Capitol Chronicle

Focusing on Academics
Educating the next generation of leaders
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on the cover
Ahmed Tariq, a sophomore astronautical engineering major, is like many students who come to Capitol: a focused, hard worker who spends much of his time in the Puente Library.
Capitol’s Niche:
Educating the next generation of leaders in engineering, science, technology and business

Capitol College is an extraordinary college, especially when it comes to academics. The niche Capitol fills in the world of academia is unlike any other college or university; students who come here know where they want to go and are willing to work hard to get there. They come here to obtain an advanced education in an engineering, computer science, information technology or business field that will qualify them for a high paying career working with cutting-edge technology.

The students who take classes here are the next generation of engineers, technology professionals, and business leaders who will harness new types of renewable energy, plan missions to Mars, develop the next generation of personal electronics, and start technology companies. They will be the business and government leaders who lead our nation to greater technological heights.

What students learn here enables them to design and produce communications networks and electronics that are better, faster, stronger and lighter. Capitol’s graduates program the computers that run networks for hospitals, law firms, government agencies, and financial services companies. With business courses integrated into their curriculum, they fuse a practical knowledge of technology with managerial know-how and leadership.

Capitol offers 12 undergraduate programs, all concentrated in areas that are crucial for the development of new technologies. For example, as society becomes increasingly reliant on electronic information, a demand for highly trained information technology professionals has emerged. The undergraduate information assurance program is designed to meet this demand by developing in students a mastery of cyber security and homeland security concepts, tactics and strategies.

Aeronautical engineering is another popular undergraduate major. It is tied to the Space Operations Institute, a NASA-funded program that takes on students as interns who control and monitor NASA satellites. This hands-on experience is just one example of the kind of education that extends to all majors on campus.

The proof of innovation and integration in Capitol’s academic programs can be found in the names of the programs themselves; for example, computer engineering technology or...
information and telecommunications systems management. There are few other institutions that offer such a blend of information and technology sectors to their students, while balancing creativity with appropriate theory and liberal arts classes.

Instead of waiting until the last year of study to ask students to apply theory to real-world situations, faculty members introduce the practical experience students will need to succeed in their careers from day one. Thus, an electrical engineering major’s first three years are filled with classes focused on the practical design of systems, network analysis, and digital communications. The senior capstone experience and internships bring all of this together into real-world experience.

The unique melding of academic programs is also a key for our students’ successes. For example, information assurance students take courses in computer science and software engineering theory. Software and internet applications majors are instilled with information technology and information assurance knowledge. This broad knowledge base is what makes a Capitol graduate a highly coveted employee around the region, and indeed the world.

Often, Capitol students are already doing amazing things with technology in their careers, and seek a master’s degree to gain deeper technical insights, prepare for leadership positions in their corporations, or to start their own company.

Our MBA graduates have an edge over their counterparts in that they not only have the skills necessary to run a business, but they have skills necessary to run businesses in technology and engineering-related fields. Capitol graduate students are exposed to unique classes that fuse a business education with the best of the world of technology. Armed with powerful knowledge of computers and new technologies, they are sure to have an edge over other job seekers after graduation.

All six graduate programs at Capitol are offered completely online. While this delivery method is becoming increasingly common in higher education, Capitol’s graduate programs offer more than just convenience. The courses are taught via a highly interactive system. Students attend live class sessions, interact with classmates, discuss problems with their professors, and even ‘raise’ their hand in class.

Through Capitol Live, the college’s home base for all online classes, students are actively engaged in their virtual classroom environments. So even if you are a graduate student sitting at home in comfortable slippers, you’re still getting individual attention and the education you need to move up in your profession. For additional information on how Capitol’s innovative distance learning program works, read Dean Helen Barker’s editorial on page 3.

Another element that makes Capitol’s academic programs rise above the rest is the integration of leadership into the curriculum. The Innovation and Leadership Institute, envisioned by President Michael Wood, connects academics with the college’s expansive network of business and government leaders. Students are provided the opportunity to interact with these leaders on a regular basis through mentoring, internships, collaborating on research, and even taking classes taught by guest professors who have years of experience in their fields.

