

SPSU

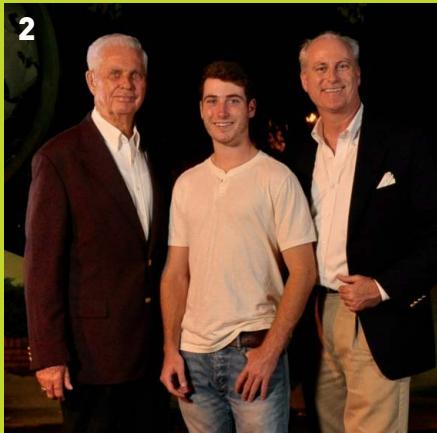
THE MAGAZINE | FALL 2011



**SPSU becomes a
family tradition with
third generation**

SPSU

THE MAGAZINE | FALL 2011



THE MAGAZINE FOR SOUTHERN POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY

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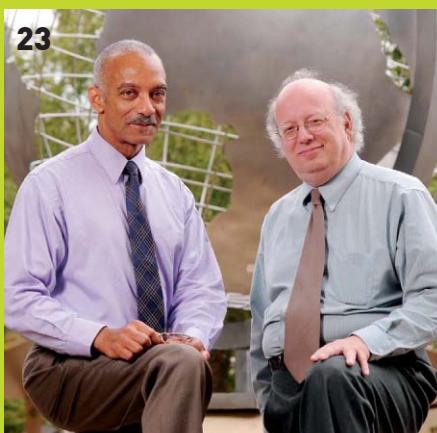


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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings from SPSU!

Our fall semester is off to a great start. Overall enrollment is about 5,781, an increase of about 5 percent compared with last fall, and our fastest growing programs are electrical and mechanical engineering. Thanks to the hard work of our dedicated faculty and staff, we are educating more students at the lowest cost-per-student since 1994.



As Southern Polytechnic has grown over the last 60+ years, we have seen a number of traditions develop. Graduates and community residents alike remember the Bathtub Races, painting the rock in the middle of campus, and Goat Night festivities. One sign of these growing traditions is that we are seeing more families with multiple students enrolled here, as well as multi-generational representation. In this issue, you will read about three generations of Hornets, the Bargers: Joe ('52), Curtis ('85), and Grant, who entered SPSU as a freshman this fall semester. At our recruiting open houses, we see increasing numbers of prospective students whose parents — and grandparents — attended college here. Whether the name on the diploma says the Technical Institute, Southern Technical Institute, Southern College of Technology, or Southern Polytechnic State University, we welcome all these generations to campus.

New traditions continue to unfold on campus as well. The walkway adjacent to the new architecture studio annex, Design 2, is becoming Alumni Walk. This landscaped walkway will be paved with bricks honoring graduates and supporters of the University. You'll read about this project elsewhere in this magazine — and I hope you'll be interested in contributing a brick or two of your own.

If, like me, you have been anxiously awaiting the new SPSU license plate, then you will share my excitement that these will be available around the end of this calendar year. The new digital plates are being designed now, and I can't wait to see all those rolling mini-billboards saying "SPSU" on cars around the region.

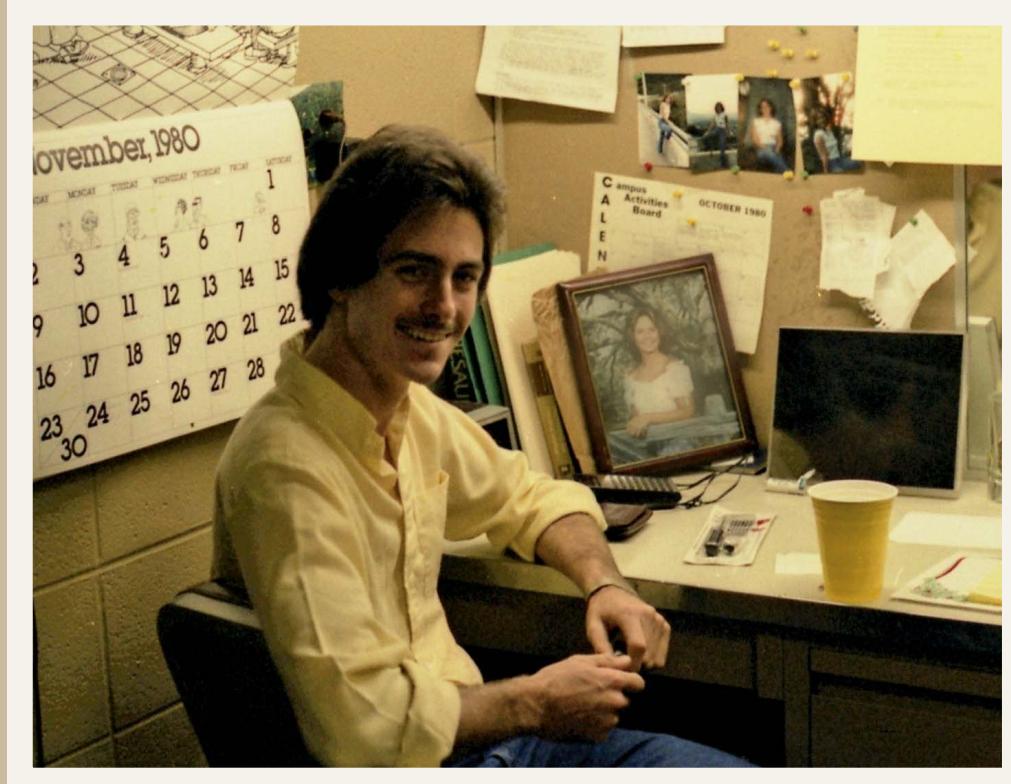
I hope to see you around campus soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa A. Rossbacher".

