

October 2007

Dear Faculty and Staff:

Greetings from the Office of Research and Economic Development! Our football team is off to their best start since 2000, and it is an exciting time to be a Bulldog.

Every now and then, I will do some general “catching up” with the newsletter so that it may contain a multitude of different topics. This month, I want to let you know of some kudos to our faculty and staff, talk some about the importance of safety on our campus and in our laboratories, and brief you on our congressional initiative process for the upcoming year. So here goes

First, some kudos –

- In the Winter 2007 issue of Southern Business and Development magazine (<http://www.sb-d.com/issues/spring2007/index.asp>), Starkville and MSU made two of Top 10 lists. Starkville was cited as one of the “Top 10 Places in the South for Emerging Growth Industries” (along with Greenville, SC; Fairfax County in Northern VA; Charlotte, NC; Aiken, SC; Shreveport, LA; Memphis, TN; Research Triangle Park, NC; Huntsville, AL; Knoxville, TN, and Orlando, FL). Mississippi State University was also listed as one of the “Top 10 Universities that Drive Economic Development” (along with University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Texas at Austin, Florida Atlantic University, Georgia Tech, Johns Hopkins, University of Central Florida, Clemson, Virginia Tech, and the University of Kentucky). This recognition speaks highly of MSU and the Starkville community!
- Dr. Lucy Senter, University Veterinarian and Director of Laboratory Animal Resources at MSU, was recently elected as a member of the Board of Directors of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine.
- Dr. Duane Gill, Professor of Sociology and Research Fellow at the SSRC, has been selected to receive the Jerry S. Dixon Award for Environmental Education from the Alaska Conservation Foundation. The award "honors the most innovative educators who, in an inspired manner, integrate stewardship of Alaska's natural resources into their instructive efforts."

One of the real strengths of Mississippi is the presence of a dedicated and supportive congressional delegation. Each year, MSU solicits ideas for new federal initiatives from the university community. We receive many more excellent ideas than can be funded in Washington, so the number of ideas are funneled down by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and the Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine. Following a thorough review at the Vice Presidential level, an abbreviated list of ideas is submitted to President Foglesong, who ultimately prioritizes

MSU requests in a “wish book” which is sent to our congressional delegation in Washington, D.C.

In order to ensure that we are submitting the best and brightest ideas, ORED has adopted a new procedure this year for use in selecting projects submitted through our office. Until mid-October, my office is accepting proposals for possible inclusion in the university wish-book for the 2009 federal funding cycle. Following submission of these proposals, each proposal team will make a brief presentation to a peer-group to assist in selecting a smaller number of projects to be sent to the President. This will allow my office to work with the proposal team to strengthen their ideas, will allow us to better sell our ideas to our delegation, and will make the process more transparent to the university community. Copies of the submission materials and guidelines are available on the MSU ORED website under the Research Funding tab at: <http://www.research.msstate.edu/funding/>.

As a Chemical Engineer, one of the topics that I emphasized in teaching laboratory classes was safety in the laboratory. However, as one of my engineering colleagues used to point out, it was important to adopt a culture of safe behaviors in our lives – so that you use the same safety practices in your house as you did in a research laboratory. As an example, most of us would wear safety glasses while handling a chemical in a research laboratory – but do we bother wearing safety glasses when cutting the grass at home?

When I was growing up, my father didn't believe in hiring people to do any sorts of household projects – that was why you had children after all! As such, most weekends were spent in the garage working on household projects. My father strongly emphasized that “you only get one set of eyes”, and had lots of stories of people he knew that had lost an eye or a limb in a factory or shop because they didn't pay attention to safety issues. I find myself repeating these stories to my own children and my students – I am not sure if they are all true – but they do make a good point.

So here are some general reminders –

- MSU research personnel (faculty, staff, and students) should not wear loose clothing such as shorts, halter tops, sandals, flip flops, or mini-skirts in a laboratory environment because these items offer little protection to the skin in the event of a chemical, radioactive or biological accident. Loose or torn clothing and unrestrained long hair can easily catch fire, dip into hazardous materials or become entangled in moving mechanical parts.
- Laboratory coats should be worn over personal clothing to prevent contamination. This can also prevent the possible transfer of contamination from personal clothing to employee vehicles, homes and family members.

- Finger rings and other metal jewelry can react with some chemicals and should be removed in these instances. They should also be removed when working on equipment with moving parts and with energized electrical apparatus or circuits. Appropriate chemical resistant gloves should be worn at all times while working with hazardous materials.
- Closed-toe shoes should be worn at all times in areas where hazardous materials are being used or stored. Perforated shoes, flip-flops, or sandals should not be worn in laboratories or areas where hazardous materials are present.
- Please be sure to handle and dispose of broken glass properly - don't throw sharp objects in the regular trash!
- Please remember to wash your hands after working with potentially hazardous materials.
- There should be no eating, drinking, smoking, handling contact lenses, applying cosmetics, or storing food for human consumption in laboratory areas.

So, when you do go into a laboratory to do some work, decide to cut the grass at home, or are doing any type of activity which might cause you or others around you personal harm, remember to take a little extra time and be safe in the workplace.

Please be safe at home and in the workplace. Go Dawgs, Beat Tennessee!

Until next month,

Kirk.