By teaching leadership in the classroom and giving students opportunities to show leadership through internships and real-world experiences, Capitol makes sure that students don’t just go out and get a job – they are able to engage in careers that require the quality of leadership. By focusing on academics, Capitol College ensures its graduates, at all levels, leave campus with the practical education that will help them succeed in their technology-driven careers.
Committing to Quality Online Education – “Anytime, Anywhere”

In response to a shift in the demographic make-up of their student bodies, many colleges and universities find themselves increasing their use of online course delivery – Capitol College is no exception. While distance education has a long history, recent technological advances have provided higher education with new opportunities in online education. For example, advances in audio and video have redefined virtual learning, positioning it as a viable alternative to face-to-face learning.

A long-time partner in the distance education arena, Capitol College has (for over 10 years) continued to capitalize on new technologies by applying them to our distance education program. Utilizing a blended model of live online classes, supported by the tools of asynchronous communication (email, blogs, and wikis), we are able to provide “anywhere, anytime” education. More recently, Capitol’s commitment to making higher education accessible has led us to offer entire graduate degree programs online and to provide the last two years of several undergraduate programs online. Over the last year, we have added a successful hybrid model of instruction, integrating online students into the face-to-face classroom.

With the understanding that online course delivery is different than face-to-face course delivery, we are committed to addressing the quality of student learning in terms of the specific delivery medium. Working closely with faculty, we have identified best online teaching and learning practices appropriate for each academic curriculum. The search for best practices examines not only what we teach, but also the technological tools that support our learning processes. Creating an effective and high-quality learning environment requires a partnership between the college and our students, as the student is an integral partner in the ongoing evaluation process. Ongoing communication with students provides us with feedback critical to ensuring the quality of the education we offer.

The activities that take place in a web-based learning environment also play a key role in learning outcomes. If you are a student, your individual learning needs are supported by utilizing activities such online labs, blogs, discussion threads, and wikis. These activities set the stage for how you engage in the learning process and the knowledge you will take away from the learning experience. This kind of active engagement provides all students with a higher quality learning experience.

Distance education at Capitol is more than just reaching as many students as possible. It requires a responsible approach to providing education to students who want, and in many cases require, education provided in a more convenient delivery environment. The college will continue to be a leader in distance education, as our partners are committed to leading the way in the innovative delivery of online education.

“...We have identified best online teaching and learning practices appropriate for each academic curriculum.”

Helen Barker is the dean of the school of business and information sciences at Capitol College and can be contacted at hgbarker@capital-college.edu.
Degrees and Decisions: New alumni honored at Commencement

After years of hard work and dedication, Capitol College graduates walked across the stage on May 16 at Capitol’s 2009 Commencement ceremony. Graduates received their various degrees and honors in front of a crowd filled with family, friends, and members of the Capitol community.

The crowd saw class of 2009 graduates from 29 states and 13 countries receive degrees. In his traditional address to students highlighting the statistical make-up of their graduating class, President Wood cited 216 graduates would be honored; graduates both young and old, ranging in age from 21 to 64.

William P. Littleton, Jr., who bore the college flag, was presented the Marilyn and Seymour Levenson Memorial Award by Helen Barker, dean of the school of business and information sciences. Littleton, after enjoying a diverse career in many areas including the military, culinary arts, and a Capitol employee, graduated summa cum laude. A superstar among this year’s information assurance graduates, he was also honored as the recipient of a rare scholarship and internship by the Department of Defense’s Information Assurance Scholarship Program in 2008.

Three more extraordinary students, SMART scholarship recipient Melody Ford, 2008 Avrum Gudelsky scholar Doug Daniels, and Presidential Scholarship recipient Christopher Blegen, the class of 2009 Gift Committee chairs, graciously bestowed new printers to the library on behalf of the graduating class.

Capitol leaders welcomed Col. Paul S. Lockhart (Ret.), a former United States Air Force test pilot and NASA astronaut, as this year’s commencement speaker. Lockhart clued graduates into the difficult decisions that often accompany the success of achieving a degree. During his speech he chronicled many of his own decisions, for good or for bad, which allowed students to see that a career is made up of a set of chosen paths.

“Paths in life take you to the places you want to go, and the decisions you make will help you get there,” said Lockhart. “Remember the journey; it is just as important as the end result.” He also urged students to set goals and make plans, be open to advice but trust their instincts, remain flexible, and above all to set high standards for themselves.

While the class of 2009 faces an unstable job market and tough economic times upon their emergence from the world of academia, we know they all have the skills and knowledge they need to make excellent decisions throughout their careers and the journey of their lives. To the class of 2009, congratulations and good luck!
For the continued dedication of Capitol College to make information assurance education a priority, the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security have re-designated the college as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education for academic years 2009-2014.

