

September 2000

Department of Chemical Engineering Graduates  
Michigan State University

Dear Friends of the Department,

Greetings and salutations! Another semester is underway at State and another football season has also begun. We are off to a good start for both. ☺

Our students continue to excel. Last spring we learned that Mr. Brian Ngo, now a senior in chemical engineering, had won a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship. As I mentioned in a previous letter, the Goldwater Scholarship is the most competitive and most prestigious scholarship for undergraduate science and engineering students in the country. Last year and this year MSU had only one winner of this scholarship. Last year and this year, that student was a chemical engineer. (Last year's winner was Jason Fuller.) I am really proud of our students and you can be proud of them too.

Brian's story is inspiring. His parents fled Vietnam in 1975 and became refugees in this country. They have worked hard to raise their children and to provide them with opportunities. Brian is also hardworking, diligent and very, very grateful for the freedoms of his new country. You would like him. Brian plans to go on to graduate study in chemical engineering and hopes to work eventually in the biotechnology industry. You Spartans out there in the biotech industry should try to hire him when he finishes. You could not find a better employee than Brian.

The faculty are also doing well. We continue to lead the University in patent applications. (Your humble informant actually received the most recent patent in the department, #6,106,888, "Process for Treating Cellulosic Materials".☺) The faculty have recently completed a strategic plan for the department's future that compares us with leading departments of chemical engineering across the country. In a variety of important measures, we are fully the equal of the best departments in the country. We also set the pace for achievement among other departments here in the College of Engineering. I invite you to view our strategic plan when it is posted on our web site in mid-October.

I am happy to tell you that Mr. Tim Bender, now at Dow Chemical in Midland, will join the department later this year as a full time lab coordinator. Tim has over 20 years experience at Dow and will provide our students with a great perspective on the industrial practice of chemical engineering. We are looking forward to real improvements in our undergraduate teaching labs under Tim's leadership and are excited that he is joining us. We are still recruiting for two new faculty members with research expertise in areas in polymers or biotechnology. If you know of attractive candidates, please ask them to contact me or give me their names and phone numbers

and I will call them. We want to keep your department at the top by recruiting the best people we can find.

Last June we held our second Alumni Dinner with over 100 people in attendance. It was a pleasure to see so many of you. At this dinner we honored several of our graduates as charter members of the Red Cedar Circle. The faculty has established this award to honor our alumni who have achieved both outstanding professional success and also distinguished service to the community. The charter members honored at this time include Mr. John Hetchler '35, Mr. R. William Caldwell '38, Mr. C. Robert Weir '42, Mr. Michael H. Dennon '43, Mr. William J. Hargreaves '46, Mr. Bernard A. Paulson '49 and Dr. Edwin J. Crosby '50. I invite you to read a summary of their professional accomplishments and service to the community that we will post on our departmental web site soon. Visit us at [www.egr.msu.edu/che/](http://www.egr.msu.edu/che/)

One more bit of news. The Dean of Engineering, Dr. Janie Fouke, has announced that the Department of Materials Science and Mechanics (MSM) will be reorganized over this next year. In effect, the department will be dissolved and the faculty will look for other academic homes. The courses and degree programs will remain intact. It is likely that many of the materials science folks will wish to become part of chemical engineering. Dean Fouke has asked me to be the interim chair of MSM during this transition period. I hope I can help the faculty make "soft landings" in other units. However, if I am slow in returning your calls or email messages, I hope you will be patient with me.

As before, please feel free to call or write me at any time. I would love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Bruce E. Dale  
Professor and Chair of the Department