



"Developing Outstanding Ideas and Individuals... One at a time."

ARG Alumni Newsletter Winter '11

1. Happy New Year

Hello all ARG members. It is good to reach out and give you an update on the current activities within the group back here in Illinois. We've had ourselves a very good year in 2010 and are looking forward to an equally good 2011. This year was quite a bit quieter for Prof. Alleyne in that the ARRA/stimulus activity died down and there weren't as many crazy activities going on chasing those resources.

Again, we've been messing around with our server trying to get the look 'right' to seem professional. You can check out the new look to see if it's an improvement over the old versions you remember. Please check there for any news about current lab members

2. Who's New?

Surprisingly, we didn't add any new graduate students to the lab this Fall. Not for lack of trying. However, the few candidates that fit well with the ARG mold had personal commitments that took them to other institutions. We'll be looking to add some new faces over the Summer and Fall of 2011.

There is one new undergraduate who became a part of the lab. Her name is Amanda Stowers and she's actually a sophomore student. This may be the most junior person

we've had in the lab. Amanda has been very productive and has gotten the IRS system back up and running. She's working with Nanjun Liu on some of the vehicle identification and control algorithms for the GPS guided agricultural automation project. If any of you are looking for an excellent graduate student, she'd be one to keep an eye on.

That's all for new folks for now. We'll likely have more new faces to add after our recruiting season this Spring.

3. Transitions

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the primary transitions were Sandipan Mishra heading to RPI for an Assistant Professor position and Rich Otten heading to Sandia Labs.

Kira Barton transitioned from her Ph.D. to a post doc but is still with us for a while longer. This August, she and Alex will be moving on to Ann Arbor as she starts her faculty position there in Mechanical Engineering.

4. Accomplishments

Here is a select update on what the current crop of ARG members has been doing to keep up the tradition that was set by previous members.

- Vikas Chandan passed his Qualifying Exam

- Bin Li passed his Prelim Exam
- Kira Barton defended her Ph.D thesis.
- Neera Jain received an ASME Graduate Teaching Fellowship.

As mentioned above, Neera Jain has followed in a good tradition of ARG members by winning an ASME Graduate Teaching Fellowship. She will be taking on an undergraduate course in Fall 2011. The current most likely candidate is ME 460, the classical controls class. She may be contacting several of you for notes/exams ideas in the summer and Fall.

In addition to professional accomplishments, there were also some personal ones. Alex Shorter (honorary ARG) and Kira Barton were married in Champaign Urbana. Yay. Here's a picture from their civil ceremony at the courthouse in Urbana.



5. Catching up with ARG Alumni.



There was quite a lot of catching up done at Kira and Alex's wedding reception in Boulder, Colorado this past September. Many former lab members showed up to help wish the happy couple best wishes in their new life. Above is a shot of some of the attendees including both past and present ARG members. It was a fun filled weekend with lots of outdoor activities for the whole group during the day and lots of indoor activities (for those without kids) during the nights.

Some of our alumni have traded up in the world. Rajat Shah (M.S. 2003) used to work for Behr in Michigan. He completed his MBA from the University of Michigan and joined a Treasury management program in New York. Not much in the way of actual engineering but the problem solving skills still helps. As he puts it, "*This city is out of control.*"

Possibly going the other way in the career path Rong Zhang, (PhD 2002) has decided to trade in his Hart Schaffner & Marx suits for a set of Carhart's. He moved from McKinsey Consulting to John Deere, both in Beijing. He remains in China and is responsible for regional strategic planning for Deere. Maybe he and Mark DePoorter will have reason to cross paths.



Speaking of Mark D, what newsletter would be complete without baby news! Natalie Marie DePoorter was born on

September 23rd, 2010. Mark and wife Stacey are doing well. Mark now finds himself even more outnumbered in a house full of XX chromosomes. Sisters Kayla (8) and Megan (5) welcomed their little sister to the DePoorter clan. At least they don't need to worry about what clothes to get. Mark is still at Deere and is currently the lead engineer for harvesting cabs for the Ag and Turf Division. They design cabs for combines, forage harvesters, sugar cane harvesters, cotton pickers, and windrowers. He has been busy with reports in both Silvis, IL and Mannheim, Germany where he travels every 6-8 weeks on assignment.

David Lynch and his wife are thrilled to have Abigail Shea Lynch in their family. Abby was born on October 9th 2010. The family is doing fine. It seems as if there is definitely a trend towards ARG members having girls.



Finally, in non-baby related news, ARG Alumnus Sean Brennan (PhD 2002) was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with tenure. Congrats Dr. Brennan! That's all the news we have for now. We're just looking forward to Spring coming so we can warm up. Look for more news this summer.



Even the ARG women are having girls! Kira Barton and Alex Shorter welcomed Adelynn Luisa Barton Shorter on Feb 8, 2011. Adelynn weighed 7lbs 11 oz and took her sweet time getting here. The family is doing well and excited about starting a new life.