Capitol is one of five higher education institutions in Maryland to be recognized as a CAE, offering programs that are jointly sponsored by NSA and DHS. Representatives from the college received the honor during the Awards Ceremony Dinner at the 13th Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education conference in Seattle, Washington, held June 1-3, 2009.

“The re-designation validates the hard work our academic leaders have done to develop programs which provide a high quality and practical education to information assurance professionals,” said Dr. Michael Wood, president of Capitol College. “The importance of effectively preparing information assurance professionals in all sectors of government and industry should not be understated. The college’s re-designation demonstrates our strong commitment to fulfilling the call for more highly educated information assurance professionals.”

Recognition of CAEs is proof that the government, including NSA and DHS, realize the criticality of partnering with academia to ensure the nation’s future. Branches of the government are actively pursuing strong alliances with these schools to ensure the continued improvement of information assurance education and research of the next generation.

“The Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education program are well recognized by government, industry and academia as those that produce well-educated students who understand information assurance,” wrote Richard C. Schaeffer, NSAs director of information assurance in a letter to President Wood.

“Capitol College is well positioned to help ensure the nation is protected from future cyber vulnerabilities and attacks through the students you educate and the research opportunities you provide,” he said. “Graduates from the CAE programs enter the workforce prepared to make an immediate contribution, leading the nation to a more secure future.”

Also at the CISSE conference, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer Dr. W. Vic Maconachy led a research team of two Capitol students, Peter Starland and Department of Defense Information Assurance Scholarship Program recipient Jennifer Duryea, in giving a presentation discussing the need to develop a common understanding of a curriculum which prepares students to practice in the field of information assurance.

The team’s research found that within academia, information assurance education is not consistently approached and lacks a standard curriculum. With no well-defined plan of action in place to correct this problem, the team suggested that a plan must be developed and shared with those engaged in the process of recruiting information assurance professionals. They proposed a national summit to address information assurance education at the graduate and undergraduate level.

NSA projects to fill approximately 1300 positions each year for the next several years, actively recruiting from CAE institutions like Capitol, for critical information assurance jobs for which both Starland and Duryea will find themselves being recruited.
Golfers sink putts for scholarship students

For the second year, golfers of all ages came together at the Capitol College Scholarship Golf Tournament on June 12, to play a round in support of the college’s scholarship fund. The tournament and its sponsors helped raise funds to support the increased financial needs of our students and ensure that they will receive financial aid scholarships.

Patuxent Greens in Laurel was a warm, sunny backdrop for college executives, alumni, staff members, representatives from sponsoring businesses and friends of Capitol to participate in the event. Sponsors this year included tournament sponsor trustee John Puente, lunch sponsors John and Mary Dettra, Eaton Aerospace, RCM&D, Patuxent Insurance Group, Echo, and SAIC.

At the awards luncheon, Larry Tornabene, the recipient of the Golf Scholarship funded by last year’s tournament, reminded the golfers how much their participation and contributions mean to the students. “This event makes it possible for me to get my degree. I’d like to thank everyone who came out today.”

College’s green focus results in PLANT Award

The Maryland Urban and Community Forest Committee of the Maryland Association of Forest Conservancy District Boards, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service have recently awarded Capitol College the Bronze Maryland Community PLANT (People Loving and Nurturing Trees) Award.

Administrative Assistant Ché Thompson received the award on behalf of the college at the award ceremony on June 11, 2009 at Billingsley Manor in Upper Marlboro, Md., held to recognize the people and communities in Maryland that have enhanced their community forests during the past year. Thompson led efforts to beautify the campus and the Laurel community by encouraging staff and students to participate in the 2009 Gorgeous Prince George’s Day.

“Your commitment in caring for our precious trees embodies what the State’s new tree planting program, Marylanders Plant Trees, strives to inspire in our communities,” wrote Governor Martin O’Malley in a letter to the college. “Working together as One Maryland, we can preserve our remaining tree cover and grow new trees to create a smarter, greener State for future generations.”

Website redesign receives an A from online critics

After months of anticipation from the campus community, Capitol launched its new website in April. The new online representation of the college utilizes modern web technology in its organization, navigation and design.

An independent web reviewer of higher education sites, educheckup.com, rated the new site on a live web show after it was launched and awarded an overall score of an A. The visuals and organization of information categories each received a score in the 95th percentile for all college websites reviewed.
The new site design took many cues from a survey of students, parents, staff, faculty and alumni. During the summer months the Capitol Store will also be launched, allowing the college community to display their pride and support of the college on sweatshirts, t-shirts, hats and other merchandise available for purchase directly online.

