

OIRD/Virginia Tech Will Soon Receive \$1.4 Million Sub-Grant for Information Technology Project in Egypt

The Office of International Research and Development (OIRD)/Virginia Tech has partnered with Planning and Learning Technologies, Inc (PaL-Tech) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to win a United States Agency for International Development Egypt Mission-funded project to help build a technology university in Egypt. Management Development Initia-

tive (MDI) Phase 2 will support the development of a private, not-for-profit university, which will be named Nile University. The university is being built on a 300-acre site in a rapidly expanding desert suburb of Cairo known as 6 October City. The primary goal of the project will be to seek to enhance the education of the worker pool available to Egyptian companies. Although Egypt has

a strong base of engineering and science graduates, observers agree that the education these students receive is too theoretical. The challenge for the project is to establish a model for quickly reeducating the rich pool of human resources and provide a practical orientation in management and engineering skills that form the base of

See **Egypt**, Page 6

Perspectives



From the desk of Dr. S.K. De Datta, Director of the Office of International Research and Development (OIRD), Outreach Division, Office of the Provost, and Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

As a part of budget-cutting measures, Virginia Tech is restructuring colleges, departments and certain programs. In the not too distant future, these changes will impact the entire university community—some more than others. Restructuring is often inevitable to adjust to need and situation-based circumstances. Will the international programs be restructured? A university-level committee has submitted a report to the VT provost. It is expected that the provost will make some changes in the functioning of different units of international programs. While we wait for decisions on these changes, OIRD is embarking on several university-wide initiatives to embrace new opportunities for Virginia Tech.

I. Information Technology

The first of these initiatives is on the use of Information Technology (IT) in education. This is a joint initiative between OIRD and the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT). The IIIT is headed by Dr. Leonard Ferrari, Vice Provost

See **PERSPECTIVES**, Page 5



Virginia Tech President Charles Steger shakes hands with Kwang Jin Rhee, President of Chungnam National University in Korea.

President of Chungnam National University in Korea visits Virginia Tech

Kwang Jin Rhee, President of Chungnam National University in Korea, visited Virginia Tech in February to meet with university officials to discuss possible collaborations between the two universities. Accompanying Rhee on his visit were Sun Jung Moon, Director of International Programs for Chungnam National University, and Mann Ho Lee, Professor of Computer Science at the university.

During his visit, President Rhee met with Virginia Tech President Charles Steger and both signed a Memorandum of Understanding, agreeing to facilitate the development of cooperative and collabo-

orative efforts between CNU and Virginia Tech to enhance academic interchange between the institutions. The areas of collaboration include research and education programs in the fields of engineering, science, and agriculture.

President Rhee and his colleagues also attended a discussion on academic issues and collaboration chaired by University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Mark McNamee. Several key officials and professors from Virginia Tech attended this discussion. The visitors from CNU also met with the director of the Center for Public Administration

