

## Message from the Chair



2008-09 was a challenging academic year for our Department. Faced with an unprecedented budget crisis the Department was slated to go through a planned reorganization process that would have curtailed a portion of resources currently allocated to the Department. In order to maintain the independent entity of the Department, FIU and the South Florida construction industry launched a concerted campaigning effort to raise a minimum of \$250,000 before June 30, 2009. I am extremely happy to report that the campaign was more than successful, raising a total of \$275,625. I congratulate the Council leaders for their untiring effort and unwavering resolve to reach the goal of this year's campaign. On behalf of the Department students, faculty and staff I express my heartfelt thanks to all the donors.

The department successfully organized the Fifth International Conference on Construction in the Twenty First Century (CITC-V) in May 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey in collaboration with the Middle East Technical University.

A 700 sq. ft. MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) studio is currently under construction, to be completed this fall. This laboratory studio will be furnished with HVAC, electrical and plumbing appliances and furnaces typical in a residential unit. Students will be able to learn hands-on about how these components are assembled and the way they work. I am happy to report that a part of the funds raised through our emergency campaign was utilized to build this laboratory. I thank our partners in the construction industry once again for their generous contributions that enrich our program and increase our resources.

The FIU administration is strongly committed to supporting the Department of Construction Management in its mission to serve the construction industry. FIU recognizes the importance of the construction industry to South Florida's economy, and the contribution the Construction Management program makes to the industry. We look forward to forging and maintaining strong industry partnerships. Together we have the opportunity to make Construction Management at FIU a world-class program dedicated to construction education and research in South Florida.

Join me in congratulating the 126 bachelor's and master's degree graduates of our Construction Management program for the 2008 - 2009 year!



Irtishad Ahmad, Ph.D., P.E.  
Professor and Chairperson

## Successful Industry Support Campaign

The Construction Management Department in FIU's College of Engineering and Computing has successfully concluded its industry support campaign to raise \$250,000 for the Department's 2009-2010 operating budget. The department was slated to undergo a reorganization process as part of the university's \$19.6 million in budget cuts this year. The university agreed that if the department raised \$250,000 by June 30, the proposed reorganization could be averted.

To help protect the nationally-recognized program, the only one of its kind among South Florida universities that is accredited by the American Council for Construction Education (ACCE), the Construction Management Industry Advisory Council launched a fund-raising campaign. Nearly 40 construction-related companies in South Florida participated.

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## International Conference on Construction in Istanbul



The Department of Construction Management organized its fifth international conference on Construction in the Twenty First Century (CITC-V) in Istanbul, Turkey during May, 2009 in collaboration with the Department of Civil Engineering of the Middle East Technical University. The successful conference was chaired by Dr. Syed M. Ahmed, Associate Professor of Construction Management at FIU. One hundred and fifty registered participants from 34 countries have attended the conference and 180 papers were published in the conference proceedings. The conference provided an excellent forum for discussing a wide range of topics facing the construction industry at the beginning of this century.

The CITC series of conferences began in 2002 with the first conference held in Miami. The second was held in Hong Kong in December 2003, third in Athens, Greece in September 2005 and the fourth was held in Gold Coast, Australia in July 2007. The sixth conference will be held in 2011 in Malaysia.

## Student Spotlight



**Christin L. Perkinson**  
Ph.D. Civil Engineering, 2008  
Construction Management

Dr. Perkinson received her Ph.D. in Civil Engineering with a specialty in Construction Management from FIU in December, 2008. Christin studied under Dr. Irtyshad Ahmad during her time at FIU.

Her doctoral dissertation entitled "The Use of Computing Technology in Highway Construction Contractor Companies as a Total Jobsite Management Tool (TJMT)" focused on the integration of Global Positioning Technology (GPS) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to create a Total Jobsite Management Tool for highway construction contractors. In recent years construction contractors, especially in highway construction, have reported significant benefits in the use of GPS technologies for site layout, resource tracking, and machine control. Now that they are having success on-site, these contractors are considering expanding their technology programs to include ICT technologies that utilize real-time data collected onsite to improve management and decision making functions.