Lisa A. Rossbacher, Ph.D.
President

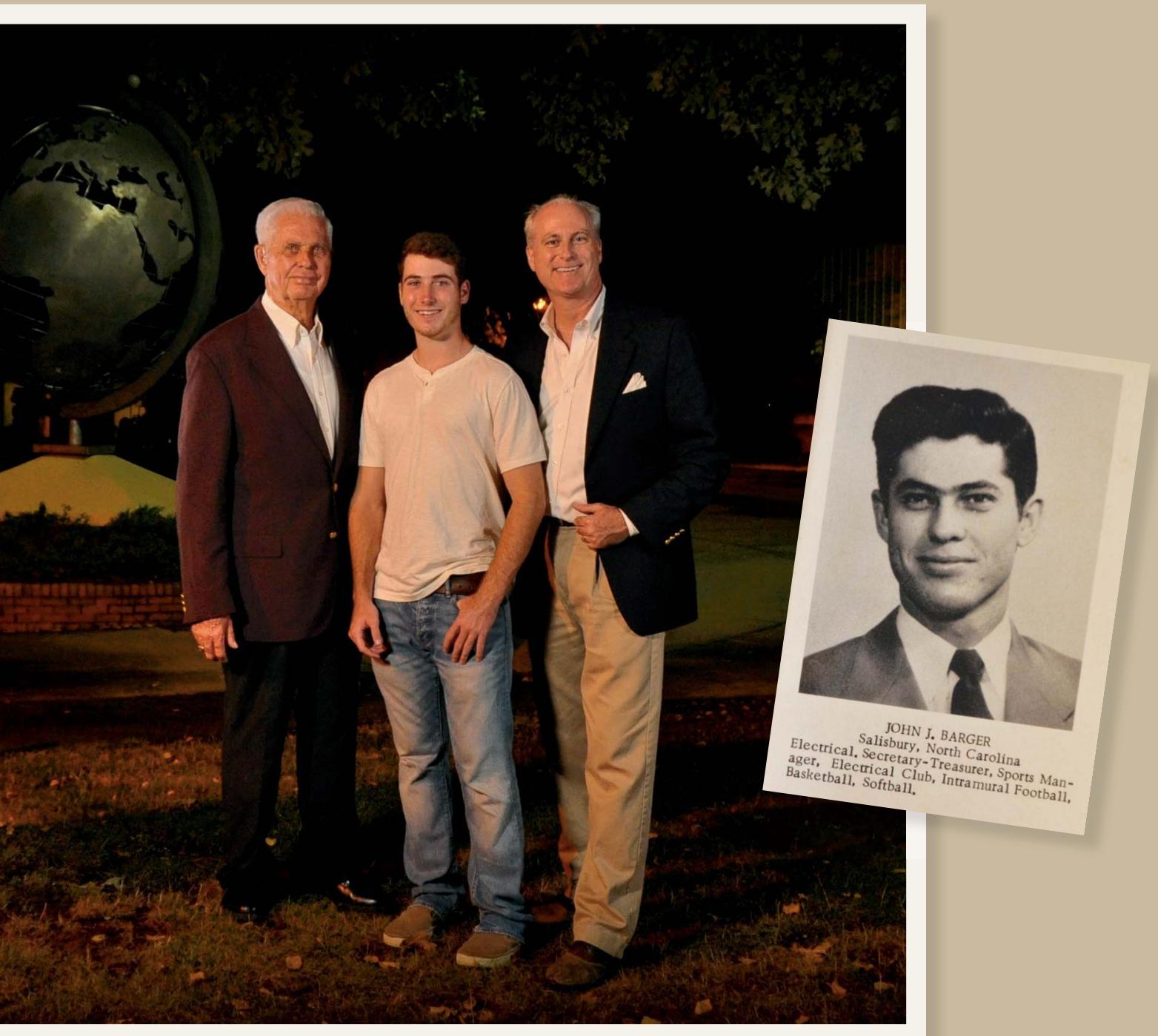
All in the family

A young farmer's desire for a better life led him six decades ago to what would become Southern Polytechnic State University, and sparked a family tradition of sorts. Joe Barger, one of the university's earliest graduates, went on to excel in his career and later proudly watched his son and his grandson enroll in his alma mater.



James Curtis Barger taking a study break in 1980.





JOHN J. BARGER
Salisbury, North Carolina
Electrical Secretary-Treasurer, Sports Manager, Electrical Club, Intramural Football, Basketball, Softball.

The Bargers make SPSU a family tradition. From left to right: Joe, Grant, and Curtis.

Barger, who grew up on a North Carolina farm that produced tobacco, cotton, wheat, and sweet potatoes, knew that life in the fields wasn't for him. "It's just plain hard work," he said. "I knew I had to go to school to do something other than farming."

After high school he enrolled at North Carolina State University, where he took a course in electrical engineering, but he found it hard to juggle academics with the part-time job he needed to pay his tuition.

"I didn't have enough time to study and I flunked out," he said.

Determined to succeed, Barger spent six months working, saving the money he needed to give college another shot. Attracted by the electrical technology program, in 1950 he enrolled in Southern Technical Institute, attending classes on the Chamblee Naval Air Station campus.

Barger had another good reason to excel academically; to avoid the draft, students had to be ranked in the top one-third of their class.

"You had to study or you were going into the service," he said.

