online image this spring in the form of an all-new website that utilizes modern web technology in its organization, navigation and design. The new site design took many cues from a survey of students, parents, staff, faculty and alumni who reviewed the current site and critiqued it, adding input for ways it could be improved and updated. The survey's results weren't surprising, and in response to the outcomes the new website has many new features that let it stand out.

First, the site will contain more engaging photography, acting as a visual representation of the excellent programs and people that make up the Capitol family. While providing those who use the website daily with an eye-pleasing, sophisticated design, the website will also be attractive to prospective students and act as

an active element in recruiting students of all ages.

For graduate students, many of whom interact with Capitol solely online, the new website will act as their Capitol "home." The website works together with the MyCapitol Portal and Capitol LIVE!, forming an online environment for current and prospective students, clearly segmenting online classrooms, career center, and registration tools for the appropriate users.

Those with a clear picture of what they are searching for will easily find it through the reinvented navigation system, coupled with an excellent search function. An A-Z index allows frequent users to get where they want to go quickly and easily, bypassing unnecessary menu items. Certain pages that are clearly associated with other sections

have clear links that make it easy to switch from one page to another, without having to use the back button or re-navigate menus.

The exciting new Capitol Store will also be a prominent feature, a market for all things Capitol. Anyone who wants to live the brand proudly can buy polos, shirts, bags, hats and other memorabilia directly online.

Look for the website to be launched this spring; it's something you won't want to miss! ■

Dr. Sykes (left) points out that future planet debates could call into question Earth's own planet status.



Student Joshua Howard browses the current website in the John G. and Beverly A. Puente Library.

## Business students benefit from College of Southern Maryland partnership

Capitol College and the College of Southern Maryland partnered early this year to connect the CSM associate degree in management development to the Capitol bachelor's degree in business administration.

Executives and faculty from both colleges were present at a signing ceremony to solidify the articulation agreement that will allow students to easily transfer up to 70 credit hours earned at CSM toward the higher degree at Capitol. The agreement is an ongoing initiative between the two colleges that establishes a mutual understanding and a clear set of expectations for students, each institution and the respective degree programs.

As an added bonus, CSM students may begin taking courses in the business administration program while still completing their associate degree. Upon admission to Capitol College, these students are eligible for scholarships that could provide up to 50 percent of tuition costs.



Executives, staff and students represent Capitol at Independent Higher Education Day. Back row (l to r): Chris Swain, Travis Anderson, Dr. Wood, Dr. Gibbs. Front row: Sydnee Distance, Christian Allen, De'Nitra Terrell.

## Capitol representatives attend Independent Higher Education Day

On February 12, 2009, deemed "Maryland Independent Higher Education Day" by Governor Martin O'Malley, Capitol student and staff representatives traveled to Annapolis to participate in the recognition of the vital role Maryland's independent colleges serve in the state, which boasts one of the best educated workforces in the nation.

Capitol, along with other independent institutions in Maryland, brought more than 150 college students, executives

and presidents from across the state to Annapolis for the day of briefings and special activities at the Historic Inn of Annapolis, Calvert House.

"Especially with our economy in recession, continued support from the state government and business communities is important for the growth and development of our workforce and citizens, and for the ability of our public and independent colleges and universities to educate them," says Dr. Michael T. Wood. "We appreciate the relationship of mutual support that we enjoy with Maryland's executive and legislative leaders."

Professor Walters (second from right) and the Capitol Balloon Experiment Club test a weather balloon and their payload full of sensory instruments. Students from left to right: Zach Dwyer, Marcel Mabson, Justin Gronert, Ian Howard and Melody Ford.



## Maryland Space Business Roundtable sponsors student club

Following a presentation from faculty advisor Angela Walters, the Capitol Balloon Experiment Club was awarded \$1,270 this spring from the Maryland Space Business Roundtable Board of Directors. The sponsorship will allow the popular on-campus club to continue their high-altitude, weather balloon experiments.

CBEC was developed with a mission; to provide a way for Capitol students to use their smarts by developing and testing high-altitude sensors and instruments, designing structures to house these instruments, and to effectively analyze data collected from the project. The funds from this sponsorship will help the club buy supplies, take trips, and conduct experiments.