Christin identified the primary reasons why many highway construction contractors have not made the next step for the use of real-time data in the office and then created an implementation framework to assist these companies in navigating the implementation and transitioning requirements associated with this new technology application. The framework she developed consists of three components: (i) ICT Infrastructure Model, (ii) Organizational Restructuring Model, and (iii) Cost/Benefit Analysis.

Christin recently presented the results of her research at the 2009 Trimble Dimensions User Conference in Las Vegas. Christin is a licensed professional engineer in the State of Florida and is currently employed by Erickson Consulting Engineers in Sarasota, Florida. Christin wishes to thank Catalfumo Construction who funded two years of her studies through a graduate fellowship. For additional information, Christin can be reached at [christinperkinson@gmail.com](mailto:christinperkinson@gmail.com).

## Mission Statement

The Department's mission is to provide enlightened leadership to the construction industry through its graduates; to increase and to improve the body of working knowledge; and to promote the interdisciplinary transfer of technology.

The Department also strives to produce professional construction managers who are informed and participating citizens with a sense of civic duty and responsibility; persons with a sense of dignity whose actions express high moral and ethical standards; and professionals who strive to comprehend the impact of their work on their own lives as well as on the society in which they live.



**Arthur "AJ" Meyer**  
B.S. in Construction Management, 2009

Arthur "AJ" Meyer has devoted his life to FIU and its students. As the Student Government Association president at University Park during 2008, he was the voice for students on the FIU Board of Trustees and sat as the only student representative on the Board of Governors for the State of Florida.

AJ will finish his Bachelors in Construction Management this Fall and will pursue a Masters Degree in Construction Management. In 2008, AJ received the prestigious Construction Association of South Florida (CASF) scholarship.

AJ has recently been hired by FIU in the Office of Alumni Relations as their Coordinator for Building Development and Fundraising. His chief responsibility is the pre-construction operations of the Alumni Center from the design-build components to fundraising for construction. He says, "I am thrilled to participate in the building of an alumni home for more than three decades of FIU Alumni."

## Successful Industry Support Campaign

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The nationally recognized and highly regarded program takes pride in its placement of more than 80% of Construction Management graduates within the construction marketplace of South Florida. The companies that participated in the support campaign demonstrated their appreciation of the Department's well-prepared students and graduates who serve the construction community as interns, project managers, upper level management and CEOs.

We recognized the vital need to maintain an academic center in Southeast Florida to train future leaders of the construction industry," said Emilio Alvarez, founder and CEO of E. F. Alvarez and Co, P.A., and a member of the Advisory and Council's Executive Committee. "There was only a very small window of time to accomplish the goal, but we all pulled together, contacted our clients and colleagues, and got it done. We are grateful to the individuals who participated in the campaign during these challenging economic times." A number of dedicated individuals were behind this successful campaign. Charles Nielson, President/CEO of Nielson & Company, Inc., Dr. Daniel Whiteman, President of Coastal Construction and member of the College's Advisory Council for Engineering, Chad Moss, Vice President of Moss and Associates and alumnus of our Construction Management program; Dr. Susan Jay, Director of Development for the College; and Emilio Alvarez led the campaign to its remarkably successful conclusion.

Our generous donors are:

Arellano Construction  
Balfour Beatty Construction  
Beauchamp Construction  
C. Davis Electric Company  
Coastal Construction  
Condotte America  
Cuesta Construction  
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GFA International  
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John Moriarty & Associates of Florida  
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Pavarini Construction  
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Right Way Plumbing  
Schuff Steel  
Skanska  
SPI Structural Prestressed Industries  
Stiles Construction  
Suffolk Construction  
The Barthet Firm  
Turner Construction  
Waas Construction  
Williams Paving Company

# Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) Laboratory



The Construction Management department is completing a Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) lab to provide students with hands-on experience during their careers. The lab has two electrical mockup areas: one represents an industrial installation and the other a residential installation. There is also a bathroom mockup showing the different stages and materials used in construction. In it, the majority of the piping system and the electrical wiring have been left exposed for students to see. When completed, the lab will hold a split air conditioning system simulating the residential application, as well as a rooftop unit mounted on a platform to simulate the typical roof installation. The lab will also be furnished with four computers holding state of the art software for BIM design, cost estimating and planning. An overhead projector will display presentations and play video controlled from an interactive display that allows recording of the onscreen notes made by the presenter. Topics in estimating, planning, HVAC and electrical will be taught with a new hands-on approach that enhances the learning experience for all.



## Faculty Focus



Dr. Yimin Zhu joined the Department of Construction Management at FIU in Spring 2004. He is a well known researcher in the area of cost engineering and has attracted funds from National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

His current project sponsored by the FDOT involves developing a web-based dispute review board (DRB) reporting and management system. After completion, the system will help FDOT engineers to retrieve DRB reports and lessons learned more efficiently and effectively. Often disputes may arise between an owner and contractors during a construction project. Construction disputes typically cause loss of time and money. To resolve disagreements and avoid time consuming and expensive litigation, a dispute review board provides a valuable and proven alternative. Although a website has been created to list all DRB reports that are classified by district, it is difficult for FDOT engineers to search through hundreds of lengthy reports to look for specific information or precedent. Consequently, Dr. Zhu aims to enhance the existing FDOT DRB system by improving information retrieval from DRB documents, and providing integration of DRB reports with relevant documents and specifications. The project uses Oracle and eXtensible Markup Language (XML) technologies. Dr. Emre Bayraktar (Construction Management) and Dr. Shu-Ching Chen (School of Computer and Information Science) are also involved in the development of the system.

## Scholarship Recipients

### 2008-2009 Scholarship Recipients

Consul Tech – Jillian Ragoonath  
 Balfour Beatty – Juli Gonzalez  
 Condotte America – Leonard Arippol  
 Construction Association of South Florida – Arthur J. Meyer  
 American Society of Professional Estimators – Richard Gonzalez  
 Turner Construction – Alan Barroso  
 Victor A. Bonachea Memorial Scholarship – Stephanie Asenjo  
 GLF Construction Corporation – Mohammed Shahid Mohiuddin

### 2009-2010 Scholarship Recipients to date

Construction Association of South Florida – Alana Darville  
 Latin Builders Association – Esau Alvarez and Mark Rodriguez

## Student Chapters



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## Faculty

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## Staff

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Cagri Cinkilic

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Deepika Paryani

Yueren Wang

### Constructioneer Credits

**Contributors:** Dr. Susan Jay  
Bernadette Chung

**Designer:** Enrique Obando

## Welcome Construction Management Supporters



**Dr. Susan Jay**  
Director of Development  
College of Engineering and Computing

It has been my great pleasure to work with the construction management industry in achieving our goal for the 2009 department campaign as you have read in this issue. We held a lively recognition event in August at the Football Stadium that many of you attended. Our 2010 campaign kicks off in January, and I will look forward to your continued support. President Rosenberg's new initiatives and plans for the university are bold and exhilarating. They stimulate us to reach higher and achieve more.

I would be remiss if I did not remind you of my role at the College. As the fundraiser, I am in the business of philanthropy, which means "love of humanity." I am fortunate to be in the position of supporting your love of humanity-- your generosity and abundance of spirit--so that you feel good when you contribute your hard-earned resources.

I will keep you informed of the strategies I have to make you and your gift shine both at the university and in the community. Whether you choose to make a cash gift of any amount, an endowment gift beginning at \$25,000, a state matching gift, a naming opportunity or a planned gift, your generosity of spirit is appreciated. You are valued at the College and by the entire university family.

Warm wishes for a happy holiday season,

Susan

## Career Expo Fall 2009



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**Engineering  
& Computing**

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