See **VISIT**, Page 5

Notables *Faculty Involvement Around Campus*

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Chester L. Foy, Professor of Plant Physiology and Weed Science, participated in the 24th International Symposium on Natural Products Chemistry, "Current Trends in Natural Products," which was held on November 4 through 10 at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico in Mexico City, Mexico. His invited presentation, co-authored by colleagues Khalid M. Hameed and Al-Shyab Zaineb of the University of Science and Technology in Irbid, Jordan, was entitled "Inhibition of *Orobanche* Seed Germination and its Infection of Faba Bean and Tomato by Aqueous and Ethanol Extracts of Olive Jift Under *In Vitro* and *In Vivo* Conditioning." He also co-authored "Chemical Ecology of Annual and Perennial Weed Species" with Inderjit Singh of Panjab University in Chandigarh, India, and Prasanta C. Bhowmik of the University of Massachusetts. • **Scott Salom**, Associate Professor of Entomology, co-organized a conference of the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations held in Velaine-en-Haye, France, on September 5 through 7. The conference addressed the theme of "Facing a Crisis - Forest Insect Problems after Catastrophic Events." Salom and Associate Professor Nicholas Stone also presented a paper on "Using the Tools of the Information Age to Enhance Research and Management of the Southern Pine Beetle." • **Charles C. Stallings**, Professor and Extension Dairy Scientist, recently traveled to Egypt and Turkey to give presentations and provide technical assistance to dairy producers in conjunction with the American Soybean Association (ASA). In Cairo, he presented talks on "How the Changes in the NRC 2001 Nutrient Requirements of Dairy Cattle Affect Soybeans and Soybean Products" and "Transition Cow Nutrition." In Izmir, Turkey, he conducted a workshop on proper feeding and management of dairy cattle and in both countries, dairy farms were visited and practices evaluated. These visits are part of an ongoing project supported by ASA and the United Soybean Board to improve the production practices of dairy producers in the region. • **Stephen C. Nickerson**, Professor and Head of the Dairy Scientist Department, recently traveled to Japan to give presentations and provide technical assistance to dairy producers, veterinarians, and milk cooperatives in the areas of milk quality and mastitis control. In the north island of Hokaido, he presented seminars on environmental issues facing dairymen, the use of antimicrobial therapy in the treatment of mammary disease, and the control of heifer mastitis. On the main island of Honshu, he visited Maebashi and Hiroshima, where topics included enhancing the cow's resistance mechanisms to intramammary infection, use of immunization programs, and proper milking hygiene. This series of seminars was part of a joint initiative between the National Mastitis Council, of which Nickerson is president, and the commercial sector (Westfalia-Surge) to globalize programs to improve milk quality and milk production.

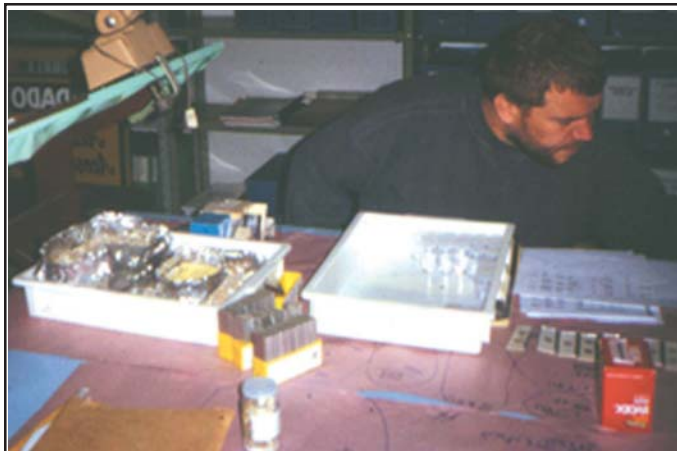
College of Arts and Sciences

Geological Sciences Professor **Robert Bodnar** is the Mineralogical Society of America Distinguished Lecturer for 2001-2002. He has already given eight lectures at universities in the U.S. and left on April 2 for a two week tour of Europe, where he presented lectures