Emerging Leader Program focuses on STEM outreach and retention goals

President Michael Wood announced the creation of the Emerging Leader Program, a comprehensive outreach and retention program focused on cultivating leaders, along with a $500,000 financial aid commitment for incoming first-year students.

Designed to meet the college’s mission of accessibility and commitment to build and educate leaders of the future science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) workforce, the Emerging Leader Program acts as an umbrella for many of Capitol’s initiatives that address workforce development, including STEM and college awareness outreach to middle and high school students, the Capitol Scholars Program, and many others.

The program is a key component to the overall student experience at Capitol that provides both an educational and holistic approach, and builds on Capitol’s commitment to developing the STEM and cyber security workforce pipeline. Dr. Wood indicated that, “The Emerging Leader Program is a clear example of the Capitol College commitment to addressing our state, regional and national needs in developing our future leaders in the STEM, cyber and business fields.”

Capitol Scholars Program enrolls first 14 students

Starting this fall, students who excel in science and technology will have the opportunity to show off their talents at Capitol College with the added bonus of having their tuition paid in full through the Capitol Scholars Program, funded in part by a 2008 grant from the National Science Foundation. The CSP provides funding and support programs for a cohort of 14 specially selected, high-ability freshmen each year for the next five years, bringing the region’s brightest and most motivated young minds to campus.

Career awareness program for high school funded by MHEC grants

This spring, the Maryland Higher Education Commission College Preparation Intervention Program granted Capitol College with over $30,000 in state funds to assist in the implementation of Career and College Awareness Programs for 2009 and 2010 to GEAR UP sophomores at Fairmont Heights High School and their parents.

The programs will increase student awareness of selected career fields that require a college education, including necessary academic preparation during high school, and will increase both student and parent knowledge of the college admissions and financial aid processes.

Looking Ahead

Alumni Task Force

During the 2009 Commencement ceremony, President Dr. Michael Wood announced the creation of a special task force charged with the responsibility to develop a constitution and by-laws for a Capitol College National Alumni Association. The task force, comprised of Capitol alumni both in the Maryland region and nationally, will convene during the upcoming summer and fall months to begin the process of establishing this new association. Additional information will be provided via the Capitol website.

Registration

Graduate registration for summer term II and fall semesters is underway. Summer term II graduate classes begin June 29, 2009 and fall 2009 classes begin August 31, 2009. Go online to view course schedules at http://mycapitol.capitol-college.edu.

Graduate Virtual Open House

Haven’t you always wanted to continue your education? Capitol College is offering graduate students the opportunity to attend a Virtual Open House on August 12, 2009 at 7 p.m. in anticipation of classes beginning this fall. Open house attendees should expect to learn about what Capitol has to offer and be acclimated to the available master’s degree programs, all while experiencing the unique online classroom format. Register now at www.capitol-college.edu/voh.
Robert I. Rhoads, BS, is a senior project manager at GAI-Tronics Corporation in Mohnton, Pa. He is a current member of the Project Management Institute and IEEE. He and his wife Carol reside in West Lawn, Pa.

Don Eggar, BS, retired from his position as the principal electrical engineer for E-Systems/Raytheon in 1998, a position he held for 18 years. He now resides in Moyock, NC.

Kevin G. Winters, BS, serves as the director of engineering at Qualcomm, Inc. in San Diego, Calif. He is a member of CommNexus, and earned his MBA from San Diego State University. He lives in Del Mar, Calif.

George Hoffman, MS, works as a program manager for Sun Microsystems, Inc. in Ashburn, Va. He is currently attending Northcentral University in pursuit of his DBA. He and his wife, Lisa, reside in Brambleton, Va.

Tom Trotter, BS, is a systems engineer for P3I, Inc. and has been working at Hanscom Air Force Base since moving to the Boston, Ma. area in 2002. He was recently promoted to company group lead and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in management at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He is a member of both IEEE and INCOSE.

Larry J. Belella, BS, is a staff engineer for Proxy Aviation Systems. While attending Capitol, Belella was active in the Alpha Chi National Honor Society and Tau Alpha Pi fraternity. He lives in Smithsburg, Md. with his wife Joyce.