As Barger recalled, Southern Tech was a small school with only 400 to 500 students in the early 1950s. He remembers being impressed by the experience of the faculty, which included many professors with professional experience in the subjects they taught.

"To me, it had practical professors who knew what was in the real world as well as the textbooks, and I think that helped me greatly," he said.

"I thought it was a good school when I went there, and it's gotten even better."

—Joe Barger '52

"I don't know of anyone who had a problem getting a job when they finished there. It was recognized as a very practical school, even in the beginning."

After graduating in 1952, he worked briefly in the private sector before spending three years in the Army's National Security Agency. He later enrolled in the engineering physics program at the University of Chattanooga, eventually earning a bachelor's degree.

"Even though Southern Tech was a two-year school, the things I learned there helped me more than my degree in

engineering physics," said Barger, who believes Southern Tech helped him develop useful problem-solving strategies.

"If a person can think and see what is there and not look at it as such a big problem, but look at a segment of it, he can solve anything that needs to be done. I think Southern Tech does that," he said.

He applied those skills during his 39-year career with Chattanooga, Tenn.-based Combustion Engineering, where he worked in research development and as a welding engineer. Over the years, Barger was awarded 10 U.S. patents and more than 75 related foreign patents for his developments in the nuclear power industry.

Now, 81 and retired, Barger continues to make his mark as the mayor of Ringgold, Ga., a position he has held for the past 36 years. This year was his most challenging year as leader of the city, after it suffered widespread damage during a devastating tornado in April.

Through it all, Barger has kept up with SPSU, which his son, James Curtis, attended in the 1980s and where his grandson, Grant, is a freshman.

"I thought it was a good school when I went there, and it's gotten even better," Joe Barger said, adding that while he hoped Curtis and Grant would follow in his footsteps, "I didn't really say, 'You've got to do that.'"

The Second Generation

Just as Joe Barger arrived at Southern Tech during its infancy, his son, Curtis, began his college career when the university was on the cusp of change.

When James Curtis Barger enrolled as an industrial engineering technology major at Southern Polytechnic State University in 1980, the school had just parted ways with Georgia Institute of Technology. By his senior year, the university's first master's program was in place.

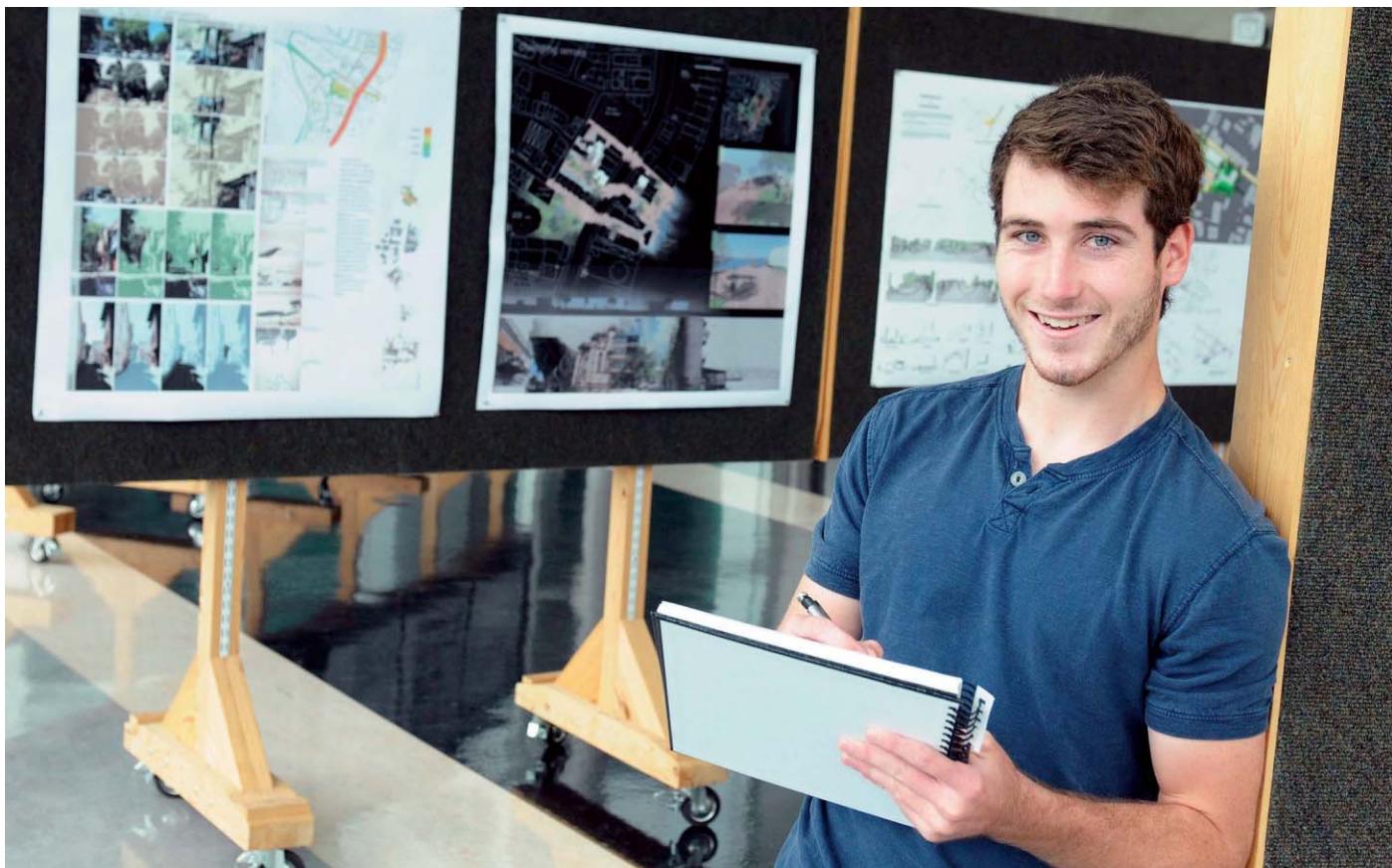
While he had heard college stories from his father, "that was not the reason I chose it," he said, noting, "It was a completely different institution."