at the University of Naples in Italy; the University of Geneva in Switzerland; Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia; and Eotvos University in Budapest, Hungary. He presented two seminars at each location – one entitled "The Search for Water and Life in the Solar System: Are We Alone?" and "Geochemistry in a Bottle: The Application of Synthetic Fluid Inclusions in Experimental Geochemistry." Bodnar is also the co-organizer of an international workshop entitled "Melt Inclusions in Volcanic Systems," which will be held September 26 through 30 in Sorrento, Italy, with a field trip to the Vesuvius volcano outside of Naples. The co-organizer for the workshop is Professor Benedetto DeVivo of the University of Naples. • Biology Professor **Arthur Buikema** and Entomology Professor **Richard Fell** will be teaching a course in South Africa on May 20 through June 25 comparing the effect of cultural activities on the ecology of Southern Africa to North America. In addition to comparing grassland communities of the plains and savanna, they will be looking at the effects that apartheid and civil rights, and the treatment of the Sioux and Cherokee versus the Zulu and San Bushman had on the environment. Students will also conduct a photographic study of culture and biology. • **Tom Burbey**, Assistant Professor of Geological Sciences, traveled to the Industrial Technology Research Institute in Chutung, Hsinchu, Taiwan, R.O.C, last November to teach a weeklong course on Land Subsidence Modeling with two other colleagues from the U.S. Geological Survey. People in Taiwan are new to this type of modeling and the purpose of this course was to teach them how to run and use models that will simulate what they are observing in the field. • **Richard Burian**, Professor of Philosophy and the department's Director of Graduate Studies, was the closing commentator at a workshop on "Revisiting Discovery and Justification," held at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin, Germany, on February 28 through March 2. There were 15 papers presented at the workshop by historians and philosophers from six countries. The workshop participants will produce a book out of the work initiated at the workshop. • **John M. Carroll**, Professor of Computer Science and Director of the Center for Human-Computer Interaction, was an invited participant at "Les Sciences de la Conception," the international memorial conference for Herbert Simon, held in Lyon, France, on March 15 and 16. The purpose of the conference was to critically assess progress towards Simon's concept of a science of design. Carroll presented a paper entitled "Dimensions of Participation - Elaborating Herbert Simon's 'Science of Design'" and participated in a debate on the allocation of power in participatory design. • Science and Technology Studies Professor **Gary Downey** presented the lecture "Ethnography as Critical Participation," at the Collegium Helveticum of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland, on December 10. Downey's lecture, "Strangers Estranged: Reflections on Fieldwork in Science and Technology," emphasized the importance of engaging scientists' perspectives in science studies research. The symposium employed a novel concept, inviting two anthropologists, Downey and Paul Rabinow from UC Berkeley, who have conducted ethnographic studies in research labs. **Arvid Myklebust**, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, also participated via a video presentation that was recorded earlier and

Notables *Faculty Involvement Around Campus*

integrated as clips in Downey's presentation. • Geological Sciences Professor **Kenneth Eriksson** presented a key-note talk entitled "Archean Sedimentary Rocks and Sedimentary Basins: Processes and Products" at the International Archean Symposium in Perth, Australia, in September. • **Michael F. Hochella Jr.**, Professor of Geochemistry and Mineralogy, has received the prestigious Humboldt Research Award to work in Germany on acid-mine drainage. Hochella is doing the research at Universität Münster between January and July. The Humboldt Award is given to as many as 150 scholars worldwide each year, and is considered a lifetime achievement award by the Humboldt Foundation. • **Michal Kowalewski**, Assistant Professor of Geobiology in the Department of Geological Sciences, and several graduate students are participating in collaborative research efforts with the Institute of Biosciences at Sao Paulo State University, Brazil, focusing on the biological oceanography and the recent (Holocene) environmental history of the southern Brazilian shelf (South Atlantic). The project is supported by an NSF grant and a FAPESP (Sao Paulo State Science Foundation) grant. • **Michael Saffle**, Professor in the



Assistant Geobiology Professor Michal Kowalewski works on collections of modern marine invertebrates from the southern Brazilian shelf in a laboratory in Brazil.

Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, gave presentations of several of his papers during his tenure as Bicentennial Fulbright Professor of American Studies at the University of Helsinki, Finland. These included "Schlagobers und Schoenberg: Cultural Transfer als musikwissenschaftlicher Begriff und Darstellungen von Musikstadt Wien in der 'New York Times,' 1919-1938," which was presented at "Cultural Transfer in Oesterreich: Begriff & Positionen," a workshop held at the Universität für Musik und darstellende in Kunst, Vienna, on November 16 and 17. • Assistant Professor **Uwe Tauber** and Professor **Royce Zia**, both from the Department of Physics, were recently invited to speak at the 5th International Conference on Renormalization Group 2002. The event is organized by the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research and the Institute of Experimental Physics Slovak Academy of Sciences.

College of Engineering

David A. de Wolf, Professor in the Bradley Department of Electrical

and Computer Engineering, spent January 2 through 11 at TU Delft in the Netherlands to prepare work for the IRCTR (International Research Centre for Telecommunications-transmission and Radar) for the summer of 2002. • **J. Michael Duncan**, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Director of the Center for Geotechnical Practice and Research, and Stephen Wright of the University of Texas at Austin will present a three-day course in Autun, France, on "Seepage Through Soil and Slope Stability" on July 8 through 12. The course is sponsored by the Laboratoires des Ponts et Chaussées, and will be taught at the LRPC offices in Autun. • **Daniel J. Inman**, Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Director for the Center for Intelligent Material Systems and Structures, traveled to Brazil to deliver the Opening Plenary Lecture entitled "Smart Structures: Examples and New Problems," at the 16th Brazilian Congress of Mechanical Engineering in Uberlandia, Brazil, on November 26 through 30, where he was the guest of the Brazilian Society of Mechanical Engineers. Inman also traveled to Swansea, Wales, to deliver a key note address entitled "The Role of Smart Materials in Identification and Structural Health Monitoring" at the 3rd International Conference on Identification in Engineering Systems held at the University of Swansea Wales on April 15 through 17. In addition, Inman, Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor **Rich Claus**, and Engineering Science and Mechanics Professor **Romesh Batra** traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland, to deliver a two-day short course entitled "Engineering and Designing Smart Structures and Nano Technology" on December 12 and 13 at Heriott Watt University. • **Arun G. Phadke**, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Director of the Center for Power Engineering, presented the 11th Faraday Memorial Lecture-2001, which was sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-Hyderabad Section and was held on September 22 in Hyderabad, India. His address was on secure electric power supply. In addition, he participated in the International Conference on Energy, Automation and Information Technology, which was held at the Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur, India, on December 10 through 12. His address was entitled "Catastrophic failures in power systems: role of hidden failures in protection systems." • **William G. Sullivan**, Professor of Industrial and Systems Engineering, is a co-chair for this year's Flexible Automation and Intelligent Manufacturing (FAIM) Conference, which is being held in Dresden, Germany, at the Dresden University of Technology on July 15 through 17. The conference provides a forum for both practitioners and academicians to present papers and exchange ideas on recent developments in the field of flexible automation and next generation manufacturing systems. Over 140 authors from 40 countries will attend the event.

College of Human Resources and Education

Marcie Boucouvalas, Professor in the Department of Human Development, delivered an expanded version of the paper "Reflections on International Cooperation and New Partnerships in the 'Age of Globalization'" at the 11th German Adult Education Conference in Hamburg, Germany, on November 7 through 9. The paper first appeared as a journal article in *Adult Education and Development*. • **Kate Carroll**, Instructor of Near Environments

Notables *Faculty Involvement Around Campus*

(Textiles & Clothing), will be presenting a paper at Easytex 2002, the first International Conference on clothing and textiles for disabled and elderly people, in Tampere, Finland, on June 16 through 18. • **Brian J. Mihalik**, Professor and Department Head of Hospitality and Tourism Management, taught a one week class module, “Staging the Modern Olympic Games,” for the Ecole hoteliere de Lausanne in Lausanne, Switzerland, from October 29 to November 3. Mihalik also met with representatives of the International Olympic Committee, which is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, to discuss funding of future Olympic Games research and continued his research of the modern Olympic Games while visiting the official I.O.C. Library housed in Lausanne.

• **Michael D. Olsen** addressed the Caribbean Summit - Crisis in Tourism, Heads of Government Conference in Nassau, Bahamas, on the issues of Safety and Security in the Caribbean region in December. In January, he addressed an international audience in Madrid at a program sponsored by the World Tourism Organization, where the topic was safety and security issues in the travel industry. In addition, Olsen conducted a one-week course in February on creativity in management in Estapona, Spain, for an MBA group from the REIMS Management School of France and in March he also conducted a panel presentation and discussion on safety and security issues in the hotel industry at the Berlin Investors Forum in Germany. • Hospitality and Tourism Management Professor **Muzzo Uysal** is serving as one of the four conference co-chairs for the Third Symposium on the Consumer Psychology of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure (CPTHL) to be held in Melbourne, Australia, in January, 2003. Uysal was also one of the three invited speakers at a national tourism conference organized by Baskent University in October in Ankara, Turkey, and he was recently invited by the Commission of Higher Education of the United Arab Emirates to serve as one of their external reviewers for their tourism and hospitality education in the country. In addition, he served as a member of the Scientific Committee for the First Tourism Business Congress on Mediterranean Countries, which was organized by Akdeniz University in Antalya, Turkey, and will be held on April 17 through 21. He is also serving as track chair for Global Tourism for the 11th Annual World Business Congress – IMDA in Antalya, Turkey, on July 10 through the 14. In addition, Uysal is also a frequent reviewer of research proposals for Hong Kong Research Council. • **Karen Watson**, Coordinator of Academic Advising for the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Office, participated in the visitor program at the London Campus for American Intercontinental University on March 3 through 6. The purpose of the program is to strengthen the ties between the universities and the programs that send students to participate in study abroad programs. The program involved meeting with Program Chairs for all of the majors on campus, as well as the internship coordinators, and the student services staff.

