Scientists will host an important national four-day faculty workshop on nanoscale science and engineering March 26-29. The workshop is sponsored by the National Center for Learning and Teaching (NCLT), founded in 2004 to foster pioneering research and to strengthen capacities in nanoscale science and engineering among students from middle school to college seniors.

Noted Harvard University physicist Eric Mazur, a keynote speaker, will discuss “Wrapping Light Around a Hair,” during a special session open to the general public at 9 a.m.,

Dr. Ila presents state’s top research students to legislators

As the Executive Director of the Alabama Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (ALEPSCoR), Dr. Daryush Ila has been visiting key locations in the state to showcase some successes of the program, especially in student achievement.

His last stop was at the State Capitol in Montgomery, where on Feb. 21 he presented this year’s winners of the Platinum Award of the Graduate Research Scholars Program. Dr. Ila is also the Executive Director of the Alabama A&M University Research Institute.
Dr. Robert W. Taylor, a soil chemist, and dean of the School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, has been inducted as a “Caribbean Icon in Science and Technology” by the Caribbean Council of Science and Technology. The honor, according to Taylor, is the highest distinction among Caribbean scientists. It encompasses scientists who hail from the Bahamas, Belize, Barbados, Cuba, The Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, among others. Three years ago, Taylor was elected to the Bahamas Science and Technology Hall of Fame.

Taylor says the award places him in the good company of numerous Caribbean notables, among them Marcus Garvey, Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), Collin Powell, Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier and Nobel Laureates.

Taylor entered the AAMU deanship as a Fellow in two leading international professional societies. He also served as a program officer for the National Science Foundation, considered one of the most prestigious peer review funding agencies in the world. He was elevated to the senior management when in the second year he served as Acting Deputy Director of the Division of Biological Infrastructure.

Upon returning to AAMU, the Division presented Taylor with the Distinguished Service Award. Taylor earned the B.S. degree from Tuskegee University in 1970. He pursued his postgraduate studies at Michigan State University, obtaining an M.S. degree in soil microbiology in 1973 and a Ph.D. in soil chemistry in 1977.

Ag advisory
...continued from page 1

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Dr. V. Trent Montgomery, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology, left, receives a check for $10,000 from Northrop Grumman Corporation representatives Tizoc S. Loza, Corporate Project Manager for Mentor Protégé, and Gloria Pualani, Director of Socio-Economic Business Program and Government Relations. The fund, made possible through Northrop’s Industrial Affiliates Program Office, is intended to support the Mechanical Engineering program at AAMU.
ENGINEERING SOCIETIES RECOGNIZE TOP AAMU ENGINEERING STUDENTS

Dr. Willie J. Fitzpatrick, Jr., Vice Chair of the Huntsville Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, left, congratulates some AAMU faculty members and three engineering students who received top recognitions during this year’s Huntsville Engineering Societies E-Week Awards Banquet. The banquet culminated the 2008 National Engineers Week, the profession’s premier campaign to engender public awareness and acknowledgment of engineers and their contributions to improving human life.

from left, Angelo J. Manuel, a senior Electrical Engineering major, recognized by the IEEE as Outstanding A&M Branch Member;

Tamara Edwards, a junior, Mechanical Engineering major, recognized by the Society of Women Engineers North Alabama Section as A&M Student Member of the Year;

and Brian Crutcher, a senior Civil Engineering major, who received the Civil Engineer of the Year award presented by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The students, holding their awards are...

Dr. Cathy Qian, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering,

Dr. Pabitra Saha, Chair of the Department of Civil Engineering; and

Dr. V. Trent Montgomery, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology;

Prof. James Foreman, of the Department of Civil Engineering.

Also pictured are...

Prof. Stoney Massey, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering and the IEEE Advisor for the AAMU Student Chapter;

Not pictured is Dr. Koy Cook, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering.
Program (GRSP) to lawmakers. 

The GRSP, an offspring of ALEPSCoR, is a state-funded program to expand research output at Alabama universities. Every year, the program awards $25,000 each to 20 exceptional graduate students selected from the state’s four National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement Centers.

The Alabama students won the awards after garnering top spots in the poster presentation competition at the 20th NSF EPSCoR Conference in Hilo, Hawaii, last November. They

were among participants from the 27 EPSCoR jurisdictions from around the country.

Among officials and legislators receiving the students at the Capitol was Gov. Bob Riley. They recognized the students for ably representing Alabama and for their outstanding work in developing cutting-edge technology and research on behalf of the state.

Rep. Laura Hall, D-19th District, gave a special recognition to Dr. Ila and students during the meeting.

“These students are among the very best you will find anywhere,” said Dr. Ila, who is also Executive Director of the Alabama A&M University Research Institute (AAMURI). “This program (ALEPSCoR) is among the best in the nation, as you can see in these students’ performance.”