He said he knew others who had enrolled at the Marietta campus, and his decision was based more on the university's good reputation than on his father's experience.

It proved to be a good choice for the younger Barger, who reflected on his college experience as "enjoyable and rigorous."

As a student, he participated in an executive roundtable program with business executives, community leaders, and students. That experience, combined with his coursework and a co-op program that allowed him to apply the lessons to a practical work environment, helped shape his career track, he said.

During an internship at IBM his senior year, he discovered an interest in technical sales. About a year after



Freshman Grant Barger is as excited by his architecture coursework as he is about continuing his family's tradition.

graduating, he landed a full-time job at IBM, where he launched his career in technical sales.

Today, the 49-year-old is part owner of Allison-Smith, a Marietta-based electrical contracting firm, alongside 14 other engineers who earned their degrees from SPSU or elsewhere, he said. The owners all share sales responsibility, said Barger, who lives about 10 minutes from SPSU's campus in Kennesaw.

Despite two generations of SPSU success stories, Curtis Barger said he did not pressure his son to follow the family's tradition.

"Just because I went there and your grandfather went there ... don't make your decision based on what happened 25, 50 years ago," he told Grant during his search for a school with a good architecture program. "Make a decision based on who is doing the best job right now."

More meaningful than sending his family's third generation to SPSU was the fact that the university continued to offer strong academic programs, he said.

"It's meaningful in that the programs are relevant," he said, adding, "The amount of growth and resources put into it since 1985 is perhaps greater than in the gap from when my father was there to when I enrolled."

"The architecture program did not exist when I was there.

There are five or six buildings that didn't exist when I was there. The School of Architecture has very modern facilities that weren't there when I was there."

The Third Generation

Although he grew up in a family of engineers, Grant Barger said he's leaned toward architecture since he was a child constructing buildings with Legos™.

While his family's history at SPSU played "a little bit" of a role when choosing a college, "it was more the fact that the architecture program is so good there," he said.

"I guess the fact that my grandfather and dad went there, I always thought was really cool," he said. "Both my dad and my grandfather said it was a really good school."

Still, he said he kept an open mind during his selection process. In the long run, he said, he found SPSU to be the more impressive option.

Grant Barger hasn't dwelled on the fact that his father once walked the same campus, but he said he expects his family's history to come to mind more often as the semester progresses.

"On a campus visit before I applied, we were walking around the dorms and the library, and my dad showed me where he used to be," Grant said. "It was really cool."

ALUMNI PROFILE

Frequent traveler remains loyal alum, contributes to his alma mater for 25 years



Harold Hoeschen Jr. adamantly believes college graduates should give back to the alma maters that helped prepare them for their future careers.

The 1975 graduate of Southern Polytechnic State University (then called Southern Technical Institute) has been a loyal financial contributor to the university for 25 consecutive years and is one of only five alumni who have given for 20 or more years.

"I think it is important that everyone have a giving plan – not only of their money but also of their time and talents," Hoeschen, 59, said. "Graduates benefit so very much from the education and the degree they have received. To not give back to an institution that has put so much effort into developing its students would be as bad as not being helpful to your mother. Shame on you!"

Hoeschen, who earned associate's and bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering technology, said he donated to SPSU "sporadically" while working his way through graduate school, a time when he "typically had a little more month than money."

After earning his master's degree in electrical engineering and advancing his career at such companies as Lockheed and Bell Telephone Laboratories, the Riegelsville, Pa., resident decided to give part of his income back to SPSU each year.

"I got off to a sporadic start, but as soon as I was gainfully employed, I made sure that STI (now SPSU) was on my annual giving list," said Hoeschen, who grew up in Powder Springs, Ga. "I wanted to help support a school that had given me so very much. I received a great education from dedicated and knowledgeable instructors. I was provided the opportunity to gain marketable skills in an exciting and

growing area of technology. I found myself better prepared for productive employment than graduates from other schools."

The married father of two said he sets aside a minimum of 10 percent of his income each year for "causes that are important to me and my family." A portion of that amount is earmarked for SPSU to help give other students the same educational opportunities he had.

"While not everyone will try and take advantage of those opportunities, the people that do will continue to give enhanced credibility to one of my alma maters," he said. "Those people who grasp that opportunity will be challenged

"I want others to have the same or better opportunities than I had."

—Harold Hoeschen Jr. '75

to reach limits they never even dreamed possible before receiving the education that SPSU offers."

He added that he doesn't stipulate how the university spends his contributions.

"I want (SPSU) to be able to use the funds where they are needed most," he said. "I have never been disappointed in SPSU's management of donated funds and feel (university officials) are in the best position to determine how best to use them."

Hoeschen, an independent consultant to various technology companies in the area of corporate development, said he hopes to achieve three goals through his donations.

"I want others to have the same or better opportunities than I had," he said. "I want the school to be able to attract the best faculty and the best students on the planet. I want to see SPSU receive the national recognition that it truly deserves."

Hoeschen, a former vice president with Lucent Technologies/Agere Systems in Allentown, Pa., and former senior vice president with iFire Technologies in Toronto, Canada, was attracted to SPSU for several reasons: a degree that interested him, a location within commuting distance of his home, and a cooperative education program that allowed him to work his way through school.