College of Natural Resources

James E. Johnson, Associate Dean and Professor of Forestry, and **Robert L. Smith**, Associate Professor of Forest Products and Director of the Center for Forest Products Marketing and Manage-

ment, traveled to Lorne, Victoria, Australia, in late October and early November to attend a symposium entitled “Forestry Extension: Assisting Forest Owner, Farmer, and Stakeholder Decision-Making,” which was hosted by the Department of Forestry at the University of Melbourne and the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations Extension Working Party. Johnson presented a paper entitled “Toward a Model Program of Graduate Education in Extension Forestry,” while Smith’s paper was entitled “Education and Research: A Case Analysis with the Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management.” Johnson also moderated a technical session and presided over a business meeting of the Working Party, which he has chaired since 1994.

College of Veterinary Medicine

Bernard Fledman, Professor of Veterinary Clinical Hematology and Biochemistry, has been invited to speak at the World Veterinary Congress in Granada, Spain, in October to lecture on “Immune-Mediated Hemolytic Anemia in the Dog.” He has also been invited to the annual Italian Veterinary Congress in Padua, Italy in November to deliver a lecture entitled “Diagnostic Clinical Biochemistry in Small Animal Practice.” • Virginia Tech hosted a conference on “Vaccine Technology and Immune Responses” at Tech’s facilities at Riva San Vitale, Switzerland, on April 3 through 5. The purpose of the conference was to initiate a long-lasting cooperative research effort among the Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB), the Swiss-Italian University (USI), Chiron Vaccines, and Virginia Tech. Participants in the conference from Virginia Tech were: **James Bohland**, Senior Fellow for Biomedical, Bioengineering, and Health Related Projects and Director for the School for Public and International Affairs; **James Blair**, Associate Provost for Research and Interdisciplinary Programs; **Mark McNamee**, University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; **Athanasios Moulakis**, Director for Virginia Tech’s Center for European Studies and Architecture; **Neal Castagnoli**, Professor of Chemistry and Co-Director of the Harvey W. Peters Research Center; and Professors from College of Veterinary Medicine’s Department of Biomedical Sciences and Pathobiology – **Ansar Ahmed**, **Stephen Boyle**, **Nammalwar Sriranganthan**, **Gerhardt Schurig**, and **Yasuhiro Suzuki**.

Centers, Institutes, Labs, and Other Units

Hud Croasdale, Director of Information Technology Strategic Partnerships, has been nominated by Scottish Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Life Long Learning Wendy Alexander to become a founding member of Globalscot, the new international network for Scotland. The vision for Globalscot is to develop a network that collectively harnesses the talents, expertise and commitment of many successful Scots and friends of Scotland around the world. • Professor **Daan van Wyk** of the Center for Power Electronics Systems will be serving as General Chair of the “Conference on Integrated Power Systems” (CIPS 2000) to be held in Bremen, Germany, on June 11 and 12. The focus of this conference is smart power, mechatronic integration (power electronics and motor) and power supplies.

PERSPECTIVES Continued from Page 1

for Special Initiatives. With this international focus on IT in education, OIRD has provided leadership and coordination of three major proposals submitted to USAID.

The first proposal was submitted with a private sector partner—Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu—to the USAID mission in Egypt. This proposal, entitled “Technical Assistance to Improve Egyptian Business Competitiveness Through Increased Technology Adoption in Both the Public and Private Sector,” was unsuccessful.

In the second proposal, OIRD/Virginia Tech took help from the entire university community. The proposal was on “Putting the Power of Knowledge to Work: Increasing Access to Learning Systems Worldwide.” This was one of the most comprehensive IT proposals submitted by OIRD, with the full participation of the Colleges of Engineering; Architecture; Arts & Sciences; Agriculture; Education, and Human Resources, Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV); and the Office of the Provost and Vice Provost, among others. Although the global IT proposal submitted by OIRD/VT was not successful, it will serve as a template for future proposal writing for competitive grants and contracts.

The third IT proposal was submitted by Pal-Tech, Inc., a private sector firm, including Virginia Tech as a subcontractor. Both IIT and Professor Sedki Riad of the Electrical Engineering Department played an important role and helped OIRD/VT to submit the proposal with Pal-Tech’s leadership. This proposal was successful. VT is expected to get a subcontract for \$1.4 million for four and a half years to implement an IT education project in Egypt funded by the USAID mission there.

II. Gender Equity and Women in International Development

A second area of priorities under the leadership of OIRD/VT is gender equity and women in international development. With the leadership of a minority-owned private sector firm called Datex, Inc., OIRD/VT submitted a proposal on a worldwide Indefinite Quality Contract (IQC). This is a multi-million dollar IQC. Here again, the university community, including the Women’s Center at Virginia Tech, contributed to the proposal development. We have not yet heard whether this proposal was successful.

III. Biotechnology and Biosafety

The third of the university-wide priorities is Biotechnology and Biosafety. Under the leadership of Cornell University, OIRD/VT is in the process of writing and submitting a proposal on “Agriculture Biotechnology Support Program Phase Two (ABSP 2). This is a \$15 million Request for Assistance (RFA) from USAID. The Cornell group is expected to visit Virginia Tech and help write this proposal.

The second RFA, also from USAID, is on “Program for Biosafety Systems.” This proposal will be prepared under the leadership of OIRD/VT. Other Land Grant Universities including Cornell will support this effort. The RFA is posted at \$15 million. Virginia Tech’s Fralin Biotechnology Center and Bioinformatics Institute are expected to be important resources should we win this proposal.

These university-wide efforts and several successes achieved by OIRD/VT have placed our university on a track which will become the foundation for more cutting-edge initiatives covering all three of Virginia Tech’s missions—education, research, and outreach.

Virginia Tech Public Service Programs Improve Virginia's Economic Prosperity

Virginia Tech Public Service Programs’ international trade development mission is to improve the economic prosperity of the Commonwealth by using local, regional, and statewide economic and governmental agencies to provide educational and research opportunities that will enhance Virginia’s global and domestic competitiveness (economic development) and productivity, leading to and expansion of sales and job creation.

In order to accomplish this mission, Public Service Programs works closely with federal, state, and local agencies as well as other university departments. The U.S. Department of Commerce and the Appalachian Regional Commission are partners on many programs including export documentation workshops, export assistance training, and market entry initiatives. Partners on the state level include the Virginia Department of Economic Development, the Department of Business Assistance and the Virginia Center for Innovative Technology.

A particularly exciting program that is underway is the Appalachia Meets Mexico initiative. Working with the U.S. Embassy in Mexico and a 13-state council, Virginia Tech is coordinating a delegation of rural small-to-medium size exporters to send to Mexico City and Monterrey in December 2002 to take advantage of NAFTA and increase exports to Mexico. The mission will involve customized business appointments, a tour of the border crossing, a day long conference on selling to Mexico, and high profile networking opportunities, including a planned reception with President Vicente Fox. This low cost program is open to all Virginia companies that are serious about increasing their international trade activities.

For more information on international trade assistance activities please contact Chad Miller, Economic Development Specialist at 231-8324 or email Chadm@vt.edu.

VISIT Continued from Page 1

and Policy and several of the center’s faculty members, as well as a group of Korean students from Virginia Tech and faculty members from the Office of International Research and Development, including OIRD Director S.K. De Datta.

The University Abroad is prepared by the Faculty and Staff of the Office of International Research and Development (OIRD) at Virginia Tech, Outreach Division of the Office of the University Provost.