ALEPSCoR, an NSF-funded program, is aimed to foster the growth of research capacity and capability in Alabama and to make the state’s institutions of higher learning more competitive for federal funding.
Thursday, March 27, in the Dawson Building Auditorium.

As part of its higher education thrust, NCLT holds yearly faculty workshops on nanoscale science and engineering. This workshop will focus on “best practices” in nanoscale science, future faculty development, and increasing diversity in nanoscale technology. At least 60 registrants from throughout the country will participate.

“We are very excited about this professional development conference and this unique opportunity to showcase AAMU,” said Dr. Matthew Edwards, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. NCLT utilizes faculty partners currently active in teaching nanoscale science and engineering in the classroom or those who are serious about developing nanocontent/nanocourses/nanodegree programs for the higher education setting. The workshop further aims to develop action plans for incorporating nanoconcepts in undergraduate courses and programs and to help build a national NanoEd Resource Portal.

In addition to Harvard’s Mazur, featured speakers will include Dr. George Bodner, Purdue University, Chemical Education; Dr. Ana-Rita Mayol, University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, Chemistry; Dr. Matthew Edwards, AAMU, Physics (dean of the School of Arts and Sciences); and Dr. Gregory Light, Northwestern University, Searle Center for Teaching Excellence.

For additional information about the nanoscale science and engineering workshop, contact Dr. Matthew Edwards at (256) 372-5300.
Alabama A&M University

...where RESEARCH is THRIVING
Montgomery joins celebration of black achievement in engineering

“One America. One future. With the new global economy, the need to include Americans from all walks of society has never been so urgent. Our success will decide our collective future.” That’s the message black engineers tried to drive home when they met in Baltimore (Feb. 18-22) for this year’s Black Engineer of the Year Awards (BEYA) Conference.

Discussing global competitiveness and 20 years of excellence, the BEYA participants, including AAMU’s V. Trent Montgomery, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology, touched on topics affecting black technology professionals, such as career advancement, diversity programs and specialized industry updates. Dr. Robert Jennings, President of AAMU; Dr. Daryush Ilia, Executive Director of the AAMU Research Institute; and several AAMU engineering and science students also were at the conference which brought together hundreds of participants from across the nation to learn and network among the best and brightest technology minds in the country.

What engineering schools and colleges are doing to increase student interest in the field of engineering was one of the burning issues raised at the conference.

Dr. Montgomery, a proponent of strong emphasis on STEM courses from primary through high school, said poor preparation of students in math and science courses in earlier grades was seriously hurting their efforts to enter and persevere in engineering school.

However, Montgomery, who participated in a panel discussion with nine other deans from HBCU engineering schools around the country, said that with the acquisition of computer-based knowledge, and the development of smart computers that are capable of providing one-on-one tutorials or instructions, student will become smarter. “I think that many of the problems we are having with young folks with weak math and physical science skills are going to disappear in the future as computer systems and computer-based knowledge become smarter and smarter,” Montgomery said.

Dr. Montgomery was joined at the conference by deans from Florida A&M University, Hampton University, Howard University, Morgan State University, North Carolina A&T State University, Prairie View A&M University, Southern University, Tennessee State University and Jackson State University.

The BEYA conference, started in 1986, serves as a tool to recognize outstanding achievement of African-Americans in companies and institutions across America.

IRPSP CONFERENCE/TRAINING CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshops</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative Energy Summit</td>
<td>The U.S. continues to depend on foreign oil sources for a portion of its energy needs. World wide demand for crude oil increases significantly every year, while known worldwide reserves of petroleum are expected to be depleted by the year 2050. Fossil fuel, as the primary means of energy for the U.S., will not meet future needs of the nation. Energy self-reliance can only be obtained by means of renewable fuels, mainly alternative energy sources (i.e., bio-diesel). Alabama A&amp;M University is poised to be a leader in the field of alternative fuel research and development. This two-day conference will bring together federal, state, local, public and private agencies to discuss the direction of alternative fuel R&amp;D.</td>
<td>May 28-30, 2008</td>
<td>8:00AM-5:00PM</td>
<td>Von Braun Civic Center (VBCC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBCU Technology Transfer Conference</td>
<td>The development of a vision, mission and business model for Historically Black Colleges and Universities’ participation in technology transfer is paramount. Join us at AAMU as we discuss how HBCUs and small colleges can protect and profit from the research efforts of the university and faculty</td>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing and Describing Program Evaluation in Your Proposal</td>
<td>Federal agencies now require some form of program evaluation, which requires coordination between the agency, the university and the PI. Participants in this workshop will receive tips on designing the evaluation processes in the pre- and post-award phases of grants.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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Mentoring Future 21st Century Researchers in the Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences

An NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates