Gib and Brenda Compton—
their story on page 6
It was such a privilege to join with students, faculty and alumni in celebrating the life of the late Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. this past January. We gathered at the King campus memorial next to Ahearn Field House, which commemorates the site of the slain civil rights leader’s last speech on a university campus in 1968, where I was honored to participate in a multiple-wreath-laying ceremony.

Dr. King’s legacy lives on today through the continued efforts of our academic programs, two of which we will be hosting again this summer, aimed at increasing retention of multicultural students in higher education endeavors. The Multicultural Academic Program Success (MAPS), a part of K-State’s Project Impact and sponsored by $1 million gifts from the Cargill Corporation and ConocoPhillips, will this summer bring 50 under-represented minorities to campus for six weeks. Last summer, 26 incoming freshmen, majoring in engineering, agriculture or business, completed six hours of coursework while here and then presented results of their multidisciplinary projects to campus administrators, Cargill executives and policy makers from across Kansas.

Because MAPS did not have space to handle the large number of qualified applicants last summer, faculty and departments across our college banded together to contribute time and money, with additional funding from the National Science Foundation, to establish a new program, Summer CampuS Internships (CSI), with nine engineering and one chemistry student participating. Once again this summer, CSI students will engage in research projects alongside faculty in the colleges of engineering and arts and sciences, and will present their research at the end of the program. This academic endeavor will then integrate with our new Engineering Scholars Program, which focuses on providing opportunities for first-generation-to-college students with financial need.

Our Multicultural Engineering Program director LaVerne Betie-Baldwin and Women in Engineering and Science Program director Kimberly Douglas-Mankin are to be congratulated for their efforts in building and coordinating these outstanding bridge programs.

John R. English
Dean of the College of Engineering

On Jan. 25, Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson signed a proclamation designating April 23–24, 2010, as the “88th Annual Engineering Open House at Kansas State University.”

On hand for the occasion were, left to right, College of Engineering Assistant Dean Tom Roberts; Steel Ring vice president Neil Ostermann, CE senior; Governor Parkinson; Steel Ring president Anna Sommer, CHE senior; and Steel Ring treasurer Sarah Beier, IE senior.

Open House Proclamation

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I attribute my success in being named a Goldwater Scholar to my parents and my professors at Kansas State University.”

These are the words of Emily Tummons, K-State junior in biological systems engineering, who is among 278 students to receive 2010 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships, worth as much as $7,500 annually for recipients’ final one or two years of undergraduate study. Scholars were selected on the basis of academic merit from a pool of 1,111 applicants, according to the Goldwater scholarship program.

“My parents provided me with the opportunities to succeed in school, internships and research opportunities, by finding every way possible for me to travel and study at some of the best places in the country,” she said. “My professors provided me with the problem-solving skills and scientific knowledge to take on research experiences and excel at them.”

Nominees are required to complete four mini-essays and one longer essay about a significant area of research in their field of study.

“I expected the application process to be long and a lot of work,” said Tummons, a first-time applicant, “but I had no idea that I would spend the better part of two months writing essays, editing essays and rewriting essays for the campus application and then for the national application.”

“My engineering physics professor, Tim Bolton, told me I had the grades and ambition to succeed at some of the national scholarships, including the Goldwater. He prompted me to talk to Assistant Dean Jim Hohenbary about the scholarship application process.

“Dean Hohenbary also told me about the Research Experience for Undergraduates Program (REU), which I participated in during summer 2009,” she said. “The REU made me realize I wanted to do research

continued on page 10
K-State team examines effects of water policies

When water use policies and practices change, they produce a ripple effect in communities, impacting everything from what types of crops a farmer will grow to how many people will move in or out of a town. That’s why Kansas State University is pooling experts from multiple disciplines to understand how these changes affect people in communities that depend on the water source of a town and people depending on it as an abundant source of water.