## Looking Ahead

### Graduates' Reception

Every year before Commencement, all graduates are invited to celebrate at the Graduates' Reception, held in the McGowan Academic Center. This year, join the Capitol College family on **May 15, 2009** to chat with faculty, reminisce about good times on campus, and have fun on the eve of graduation.

### Commencement

The big day is almost here! **May 16, 2009** will mark Capitol College's 82nd commencement ceremony. Our graduates will walk across the stage to be awarded with a degree that signifies their hard work and achievements during their Capitol years. Capitol is honored to welcome Colonel Paul S. Lockhart (Ret.), formerly of the United States Air Force and currently the senior vice president of Space Systems and Services Intelligence for QinetiQ – North America, who will deliver the commencement address. As a former astronaut and former director of the Constellation Systems Division at NASA, Colonel Lockhart is an inspiration for all graduates. Attendance for the day is open, and all friends and alumni of the college are invited to attend.



### Golf Tournament

Student success and college completion is often dependant upon the financial support students receive from Capitol College. The 2nd annual Capitol College Scholarship Golf Tournament on **June 12, 2009** will raise funds to support the growing needs of our students and ensure that they will receive financial support annually through scholarships. To register to play, or to be a sponsor, go to [www.capitol-college.edu/golf](http://www.capitol-college.edu/golf).



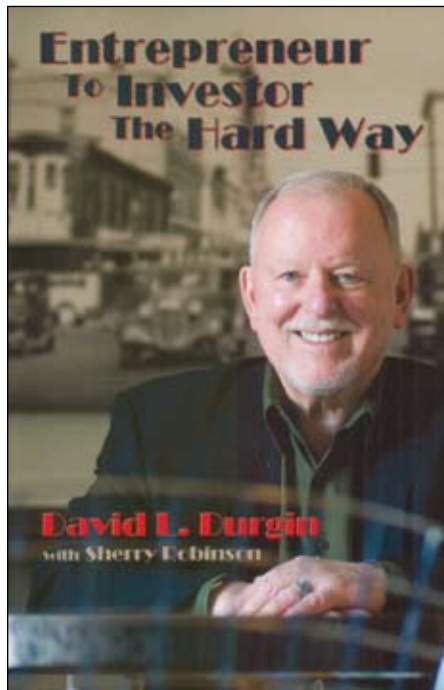
**'61** David L. Durgin, AAS, who graduated from Capitol summa cum laude and earned his BS from New Mexico State University, is a general partner with Verge Fund and is a member of the National Venture Capital Association. He and his wife, Eilene, live in Albuquerque, NM where he has recently published a book, entitled "Entrepreneur to Investor, the Hard Way."

**'71** Robert W. Richards, Jr., BS, a member of the Project Management Institute, retired in 1999 from his career as an R&D project manager for Hewlett-Packard. He earned an MBA from Golden Gate University, and is a member of IEEE and the Tau Alpha fraternity. He and his wife, Lisbeth, reside in Truckee, Calif.

**'75** Jerry Gibbon, BS, an IEEE senior member, was appointed to the IEEE Communications Society Governness Board for Global Communications and International Communications Conferences after completing a tour as General Chairman of the GlobeCom conference held in Washington, DC in November 2007.



**'79** Richard A. Okeowo, BS, retired in 2005 from his position as CEO of Nostrium Consulting, located in Bowie, Md. He is a member of IEEE, CISSP, AMA and ACP, and earned his MS from the George



Washington University in Washington, DC. Okeowo resides in Laurel, Md.

**'83** Abel O. Memuduaghan, BS, is a captain in the Nigerian Navy. He and his wife, Otuyemi, live in Lagos State, Nigeria.

**'93** Kevin E. Mitchell, BS, is the principal engineer for ITT, located in Annapolis Junction, Md. He has received an MS from Johns Hopkins University and resides with his wife, Wendy, in Mount Airy, Md.

**'95** Nelson S. Chu, BS, lives in Oak Hill, Va. and works as a senior solutions architect for Apptis. He and his wife, Quincy, are the proud parents of twin girls.

**'03** Jason M. Bachtell, BS, works as an electrical engineer for the Hagerstown Light Department in Hagerstown, Md. He resides in Chambersburg, Pa. with his wife, Tarra.

