Research highlight

Chris Brandt joined the Kansas State University Research Foundation last fall as interim vice president for technology transfer. Brandt comes to the university from Mars, Inc., where he was responsible for global management of intellectual property for the company’s pet care segment. He has broad experience in developing innovation and patent strategies; negotiating and managing the complexities of licensing, consulting and joint development agreements; and navigating intellectual property law.

In this position, Brandt will be responsible for managing the intellectual property portfolio of the research foundation that includes patents, trademarks, copyrights, plant variety certificates and non-patentable materials.

“We are very fortunate to have Chris join the team at the research foundation. He brings tremendous experience in intellectual property management, and is the perfect fit to help the research foundation become ‘best in class’ and contribute significantly to the goals of the K-State 2025 strategic plan,” said J. Ernest Minton, interim president for the research foundation.

Brandt holds a B.S. degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Kansas and a J.D. from Vanderbilt University.

Meet our staff

The engineering graduate student advisory council is looking for members to join during the 2016-2017 academic year. The advisory group works with the associate dean to develop activities and programs that encourage the professional development of graduate students in the College of Engineering. Members meet once a month as a large group and once a month with the sub-committee to which they are assigned. There is a specific need for ARE and CE students, as well as M.S. students from all departments.

If you would like to nominate a student, please send their information to ergp@ksu.edu by May 1.

Upcoming events

4/1 — Engineering Hall ribbon-cutting ceremony, Outdoor Plaza
4/5 — Graduate student appreciation week
4/6 — Graduate student appreciation week, graduate student breakfast
4/7 — Graduate student appreciation week, Say Cheez Photobooth
4/8 — Graduate student appreciation week, GDC ice cream social, 2 - 4 p.m.
4/15 — ENGG Undergraduate Poster Forum
4/28 — ENGG untenured faculty network — collaboration research activities
2064 Rathbone Hall
11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

For more information about these events, please visit engg.k-state.edu/ergp/events

Did you know?

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Transitions — ERGP location and Schulz family

Dear Colleagues:

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April 4 - 8 is national Graduate Student Appreciation Week. As part of the celebration, we’ll host an ERGP open house in 1042 Rathbone from 8 - 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 5. We hope you will stop by for donuts, fruit and juice, and visit our new offices.

It is hard to believe it has been seven years since Kirk and I transitioned to Kansas State — a wonderful time for us to have been part of the K-State family and the College of Engineering. A lot has happened within engineering including the launch of the University Engineering Initiative Act, the addition of Phase IV, a new dean, several new department heads and lots of new engineering faculty.

In the last four years, you have worked with me as we developed the ERGP Office to provide services for the engineering faculty, staff and students in the areas of research, graduate programs, Global Campus and safety. We’ve established a great staff within ERGP, who will continue to provide services and programs to move the college forward.

Dean Dawson is working on a transition plan as he evaluates ERGP programs and activities. After four years, it is a good time to review the evolution of the associate dean’s position and ERGP to help assess the best future path of this office. He will be providing additional information in the days and weeks ahead.

I look forward to continuing to work with you until mid-May, and hope to keep in touch as Kirk and I move on to new roles at Washington State University in June.

Sincerely,

Tamara Robinson

See more at ergp.k-state.edu.
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The Engineering Research and Graduate Programs Office is excited to introduce Ericka Smith as our new administrative specialist. She will be in charge of scheduling engineering classrooms (including the four new classrooms in Engineering Hall, Feidler Auditorium, 1064 Rathbone and the Cargill Classroom). She will also schedule all meetings for the associate dean for research.

Smith has worked in the private and public sectors for both profit and nonprofit organizations. She has experience with use of existing tools to successfully manage day-to-day operations of a business in any economy. She ran a private corporation for more than 10 years. Throughout her tenure, she has written strategic plans, succession plans and successfully increased business profit margins by more than 50%. Smith has worked on several projects including the city of San Gabriel’s “We Thrive” campaign, Nevada Child Care subsidy program social media and community outreach program, the Las Vegas Urban League’s annual impact report and the Las Vegas Urban League’s website. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and economics from Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Smith recently moved to Manhattan with her husband and twin boys from Las Vegas, Nevada. She is originally from Glendale, Wisconsin. In her spare time she enjoys activities with her family and reading.