The interdisciplinary team is creating tools that can predict the consequences that water policy decisions would have on all aspects of a community, from the viability of the local economy to land use practices. These tools will help policymakers understand how their decisions about the Ogallala Aquifer could play out for people living in communities that depend on the water source.

The team is also employing two cutting-edge programs in their research: the open modeling interface (OpenMI) and the hydrologic information system (HIS). OpenMI was launched in 2005 and K-State, the first research team in an academic field to employ it, uses it to allow the different models in the project to “talk” to one another.

“The Ogallala Aquifer, which lies underneath southwest Kansas, is one of the world’s largest underground sources of fresh water. The water source offsets the region’s dry climate and supports irrigated crops, the meat packing industry and the Kansans for whom such agricultural practices are their livelihood and the backbone of their towns’ economies.

There are places where the aquifer will not be able to sustain the industries and people now dependent on the water supply. These areas of decline are where the interdisciplinary team of K-State researchers—from agronomy, agricultural economics, political science, sociology and landscape architecture—is focusing its study of the intersection of people and the water supply.

And bringing all of the data together from these entities is Daniel Andresen, associate professor of computing and information science. Using the state’s largest academic research supercomputer, K-State’s Beocat, Andresen will be able to run policy scenarios and show their outcomes in the various categories.

This project builds on work by K-State’s Consortium for Global Research on Water-Based Economies, an interdisciplinary team formed in 2001.

—K-State Media Relations

Attention ESSI alumni

A banquet honoring the 45th annual Engineering and Science Summer Institute was held at K-State on June 4. Current ESSI organizers would like to compile a database of alumni members of the summer institute, as well as hear any stories or memories of the event such persons would like to share. ESSI alumni are encouraged to send this information and/or their name, mailing address, phone number and email address to Director 45th Annual ESSI 1056 Rathbone Hall Manhattan, KS 66506 or engineer.career@ksu.edu

“Are we right at the cusp of bringing together data storage capability and modeling through use of OpenMI?” Steward said, “and are being recognized internationally in scholarly journals for doing so.”

Steward said it used to be a struggle to combine water models with all the different data sources and databases, but use of the HIS program has standardized access to these sources. He organized the first-ever HIS workshop last spring at K-State, hosting researchers and state agency personnel from across Kansas interested to learn how to implement the system.

“And another thing that we’re trying to do is develop information that can be used in risk assessment,” Steward said. “Some of the policies we will be looking at are rules the state already has in place that could be enforced now. We’re trying to understand what the impacts of those are, not just on the water supply, crops and cattle production, but also on people.”

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—K-State Media Relations

The College of Engineering inducted two new members into its Hall of Fame April 23 at the Bill Snyder Family Stadium, east side club level. The following alumni honorees were recognized for their professional success and accomplishments, active involvement with and support of the College of Engineering, dedication to K-State, and professional and public service: left, Donald Lenhart, EE ’56, retired professor of electrical engineering, Kansas State University; and right, Louis Von Thaer, EE ’83, president, General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems.
Pickin’ up the K-State spirit

Gib Compton didn’t plan on majoring in construction science. As a matter of fact, he really didn’t plan to go to college at all. “Coming out of high school in Wichita, I wanted to be a finish carpenter,” he said. “I liked to work with my hands and thought I was pretty good at making things, so this was the route I’d decided to take”

But his family kept encouraging him to consider higher education.

“I knew I didn’t want to go to ‘Hillside High,’” Gib said, “as Wichita State was referred to by the local kids. So that summer I traveled to Manhattan a few times, attended some rush parties— and the rest is history.”

And part of that history led to the Compton Construction Corporation, Wichita, Kan., founded by Gib in 1997 upon the core values of “treat people fairly, work hard, and don’t worry about the rest, all the while providing a quality product for the client.”

“We’ve had huge success since 1997 following those principles,” Gib said.

Last year Compton Construction moved to number 11 on a listing of the Wichita area’s top-20 general contractors. Building projects focus on various types of commercial operations including educational, industrial, religious, retail, medical and food service areas.

“I always wanted to be listed on the Top 400 Engineering News Record,” Gib said. “I’m not there yet and doubt I’ll make it, but number 11 on the Wichita list is not bad.”

Gib had started his educational training at K-State in architecture, but soon found it wasn’t his forte. “When I looked into the construction science program, it just seemed a more natural fit. I was pretty good at making things, so this was the route I’d decided to pursue.”

“Graduates of the ARE/CNS program are sometimes called the ‘renegades’ of engineering,” Gib said, “and that’s partly because so many of the faculty bring industry experience and expertise to their teaching. I think that’s also a reason why industry support is so strong for our department.”

ARE/CNS emphasizes the K-State family aspect that means so much to us,” said Brenda Compton, the self-named ‘silent partner’ of the Comptons.

Brenda, a K-State graduate in health and P.E. and currently a special education teacher at Clearwater High School, said the connection has involved a financial investment as well. “I like being involved,” he said.

And that connection has involved a financial investment as well. Currently they support the Gib and Brenda Compton Construction Science Scholarship and have endowed the Brenda and Gib Alumnus Association Scholarship for Wichita-area youth who will be freshmen at K-State.

With Brenda being a professional educator, and me considering myself a champion of education, it is very important to us to support educational efforts through both our time and finances,” Gib said.

Throughout that time and until today, Gib and Brenda have maintained their K-State connection. Both are active in the local Wichita K-State Alumni Committee and Wichita Carhacker’s organization, and Gib recently completed a four-year term on the K-State Alumni Board. He currently serves on both the Construction Science Advisory Council and the K-State Alumni Center Building Committee.

“I like being involved,” he said.

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“With Brenda being a professional educator, and me considering myself a champion of education, it is very important to us to support educational efforts through both our time and finances,” Gib said.

“They probably wouldn’t have had anything to do with me if we had met then,” Gib said.

Brenda’s translation: “I think he ‘minored’ in Aggieville while at K-State.”

Where they did meet was in Liberal, Kan., where Brenda was teaching at a junior high school and Gib was working on a construction project building a new high school. They were living in the same apartment complex, and as Gib put it. “The apartment manager played matchmaker.”

“The time spent in Liberal was a part of the years Gib refers to as ‘my very own training program.”

After graduation in 1980, his first job was with a contractor in Hutchinson. Next he returned to Manhattan with a similar company, then it was back to Hutchinson through 1988. The Comptons next relocated to Rogers, Ark., with another construction firm, but as Gib said, “My Kansas farm girl wanted to come back to our home state, so I decided to sign on as a project estimator with a Wichita firm.”

The next career move was going into manufacturing with his dad, who had purchased an electric sign company. That venture lasted for one year, followed by a stint in millwork and then as a consultant to a bonding company.

“Each of those jobs was preparing me for my long-term goal of owning my own construction business by 2000,” Gib said.

Throughout that time and until today, Gib and Brenda have maintained their K-State connection. Both are active in the local Wichita K-State Alumni Committee and Wichita Carhacker’s organization, and Gib recently completed a four-year term on the K-State Alumni Board. He currently serves on both the Construction Science Advisory Council and the K-State Alumni Center Building Committee.

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Designing for information security

K-State CIS group—

As computers increasingly transfer patient medical records and other sensitive information, a group of computer scientists at Kan- sas State University is using basic research that will help designers keep such information safe.

Complex information systems form foundations in our nation’s infrastructure and defense forces, and these systems contain data with different security levels, says John Hatcliff, K-State professor of computing and information sciences. As data are exchanged between various users, there’s a danger that information could be released to unauthorized parties.

The ability to guarantee secure information flow is becoming more critical as government and industry push toward increasingly complex information systems in many areas, including health care, the military and in coordinating disaster relief, Hatcliff said. That’s why K-State computer scientists are developing high-level policy languages and verification techniques to strengthen the security and integrity of such systems.

“Whether it’s health care or military information, what people really want is the ability to push information out rapidly to anyone who needs it,” Hatcliff said. “You may have a doctor trying to make a diagnosis or a platoon leader trying to coordinate a maneuver in the context of a larger battlefield operation. In either case, more information leads to better decision making and better outcomes. However, you have to make sure as you’re aggressively pushing information to decision makers that you don’t inadvertently leak sensitive information to someone who shouldn’t be seeing it.”

Hatcliff leads K-State’s Specification, Analysis and Transformation of Software laboratory. The other computing and information sciences faculty researchers in the lab are associate professors Turban Amtoft and Robby, and assistant professor Simon Ou. These researchers do work in security, software engineering, programming language semantics and automatic analysis of computer software.

In March 2009, the research group, in collaboration with researchers at Princeton University, received a five-year, $3 million grant from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. The researchers are developing tools to secure information systems so that when information is transferred across large systems, there is confidence that nothing is accidentally revealed.

“We’re doing foundational research on novel forms of mathematical models and logics that enable designers and analysts to precisely state what information is allowed to flow from one point to another and under what conditions,” Hatcliff said. “This allows technicians to help people secure the mathematical techniques to verify that their systems are correct.”

The researchers also are receiving funding from Rockwell Collins, a company that creates communications and aviation electronic systems. The work with Rockwell Collins involves applying the K-State research team’s verification tools to several systems being developed in the U.S. Department of Defense.

Hatcliff said information leakage is a concern in many domains, like potential integration in the health care system with patients’ medical records.

“Millions of dollars are being invested by federal and state governments to set up health information exchanges,” Hatcliff said. “The idea of such an exchange is that you have a technology organization that facilitates and mediates the exchange of patient medical information between a variety of parties. The challenge is that the information in patients’ records has different levels of sensitivity or security. These exchanges eventually are going to need a way to specify policies describing what information can be released and to whom, and the exchange will need to guarantee that those policies are adhered to.”

Hatcliff said K-State’s research shows promise for addressing these issues because it involves creating mathematical and logical models that can be used by special computer-based auditing programs to guarantee that an information system conforms to the stated information flow policy.

“The researchers’ tools also provide graphical visualizations of information flowing through a system so that designers and auditors can more quickly understand a system’s information flow behavior,” Hatcliff said. “The research focuses on systems where very high levels of assurance are required, and it aims to prove conformance to information flow policies during a certification phase before a system is deployed.

“It’s pretty rare in the software engineering and verification research community that you receive a significant amount of money to fund basic research and also have a company that’s doing such advanced work fund you to take your basic research and apply it,” Hatcliff said.

The collaboration with Princeton University is with Andrew Appel, professor and chair of Princeton’s computer science department.

“We’re very good at building tools that help programmers actually apply some of these techniques to real programs, and Andrew’s very good at developing the underlying math and logic,” Hatcliff said. “We’re working together to come up with an even better collection of tools.”

Through collaboration of different universities, students will receive a good education in the field. The project approaches verification in both software and hardware, but the goal is for students to learn different types of verification techniques.

“Whether it’s health care or military information, what people really want is the ability to push information out rapidly . . .”

Gallagher honored with scholarship

Richard Gallagher entered full-time retirement in June 2010. Contributions to the Richard R. and Linda C. Gallagher Family Scholarship in Engineer- ing may be made to the KSU Foundation, 2323 Anderson Avenue, Suite 500, Manhat- tan, KS 66502, Reference fund T05/900.

