In August 2015, K-State Engineering Extension said farewell to the last group of students participating in a five-week Summer Institute on Environmental Stewardship (Summer Institute) for European Student Leaders, made possible through a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of State, hosted by K-State Engineering Extension.

The Summer Institute topics include wind, solar, nuclear, and coal energy; energy efficiency and conservation; sustainable agriculture; landscape architecture; and international standards for environmental management systems. The experiential nature of the program involved trips to Jeffrey Energy Center, Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, The Land Institute, Kansas City and Dodge City wastewater treatment plants, and Konza Prairie Biological Research Station.

Exposure to American culture is a vital part of the Summer Institute. Faculty and American student mentors offer activities such as Royals baseball, fireworks, square dancing, canoeing, a Native American Pow Wow, Manhattan’s Underground Railroad tour, a play at Manhattan Arts Center, and a community concert featuring the Red State Blues Band. Students also participated in leadership and team-building exercises such as the K-State High Ropes Challenge Course, StrengthsQuest paradigm building leadership style, meeting with Kansas legislative representatives, and meeting and presenting to community leaders at the Manhattan Konza Rotary Club.

In 2015, the program traveled to Seattle, Washington, where the Olympic National Park provided the location for a research supporting its fauna inventory. The final week always includes a trip to Washington, D.C.
Undergraduate research highlight

Through a fund provided by Raj and Diana Nathan, the College of Engineering is able to provide an annual research experience award in the amount of $5,000 for a College of Engineering undergraduate student at the junior or senior level. The purpose of the award is to provide a meaningful research experience for the recipient. The funds are designated to support the activities of the selected student and may be paid to the student as an hourly student wage. The award may be used over a period of one year from the date of the award. The funds may not be used to support work on a funded project or for other activities which they would otherwise be paid. The award should be used for an independent project or an expansion of a funded research project.

The 2015-2016 winner of the Raj and Diana Nathan Undergraduate Research Experience Award is Kseniya Sheshukova. Sheshukova is a junior in biological and agricultural engineering. Her research project, “Purification of Recombinant Human Serum Albumin from Transgenic Rice,” will be supervised by Lisa Wilken, assistant professor in biological and agricultural engineering.

Graduate research highlight

Through a fund provided by Linda Angold Grix and Art Grix Jr. in memory of Linda’s father, John A. Angold (’38 EE, retired after almost 42 years at Burlington Northern), the College of Engineering is able to provide a scholarship to a graduate student in good standing at the university and majoring in any curriculum within the College of Engineering, whose area of study relates to the railroad industry, transit or transportation, with railroad industry-related applicants receiving priority. The scholarship is for one year and can be renewed once during a degree program.

The 2015-2016 winner of the John A. Angold Graduate Engineering Scholarship is Syeda Rubayat Aziz. Aziz is a Ph.D. student in civil engineering. Her research areas of interest include transportation engineering and safety. Her research adviser is Sunanda Dissanayake, professor of civil engineering.

Research highlight

AMI: Successfully advancing commercial readiness of new products and technologies

The Advanced Manufacturing Institute (AMI) provides a broad range of technology and business development services, and project management resources, to both private industry and university researchers, to advance the commercial readiness of new products or technologies. AMI’s success in these areas has recently netted the institute two significant awards.

In March 2015, the Federal Railroad Administration awarded AMI a grant of $380,000 to develop a position control platform that will house a rail sensor system used for detecting rail defects. The goal of the project is to develop a solution that meets the needs of the railroad administration to improve rail safety throughout North America. The project leverages AMI’s expertise in the areas of mechanical design and control systems. The grant focuses on the development of a position control system to precisely locate a noncontact rail inspection sensor over the railroad and to ensure it maintains the proper distance from the rail under normal operating conditions.

In 2013, the U.S. Economic Development Administration designated Kansas State University Olathe as part of its University Center Economic Development Program. To date AMI has received $756,000, with an expected total of $1.25M total for the five-year project. The program supports the creation and infrastructure of the K-State Olathe Innovation Accelerator. The center is a collaborative effort of the university’s Advanced Manufacturing Institute, Institute for Commercialization, Office of Corporate Engagement and K-State Olathe to assist industry in developing and expanding products and technologies that will have a positive economic impact in the region. The K-State Olathe Innovation Accelerator is designed to work closely with private industry to understand their technical or business limitations, and then identify resources to assist in overcoming them, according to Jeff Tucker, executive director of the Advanced Manufacturing Institute and lead project director.

Over the past 30 years, AMI has created an extensive network of organizations such as university experts, patent attorneys, engineering service providers, prototyping specialists and manufacturers who can be called upon to assist in technology development efforts as identified during the course of projects. Additional information can be found at k-state.edu/ami.

Attention faculty

Classroom space available in Phase IV for spring 2016

This fall, the Phase IV edition will be completed providing the College of Engineering with four new state-of-the-art spaces, three classrooms and one auditorium. The three classrooms will primarily be used for distance education classes and the large auditorium, which seats up to 250, will be used for large lecture classes, college lectures and conferences.

The three classrooms DUE 0097, DUE 0096 and DUE 0093 will seat 36, 28 and 64, respectively. Although distance education classes have priority of their use, many open time slots are still available for regular undergraduate and graduate class scheduling, especially in the largest classroom.

All four rooms support traditional audio, video and Web conferencing. They also have a Blu-ray player, document camera, laptop/iPad connection, CPU tower and a 15” touchscreen control for self-recording capabilities.

With the speed at which K-State is growing, it is important to remember that many other colleges do not yet have this amount of space. It is also important for the new facilities to be filled by engineering classes, leaving large classroom spaces outside of the engineering complex for use by other colleges.

For information on reserving one of the new spaces in Phase IV, contact the ERGP office at 532-5844 or ergp-video@ksu.edu.

American Ceramic Society holds international conference at K-State

The American Ceramic Society (ACS) held its 6th annual conference, Advances in Cement-Based Materials, July 20-22 in Fiedler Hall. The conference attracted 86 participants from 11 countries to the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan. Participants included graduate and undergraduate students, material professionals and American Ceramic Society members.

The event is used to develop greater understanding and uses for ceramic and glass materials, especially cement-based materials. Sponsors for this conference included the College of Engineering, the civil engineering department and The American Ceramic Society.

Campus highlight

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Additions to Graduate School administration

Two Kansas State University faculty members have been named half-time associate deans of the Graduate School. Michael Herman has been named associate dean of academic affairs and research, and Geraldine Craig has been named associate dean for student services and enrollment management.

Herman is a professor of biology and co-director of the K-State Ecological Genomics Institute. As associate dean, he will be responsible for facilitating new program development and coordinating graduate program assessment and review. He assumed his new duties Sept. 29, 2014.

Craig is currently professor and department head of art. As associate dean, she will be responsible for coordinating recruitment, managing enrollment and facilitating graduate admissions and matriculation. She assumed her new duties Oct. 13, 2014.

"Michael and Gerry are great additions to the Graduate School and we're very excited to have them as part of our team," said Carol Shanklin, dean of the Graduate School. "Their roles will be important as the Graduate School moves forward in support of Kansas State University's goal to become a Top 50 public research university by 2025."
Undergraduate research highlight

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Attention faculty

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For information on reserving one of the new spaces in Phase IV, contact the engineering development team at 785-532-7609 or email at engineering@found.ksu.edu.

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