**'03** Danny J. Hartwell, MS, is a program manager for the U.S. Department of Defense in Patuxent River, Md., and resides in Leonardtown, Md. with his wife, Valerie.

**'03** Ricky S. Herron, MS, is an Army Reserve officer currently mobilized with the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, a group which helps to build and advise the Iraqi Security Forces and both their Ministries of Defense and of the Interior. Herron also works as an associate at Booz Allen Hamilton, and is a member of several professional organizations including INCOSE, Reserve Officers Association, AFCEA, Defense Acquisition University Alumni Association, Signal Corps Regimental Association, and Potomac Executive Network. He and his wife, Phuoc Le, reside in Annapolis, Md.

**'04** Len Feng Chen, BS, a member of IEEE and MACPA, currently works for Penan & Scott, P.C. as a tax accountant. She and her husband, Marc Dobak, live in Silver Spring, Md.

**'06** Diana L. Cero, MS, has gained the supervisory position of chief for Plans and Implementation at the Maryland Air National Guard. She has also been promoted to E-8, SMSgt in the United States Air Force. She and her husband, Tom, live in Middle River, Md. Says Cero, "My first born arrived in July of 2007. I have a wonderful life, marriage and family!"

**'06** Carl D. Willis-Ford, MS, has completed a master's degree in technology management from George Mason University in June of 2008. He has also received a CIO Certificate in Federal Executive Competencies from the CIO University in August of 2008. Willis-Ford is a member of INCOSE, and works as a Chief Database Engineer for SRA International, Inc. He and his wife, Brenda, reside in Manassas, Va.





## E-Newsletter

Interested in knowing more about the great things happening at Capitol?

If you haven't already received the e-newsletter, go to our website to sign up and stay connected. It's a quick and convenient way to learn about significant events like open houses, recent accomplishments of faculty, staff, students and alumni, and ways in which you can help support the college.

Let your classmates know what you've been doing. New job? Degree? Award?

Submit your class note on our website at [www.capitol-college.edu](http://www.capitol-college.edu) or mail it to Capitol College, Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations, 11301 Springfield Road, Laurel, MD 20708.

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

Allan Berg spoke at the GovSec conference in March on security clearance requirements, focusing on the vetting process, information required for security clearance, and the adjudication and appeals process. Berg also joined Dr. Ray Vaughn, computer science and engineering department chair at the Mississippi State University, and Dr. John Saunders, director for the Center for Information Assurance Education at the National Defense University, for a joint presentation on a class of software known as "supervisory control and data acquisition software" (SCADA).

Vice President Dr. Michael G. Gibbs, was appointed to the Planetary Science Institute Board of Trustees, located in Tucson, Ariz. He also co-authored a peer-reviewed article featured in the academic journal *Urban Education*, entitled "Bridging the Digital Divide: Changing the Technological Landscape of Inner City Catholic Schools." Dr. Gibbs also presented at this year's CASE conference in Baltimore, Md. on "Strategic Budgeting for Future Advancement Success" with Mary Ann Stanton, the senior regional director for leadership gifts at Bucknell University.

Adjunct Professor Craig Johnson, a retired staff security professional with the Central Intelligence Agency, spoke at the GovSec conference in March at the Washington Convention Center, presenting on terrorism, cyber terrorism, and information technology.

At the recent Council for Advancement and Support of Education conference in Baltimore, Md., Joy Johnson, Director of Advancement and Alumni Services, and Megan Campbell, Director of Marketing and Communications, served as the volunteer chair and marketing co-chair, respectively. CASE is an international association of professionals who advance educational institutions.

Dr. David O. Ward, professor of practice and member of the Capitol College Board of Trustees, was elected executive vice president of the National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 209 (FCC).

Ward served as a shop steward in Chapter 209 for five years prior to the election.

President Michael Wood, Vice President W. Vic Maconachy, and Vice President Michael G. Gibbs published an article in the *Business Monthly*, "Capitol College's Innovation and Leadership Institute," highlighting the new Innovation and Leadership Institute and the challenges of educating the next generation of business and technology leaders. This article also appeared in *Maryland Entrepreneur Quarterly*.





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