The scholarship is designated for support of student leaders of Engineering Student Council, Steel Ring and Engineering Ambassadors. Gallagher, who is active in student leadership advisory roles, was named Blue Key National Honorary Advisor of the Year in 2006. Gallagher earned B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Iowa State University in 1964, 1966 and 1968, respectively. He joined the faculty of the department of electrical engineering at Kansas State University and progressed through the ranks to full professor. Gallagher has received many departmen- tal college and university teaching awards and was presented the American Society for Engineering Education's Western Electric Fund Award. He has served on numerous university committees, held the position of K-State Faculty Senate President and served as the university’s ombudsman for seven years. Holding memberships in several honor and professional societies, he currently serves as an ABET EAC program evaluator and also serves on the board of directors, and is a past presi- dent of the Rocky Mountain Bioengineering Symposium. He has served, as well, as chair- man for the Biomedical Division of ASEE.

“Callers from the College of Engineering saw increases in pledges, dol- lars pledged and first-time donors over the previous year’s efforts during Telefund 2010, Jan. 31–Feb. 4. The all-volunteer campaign realized the following results for the college: total number of pledges—2,584; total dollars pledged—$294,938; and first-time donors—160. University wide, more than $1,200,000 was raised to provide scholarships and educational benefits for the university’s nine academic colleges.”
Kimberly Douglas-Mankin, WESP director, said, “Programming is structured around three purposes: promoting awareness, building community and providing support.”

The program offers Girls Re-Searching Our World and EXCITE—EXPloring iClence, Technology and Engineering—for middle school- to high school-aged girls; Scholars Assessing Scholars, a free tutoring program for high school students and the sciences that employs K-State students who actually attend the class they tutor; CSI or Campus Internship program, which gives first-year students the opportunity to participate in academic research in their field of study during their first and second years of college education; and CONNECT, a program that helps family members understand how to support student success in engineering or science.

“WESP has made a difference at K-State by building programs that allow students, faculty and staff to share their enthusiasm and passion for science and engineering, and build relationships with those who are younger in terms of age or knowledge,” Douglas-Mankin said. “Programs are designed to maximize impact while minimizing the time investment of those who contribute. We are a catalyst for recruiting and retaining women in engineering and science.

“WESP is unique in that it builds programs to address the needs of female students—but WESP programs are accessible to everyone, not exclusively women,” she said. “WESP also develops new tools to document our success and failures so we can assess if programs are having an impact. This allows others to see the value of what we’ve done, and helps us all be smarter as we invest in future scientists and engineers.”

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The EXploring sCIence Technology and Engineering (EXplorers) is the University’s student outreach program, focusing on promoting, advancing, and enriching the STEM fields. The program is designed to engage students in hands-on, real-world problem-solving activities, fostering a culture of innovation and scientific inquiry. EXplorers offers various summer workshops and competitions, including the Girls Researching Our World (GROW) program, which provides high school girls with opportunities to engage in STEM projects and learn from experienced mentors. The program also sponsors the Formula One team, Formula SAE® California, and the Girls Researching Our World (GROW) program, which is designed to foster interest in STEM fields among young women.

K-State Women in Engineering and Science Program (WESP) summer offerings for young women:


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WANTED: Your Updates

We are interested in featuring your career paths and accomplishments of our alumni, focusing on promotions, advancements, awards and honors, job changes and of course, retirements, as well as death notices. Please send your information in these categories to—

Send to: Impact Editor
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A different kind of spring break

K-State engineering students, right, listen in as Turner Construction officials explain details of the on-site concrete process involved in recent upgrades of Arrowhead Stadium, one stop of the Spring Break Alternative, March 14–17. Traveling by bus, 29 engineering students from eight different disciplines learned about potential career options, toured corporate and manufacturing facilities, and networked with industry professionals in Kansas City and Topeka.

Campus sponsors of the event were the College of Engineering as well as K-State Career and Employment Services; corporate sponsors were Cerner, Hallmark and Westar Energy. Students were offered a first-hand look at behind-the-scene activities at Black & Veatch, Burns & McDonnell, Cerner, Garmin, Hallmark, Missouri Department of Transportation, Stowers Institute for Medical Research, Turner Construction and Westar. On-site project visits included Arrowhead and MODOT’s Kansas City Icon Bridge project.