Graduate student appreciation week

In 1993, three students active in the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students, or NAGPS, wanted to find a way to manifest support and appreciation of the contributions, impact and value of graduate students. This effort led to a cooperative initiative called National Graduate & Professional Student Appreciation Week which is celebrated the first week of April each year. The Graduate School, Graduate Student Council and/or the Engineering Research and Graduate Programs Office have planned the following events:

Tuesday, April 5
Engineering department group photos and snacks, 3 – 4:20 p.m., Engineering Hall first-floor atrium — please be on time. 3 p.m. – CHE 3:10 p.m. – CE 3:20 p.m. – ARE 3:30 p.m. – IMSE 3:40 p.m. – MNE 3:50 p.m. – CIS 4 p.m. – ECE 4:10 p.m. – BAE

GSC awards and recognition reception, 6 – 8:30 p.m., K-State Alumni Center

Wednesday, April 6
ERGP breakfast with Associate Dean Schulz, 8 – 9:30 a.m., 1042 Rathbone Hall

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Say Cheez Photobooth, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Engineering Hall first-floor atrium

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Ice cream social, 2 – 4 p.m., K-State Alumni Center, networking begins at 1:30 p.m.

The College of Engineering departments have planned events for their respective students throughout the week as well. These include activities such as breakfasts, lunches, ice cream socials, pizza parties and bowling. Please contact the graduate coordinator in your department for more information on these events.

Make sure to use IGPSAW when posting photos of your events on social media!

Undergraduate research highlight

Spring 2016 Engineering Undergraduate Research Poster Forum

The College of Engineering is excited to announce the Spring 2016 Undergraduate Research Poster Forum, scheduled for Friday, April 15, 2016, from 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. in the lower level of the new Engineering Hall atrium.

This event is a showcase of research and scholarly activities conducted by undergraduate students from the College of Engineering at Kansas State University. This on-campus event provides students an opportunity to share their research activities with fellow K-State students and faculty, and to gain experience presenting their work in a professional setting. Anyone interested in undergraduate research is welcome to attend.

For the first time, the engineering spring poster forum will be held in conjunction with the University Open House events on April 15 and 16. The event itself will be Friday morning and the posters will remain on display throughout the weekend for all Open House visitors to view.

Research highlight

NSF grant to help researcher with work improving manufacture of ultra-thin precision parts

A grant from the National Science Foundation will help a Kansas State University engineer develop better ways to machine ultra-thin precision parts, which are micro-sized components for high-performance products.

Shuting Lei, professor of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering, has received a $300,000 NSF Manufacturing Machines and Equipment Grant for his work with the manufacturing of ultra-thin precision parts.

These precision parts often must be measured in microns of width—the same way, for example, width of bacteria are measured. “Precision parts made from brittle materials such as glass and ceramics have broad applications in the health care, biomedical, energy and photonics areas,” Lei said. “A major problem in machining these materials is random crack propagation into the work piece. This results in sub-surface cracks and thus degrades the strength of the machined parts.”

Lei’s award, which is anticipated to involve two doctoral students and three or more undergraduates, will support his fundamental research for development of a novel machining process to overcome this main limitation with controlled crack propagation. The new process will enable high-efficiency machining of brittle materials without compromising part quality.

“This significant award recognizes Shuting’s leadership and expertise in this crucial area of advanced manufacturing,” said Bradley Kramer, professor and department head of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering at Kansas State University.

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The Office of Research and Graduate Programs is working to improve the safety culture in the College of Engineering by taking a more proactive approach to safety issues, and developing tools and resources for our engineering faculty, staff and students that provide a positive and safe workplace. Part of this process is to educate ENGG employees by providing more safety training. By utilizing J.J.Keller online training, employees will have easy access to self-paced interactive safety training anywhere, anytime there is an Internet connection. Below is a sample of courses offered:

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