Brian C. Canfield, BS, is a telecommunications administrator for the Oregon Judicial Department where he manages the state-wide WAN and LAN, and other telecommunications systems including integrated video conferencing. Before his current position, Canfield worked at Allied Signal, designing communication and control systems for the NASA ground network system. He is a member of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society and resides in Dallas, Ore.

Chris Bevard, BS, has been the lead electrical engineer at AAI Corporation for the past 26 years. He earned his MS degree from Capitol College in 2006, and is a member of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society and Tau Alpha Pi fraternity. Bevard and his wife Kim live in Cockeysville, Md.

Juan E. Harnett, MS, is a senior security engineer in information assurance for the Defense Information Systems Agency. As a Capitol student, Harnett was a member of IEEE and NSBE. He is now a member of CISSP and is a 2nd Lt. in the Civil Air Patrol in Manassas, Va. In his spare time, Harnett owns a video game retail franchise in Northern Virginia, and coaches the Champion 75lbs Ravens Football Team at Dale City Sports Club. He and his wife, Renee, welcomed their fifth grandchild in June 2009. They reside in Dale City, Va.

John H. Moyer, BS, works for Monster Government Solutions as a senior Linux engineer in McLean, Va. and is a current member of RHCE. He lives in Silver Spring, Md.

Malcolm B. Fowler, MS, has been the director of information technology at Cargo-Master, LLC for the past 16 years. He is a member of the Information Systems Security Association and CISSP, and holds a BA degree from the Missouri Southern State University. Fowler and his wife Debbie reside in Grand Prairie, Texas.

Thomas C. Russell, MS, of Lansdale, Pa., is the director of standards at the Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers. He is a member of several professional organizations including IEEE, the Audio Engineering Society, and the Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers, Standards Engineering Society.

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/alumupdate. Your note could be included in the next Chronicle!

Each issue of Capitol Chronicle, including class notes, is posted on Capitol College’s website.
Professor Angela Walters served as a judge for the math and science portion of the Beacon Conference at Montgomery College in June 2009. The Beacon Conference for Student Scholars at Two-Year Colleges recognizes, celebrates, and showcases the achievements of outstanding two-year college students in academic research and writing.

Vice President Dr. Vic Maconachy and Vice President Dr. Michael Gibbs presented an academic paper, “Integrating Cyber Security into Higher Education Curriculum,” at the Third American Institute of Higher Education Conference held in Nashville, Tennessee, through the Internet division.

In May 2009, Director of Admissions George Walls was featured on WOL 1450 AM with Cynthia Harris, who hosts The Light of the City. Walls spoke to audiences about Capitol’s dedication and focus on STEM education on the show’s college and career information hour.

This spring, Mercury magazine, an online magazine dedicated to astronomy and space science, published Vice President Professor John Ryan was reelected by faculty colleagues to serve another term as the president of the Faculty Senate in 2009.

Associate Professor Andrew Mehri represented Capitol College at the Cyber Games Workshop in Charlotte, NC in June 2009.

Vice President Dr. Vic Maconachy gave a presentation on the importance of promoting STEM education at the Owens Science Center in May 2009 to celebrate its 30th anniversary as a center.

Professor Dan Jablonski received the Faculty Service to Community award at the 2009 Commencement ceremony.

Professor Earl Gottsman was awarded the Presidential Award by President Wood at the 2009 Commencement ceremony. He was also honored with the 2009 Alpha Chi Esteemed Professor Award in April, selected by student body vote. Gottsman retired at the end of the Spring semester after 27 years at Capitol.

Professor Andres Ho received the Faculty Teacher of the Year at the 2009 Commencement ceremony.

This spring, the Capitol faculty and staff were recognized for contributions to the US Secret Service. Mark Sullivan, director of the Secret Service, presented college leadership with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of the efforts and superior contributions that faculty and staff have made to the law enforcement responsibilities of the Secret Service. Close proximity to the Washington, DC area and the many government agencies and departments that reside in the Baltimore/Washington Corridor, including the National Security Agency and NASA, has allowed Capitol College to partner with all areas of the government. Often, the secluded campus is an ideal place for these agencies to hold conferences, meetings, and training camps.

Capitol Connector E-Newsletter

Interested in knowing more about the great things happening at Capitol? If you haven’t already received our 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.
The Capitol Store is now online!

Visit www.capitol-college.edu to purchase hats, t-shirts, polos and other college apparel. Wear your support of Capitol on your sleeve – literally!