S.K. De Datta, Director, OIRD
1060 Litton-Reaves Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0334 USA
Tel: (540) 231-6338
Fax: (540) 231-6741
E-mail: dedatta@vt.edu
<http://www.oird.vt.edu>



Please direct submissions to the staff editor: Susan Light
E-mail: sulight@vt.edu

The Office of International Research and Development would like to thank all those individuals who submitted information to the University Abroad Newsletter. Regrettably, some submissions could not be included due to space constraints.

a modern IT-oriented workforce.

The new concept university will be devoted exclusively to information technology and will emphasize professional development and graduate studies in addition to the planned undergraduate programs. It will be staffed with a combination of national and international faculty to establish solid ties to sources of information about international trends and resources. The highly competitive market for skilled IT professionals makes alternative schemes for faculty recruitment, retention, and human resource management key areas for research and planning. Virginia Tech, as a major subcontractor on the PaL-Tech/PwC Team, will provide the core technical assistance in working with the university to design the program for graduate and professional education and to prioritize the core technical areas for curriculum development and faculty recruitment.

Four priority subject areas have been identified as starting points for the project: Information Technology, Technology/Information Management, Computer Engineering, and Communication Engineering. Virginia Tech will also provide the expertise to draw up the specifications and plan for procurement of the necessary equipment, software, connectivity, and other resources needed to set up the university and its community linkage activities.

Virginia Tech's involvement in the project is the fruit of the collaboration between two university units: the Virginia Tech International Institute for Information

Technology (VTIIT) and the Office of International Research and Development (OIRD). Representatives from both units visited Egypt in 2001, laying the groundwork for this project. Project implementation will take advantage of the strengths of both units: OIRD will manage the \$1.4 million project subcontract while drawing on the vast technical expertise available to VTIIT.

"The involvement of Leonard Ferrari (Vice Provost for Special Initiatives and Director of VTIIT) has been extremely important in advancing Virginia Tech's capabilities in IT and culminating in this successful bid by the PaL-Tech Consortium for this project," said S. K. De Datta, Director of OIRD. "OIRD is always looking for ways to tap faculty talent throughout the university to promote international collaborative research, education, and service (technical assistance). The IT area is a major growth area for donor-funded projects, and this cross-campus partnership between VTIIT and OIRD puts us in a strong competitive position to further university goals toward world class and Top-30 Research status in the future."

As a subcontractor on MDI Phase 2, Virginia Tech will be in an excellent position to establish a long-term relationship with the Nile University for programs like faculty exchange, joint degree offerings and provision of professional short courses. As other technology universities are established in the future, similar relationships could also be developed. It is anticipated

that the academic program of Nile University will eventually be expanded to include undergraduate curricula. The initial postgraduate and professional levels program will be designed to accommodate this subsequent expansion of the program.

The technical assistance provided by Virginia Tech will be led by Dr. Sedki Riad, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Director of the Time Domain & RF Measurement Laboratory at Virginia Tech.

"Dr. Riad is another major reason PaL-Tech approached Virginia Tech to form this university/private sector partnership" according to Dr. De Datta. "He has more than 35 years of academic experience, is internationally known for his contributions in his fields, and has lectured and conducted research throughout Egypt and the Middle East."

Dr. Riad will serve as resident Senior Technical Advisor to the university and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology for three and one-half years of the four-year project. Dr. Riad will be supported by additional short-term technical assistance provided through Virginia Tech. Dr. Michael Bertelsen of OIRD will provide technical coordination for the subcontract.

OIRD/Virginia Tech currently manages a \$21 million portfolio of project contracts and grants in almost all regions of the world, which are mostly funded by the United States Agency for International Development.

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, sex, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, political affiliation, or sexual orientation. Anyone having questions concerning discrimination should contact the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office.

VT/016/0801/3.4M/220762

Editor, *The University Abroad*
Office of International Research and Development
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0334 U.S.A.
Phone: (540) 231-6338
Fax: (540) 231-6741
Web: www.oird.vt.edu
E-mail: dedatta@vt.edu
Forwarding Service

Non-Profit Org.
BULK MAILING
U.S. Postage
PAID
Blacksburg, VA 24060
Permit No. 28