"A number of things came together for me at STI," he said.

The college also offered features other schools did not have, like professors who actually taught undergraduate courses and smaller class sizes.

"At many of those schools, you hardly ever get to see a professor as an undergrad — only teaching assistants," he

said. "You frequently are in classes of many hundreds of students crammed into an auditorium, looking at the projection of the instructor on a screen. At STI, I had moderate-sized to small classes with professors who were every bit as good or better than those at the other schools I attended."

As a student in the early 1970s, Hoeschen attended classes with many Vietnam War veterans who had returned home from Asia and were pursuing college degrees on the GI Bill.

"I studied with mature, serious students who were there to learn rather than play," he said.

"It was a time of tremendous growth intellectually for me. I was in the honor society, and we were required to provide a minimum number of hours tutoring. That enabled me to meet great people with a desire to learn and who were very ambitious."

But his time at STI wasn't all attending classes and cramming for exams. There also were enough leisure activities mixed in to keep the world of academia from becoming dull and boring.

"There were wonderful, exciting, and challenging activities on campus — bathtub races, for example," he said. "There were also many fun activities. Goat Day was an opportunity to have fun and narrowly avoid getting into trouble with various pranks. I promised I would never tell who put the goat in (the professor's) office, and I'm a man of my word. The rascals thought it was funnier than the professor did. What a mess."

"I have many great memories of STI."

For more information on how to make your own gift to SPSU, contact the Office of Advancement at 678-915-7351 or visit www.spsu.edu/giving.

Other alums who have given consecutively for 20 or more years:

- Joseph F. Williams ('62)
- Carl F. Hawkins ('73)
- Warren B. Holton ('73)
- Paul T. Martin ('53)

ALUMNI PROFILE

Glynn Mitchell '84 steers \$4.5M of Texas robots to SPSU

University's largest gift to date

Suncoast Post Tension Ltd., of Texas, has donated \$4.5 million worth of new robots built by Kawasaki to SPSU's fast-growing mechatronics engineering program.

The linchpin of SPSU's robotic windfall was Glynn Mitchell, a 1984 graduate of the university's electrical engineering technology program who is currently serving as secretary of the SPSU Alumni Association Board of Directors. He is also past-president of the Atlanta Section of the International Society of Automation (ISA), for which Prof. Glenn Allen, the newly retired mechatronics program director, serves as education chair.

Mitchell, who works for Tennessee-based Logical Systems LLC (commonly known as LSI), visited Texas on business in May. LSI had recently completed a successful project for Suncoast, and Mitchell decided to make a courtesy call while he was near its corporate offices in Houston. On an impromptu tour of Suncoast's plant, Mitchell learned the company had four high-speed, high-performance industrial robots. They had been used for less than 30 hours, and were sitting under tarps in a storage area as the result of a failed project. The plant manager indicated that this equipment was of no further use to Suncoast.

"Having worked with Prof. Allen through the ISA, it occurred to me that my alma mater might like to have these robots," Mitchell said. In the weeks that followed, Mitchell made inquiries. SPSU affirmed its interest in the equipment, and Suncoast's board of directors approved the donation "with amazing speed."

Mitchell even finessed the logistics, arranging for the equipment to be shipped to Marietta and for Sigma Nu fraternity brother Daryle Higginbotham (chair of the SPSU Foundation) to temporarily store the three larger robots at his company, Marietta NDT, which is near the campus, until SPSU could prepare sufficient space on campus for their installation.

The robots now reside in SPSU's Dale Heatherington Mechatronics Lab and the Mechatronics Research and Education Center (MeREC), where students in courses such as Robotics, Mechatronics Design, and Introduction to

Mechatronics Engineering are expected to find them to be a great resource.

According to Dr. Chan Ham, mechatronics program director, "automation applications around the world utilize these Kawasaki Heavy-Duty Robots for spot welding, material handling, sealing, die and investment casting, material removal, and machine tending, as well as numerous other demanding tasks."

SPSU's mechatronics engineering program—unique in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation—was launched in 2007 and produced its first 13 graduates in spring 2011. The program has approximately 250 students this fall.

"Mechatronics has experienced significant growth primarily because we are addressing a need identified by industry," said Dr. Thomas Currin, associate dean of the Division of Engineering. "This donation will give our students the opportunity to utilize the same equipment used in industry and to assess, evaluate, and improve its capabilities through undergraduate lab and research experiences."

"This donation will give our students the opportunity to utilize the same equipment used in industry." —Dr. Thomas Currin, associate dean of the Division of Engineering

Added Dr. Ham, "As a result, our engineering students will have excellent practical skills and experiences in robot design and analysis directly connected with their professional career development."

Of his self-described role as "liaison between donor and recipient," Mitchell said, "It has been very exciting, humbling, and nothing short of miraculous to be able to do something wonderful for my school."





First gamer graduates

William Olden arrived at Southern Polytechnic State University in 2008 knowing he was destined for a career in computer gaming, although the university didn't yet cater to this specialty. He graduated in the spring of 2011 with the first diploma awarded by SPSU specifically to gamers.



"I have been into gaming ever since my dad bought me a PlayStation and a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles PC game waaaaay back in the day," the 21-year-old recalled with a grin. His addiction soon grew so strong that "my parents had to limit me to an hour of gaming a day."

He started his first year at SPSU as a computer science major, but upon hearing that the university would soon be launching a Bachelor of Science in Computer Game Design and Development (CGDD) degree, "I did not hesitate to jump on the band wagon."

Although he figures the switch in majors delayed his graduation by at least a semester, Olden has no regrets.

"I think the CGDD program is unique," he said. "Not only has it taught me how to program, but also how to interact with users of my games, how to develop gaming programs across multiple platforms with different inputs (console vs. phone vs. computer), and how to think outside the box for creative development ideas. The program also helped me to keep up with all the newest game development engines and exposed me to employers and other game developers."

One of the more memorable experiences Olden had was helping to facilitate Global Game Jam 2011, a weekend marathon of computer game designing and programming hosted by SPSU twice a year.

"We were the Red Bandana Mob," Olden said of the red-scarf-bedecked CGDD majors who assisted Dr. Jon Preston, CGDD program coordinator and professor, with the event. "I helped set up tables and equipment, brought food, fixed Internet ports, found stuff, etc."

SPSU attracted approximately 150 game developers and enthusiasts from around the state and had the second highest attendance of Global Game Jam 2011 in the United States and the eighth largest in the world.

As much as he enjoyed that experience, Olden drew his greatest satisfaction from his involvement in a partnership

"The games we made for the Marietta Center for Advanced Academics are actually being used by the students. We had a rare chance to develop games alongside the kids who would be using them." —William Olden '11

SPSU established with the Marietta Center for Advanced Academics (MCAA), a magnet school for third to fifth graders that focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through SPSU's Center for Applied Gaming and Media Arts, students in the School of Computing and Software Engineering are working with MCAA teachers and students to develop educational games.

"This is one of the coolest things about the CGDD program," said Olden. "Usually when you do a project for a class, all it's good for after you get your grade is to sit in your portfolio and rarely be used again. The games we made for MCAA are actually being used by the students. We had a rare chance to develop games alongside the kids who would be using them. We created an economics game and a rocket game that let students explore gravity."

"You meet with the students and the teachers to get their ideas and feedback, and you also interact with underclassmen at SPSU who help to make the games. It's a really integrated approach."

So what's in store for Olden, now that he's graduated? After taking much of the summer off, the Grayson, Ga., resident is gearing up to search for a job as a game designer or programmer.

Companies like CCP Games, which is relocating its North American headquarters to Decatur and is expected to create 150 new jobs over the next three years, are on his list. In addition to CCP, more than 75 digital entertainment companies are located in Georgia, including HiRez Studios in Marietta, which Olden is also planning to contact.

For more information about SPSU's Computer Game Design and Development program, visit www.spsu.edu/schoolcse.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Getting the jump on college

While many of their peers spent the summer lolling by the pool or earning a few bucks flipping burgers and waiting tables, 35 freshmen who had been admitted to SPSU for the fall term gained an edge by launching right into their college studies.

With the campus uncrowded and the mood more relaxed throughout June and July, these students checked out the campus dining hall Stingers at the X; acclimated themselves to residence halls, roommates, student services and procedures; and oh yes, cracked the books, as participants in an early-college experience called Jump Start.

By the time their peers arrived in mid-August for the start of the fall semester, Jump Start students had spent five weeks settling into campus life, earning up to seven college credits, learning good study

habits and time-management skills, and forming supportive friendships that will help get them through their first year.

The pilot for the Jump Start program began in the summer of 2010 at the urging of Dr. Julie Newell, chair of SPSU's Social and International Studies department.

"We had nothing in place before this to help graduating high school seniors make a smooth transition to college life," she said. "The idea was to help these kids really get off to a great start."

In addition to helping new students get comfortable with the campus and make friends, Dr. Newell said, Jump Start gives new students "a firm academic footing" and introduces them to campus officials who can help them navigate through their college years—from counselors and other student services personnel right on up to President Lisa A. Rossbacher.

"We had 12 participants the first year, and I was pretty much their den mother," Dr. Newell added with a laugh.

"A year later, I still run into groups of them around campus."

All of the original Jump Start participants completed their first year of college and have returned to SPSU this fall—no mean feat when you consider that, on average, more than 20 percent of all first-time freshmen wash out during that first rough year of transition.



Jump Start participant Vikram Balakrishnan talks with SPSU Director of Admissions Gary Bush during lunch at the campus' Stingers Restaurant.

pays off for new students

Jump Start participants Courtney Taylor, Sebastiana Laremont, and Jalynn Young take advantage of the residence hall experience two months earlier than their freshmen classmates.

"We send letters out to all accepted students inviting them to participate in Jump Start," said Dr. Ron Koger, vice president for Student and Enrollment Services. "We get mostly sharp kids who want to get started on college earlier than their peers, but this program is open to and holds value for any type of student, not just the high achievers."

Jenny Brown, coordinator of Residence life at SPSU taught a section of the orientation course SPSU 1101—The Hitchhiker's Guide to SPSU. She commented that Jump Start lasts just five short weeks, but really makes a world of difference. "It offers a much easier transition to college," she added.

"I was one of those students who really didn't study in high school and still got good grades, but I knew college was going to be different," said Nujad Bolivar, who admitted he very reluctantly became one of the original 12 Jump Start students. "I was scared and expected the courses to be very hard, but it wasn't overwhelming at all—it was a gentle introduction. I do not regret making the choice to participate."

Bolivar, now in his second year as a mechanical engineering student and working part-time in the SPSU Welcome Center, earned seven credit hours through Jump Start and was able to take a lighter course load during his first year as a result.

"I got accepted at a different school, but because of my experience with Jump Start, I decided to stay at Southern Poly," he said. "I am very happy with the school and all the connections I've made, especially through my participation in Jump Start, which really opened doors for me by introducing me to so many key people here."



The curriculum for this year's Jump Start program consisted of three classes. In addition to the one-credit general orientation course, students had their choice of two of the following three-credit courses: English 1101; Political Science 1101—American Government; and Political Science 2401—Global Issues.

"This is giving me a feel for what is going on in the world," said 2011 Jump Start participant Tyler Fields, during a break from his Global Issues class. "You come out of your small world that you've been in for 16 to 17 years, and you walk into another world with a lot of different people from a lot of different places. Everyone knows a little something different about a topic. When you put all that information together, you have something better than what you came with."

The 2011 Jump Start program costs approximately \$2,800 with room and board, and course and activity fees. There is no GPA requirement, and the HOPE Scholarship can be applied to tuition. For more information, contact Gary Bush, director of Admissions, at 678-915-5501 or gbush@spsu.edu.

Farewell to Dean Alan Gabrielli

For 33 years, leader, teacher, mentor... and guitar man on the side

Dean Alan Gabrielli's long history with the institution that is now Southern Polytechnic State University stretches back to when he was its only chemist, when the stockroom had no running water, and the two chemistry labs had ceramic tile counters with grouting that dutifully documented every spill and scorch mark.

He retired in May 2011 as dean of the greatly expanded School of Arts and Sciences, which—thanks largely to his efforts of the past decade—is launching a teacher education program with \$1.4 million in federal Race to the Top funds.

Both Dean Gabrielli and the university have undergone quite a bit of transformation over the past three decades. He had just earned his doctorate in chemistry when he was hired in the fall of 1978, shortly before Southern Technical Institute declared its independence from parent institution Georgia Tech and installed its first president, Dr. Stephen Cheshier.

Dean Gabrielli recalled that the rivalry between student organizations to paint the iconic SPSU rock “was a big deal back then,” and that “one group even went so far as to build a deck around it.”

By 1980, he had developed a couple of new chemistry courses and even a special topics course in physics. The chemistry faculty expanded, and he helped design new labs that were built in the mid-1980s.

After teaching both credit and non-credit courses for seven years, the young associate professor accepted an appointment in 1986 as acting director of Continuing Education.

“We were just getting computers on campus,” he recalled, noting that the Continuing Education staff—Dean Gabrielli, an assistant director, and a secretary—converted a classroom into a computer lab and began offering classes in DOS, basic word processing, Lotus, PageMaker, MicroStation, and AutoCAD.

Dean Gabrielli earned the permanent appointment as director in 1988 and served two separate terms as chair of the University Center Council on Continuing Education. Today, he remembers the Continuing Education division of that era as “always in the red,” but feels he left it in pretty good shape when he finally returned in 1993 to his first love,

teaching, as a full professor.

Though he'd kept his hand in the field of chemistry by team teaching Chemistry 201 with Dr. Edward Vizzini, then dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Dean Gabrielli was reinvigorated by his return to his roots as a full-time chemist. He spent his time outside the classroom churning out numerous lab manuals, instructional materials, and research papers.

But Dean Gabrielli has interests that go well beyond these pursuits—he was a cycling enthusiast for many years and served as faculty advisor to the Cycling Club that enjoyed a short heyday in the 1990s as well as a member of the board of directors of the Southern Bicycle League. He also loves music and was both the faculty advisor and a member of the campus jazz band from 1984–89.

It follows that Dean Gabrielli would be at the center of things when faculty and staff members formed a rock band to perform at the inauguration of the university’s second president, Dr. Lisa A. Rossbacher, in 1998. There he was, playing lead guitar with Dave Cline (guitar and lead singer), director of Institutional Research; Barry Birckhead (drums and singer), dean of students; Steve Hamrick (bass guitar and singer), Registrar; and Glenn Forbes (guitar), former Food Service director; in a band called Friday at 5 that still performs at special events to this day.

“We called it Friday at 5 because, theoretically, that’s when we practice, but we don’t,” Dean Gabrielli said with a laugh. “If we did, we’d be good.” He added, “We play stuff that’s older than most of the kids here, but their parents relate to our kind of music.”

Dr. Gabrielli’s administrative skills were called on again in 2001, when President Rossbacher appointed him as acting dean of Arts and Sciences. A year later, in July 2002, he received the permanent appointment.

“SPSU has undergone a lot of growth and diversification



of its liberal arts programs with Alan as dean of Arts and Sciences," said Dr. Zvi Szafran, vice president for Academic Affairs, who earned his Ph.D. in chemistry alongside Dean Gabrielli at the University of South Carolina and is a current member of the Friday at 5 band. "He had a strong hand in the program proposals for the degrees we've added in biology, chemistry, new media arts, psychology, political science, English (a master's program), and our four newest degrees with an education track leading to teacher certification."

Dr. Szafran said Dean Gabrielli has been a leader in advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. "Not only was he instrumental in securing our new teacher education program [which will focus on certifying educators in the STEM fields] and the \$1.4 million grant that will enable us to replicate the national UTeach model program, but he also coauthored an earlier STEM grant."

Though retired now, Dean Gabrielli can still be seen around campus in his capacity as co-director of SPSUTeach, the name given to the new teacher preparation program funded by the UTeach grant. The announcement that Gov. Nathan Deal had awarded SPSU the federal funds that will

fuel SPSUTeach was made barely one month after Dean Gabrielli retired. This program—10 years in development—will serve as a fitting cap to Dean Gabrielli's career in academia.

"One of the first things I did when I became dean was to contact the dean of education at Kennesaw State University (KSU) about a collaborative physics education program," he said.

The collaboration with KSU ultimately did not materialize, but Dean Gabrielli refused to abandon the idea of bringing a STEM-focused education program to SPSU. "I thought SPSU should play a role in math and science education before STEM became a buzzword, but it would take many years before all the pieces fell into place to make it possible."

For now, he and SPSUTeach co-director George Stickel are working with the departments on the curriculum—the first courses with an education track that will lead to teacher certification are scheduled to debut in spring 2012—and preparing for site visits from UTeach and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

"Things are busy, even with no students in the program yet," he said. "I'm guessing the next few years will fly by."

Many people seek out Dr. Thomas Nelson for his scientific expertise, especially in wildlife ecology, and also because his passion for his career has never overshadowed his sense of humor and fun-loving nature. These traits, combined with his dedication to teaching, have made him a great fit as Southern Polytechnic State University's new dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

Dr. Nelson has spent 25 years teaching college with a variety of titles, most recently as a professor and chair of the Biology Department at North Georgia College & State University (NGCSU) in Dahlonega. He spent 10 years at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Ark., half of them as the Biology Department chair, and 12 years at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Ill., as a professor and director of the Environmental Biology Program.

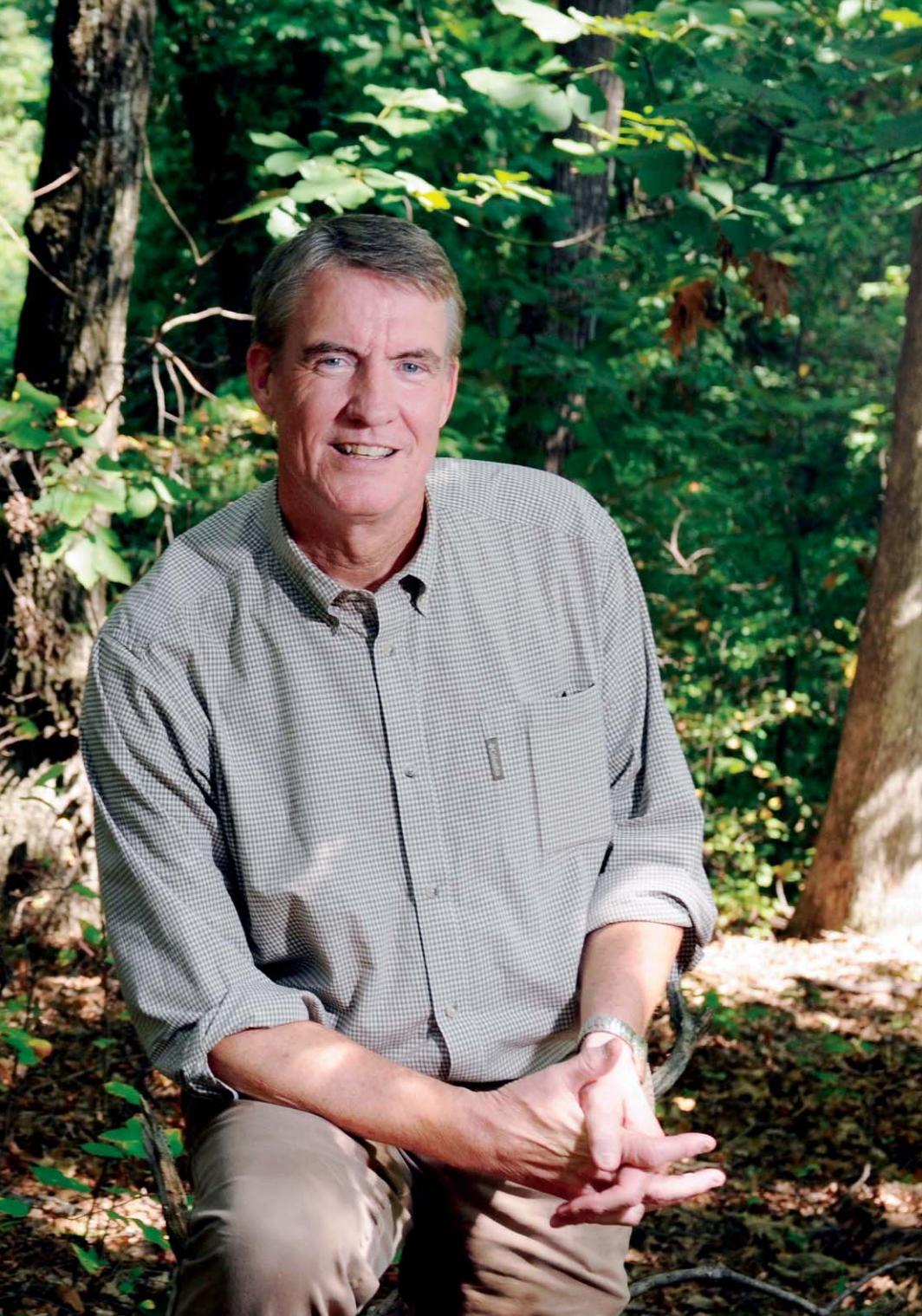
Dr. Nelson's first week at NGCSU in 2008 took an interesting turn when he was asked by CNN to comment on the likelihood that the legendary creature known as Bigfoot could exist in Georgia.

At the time, two Georgia men claimed to have found and preserved a dead animal that they insisted presented conclusive proof of Bigfoot's existence. During Dr. Nelson's CNN interview about the claim, he was asked whether or not Bigfoot was a mammal. "I explained that Bigfoot is a legend, but yes, it is always depicted as a mammal, and I confirmed that my research involves studying wild mammals." During a subsequent news conference, CNN uncovered the dead Bigfoot, which, Dr. Nelson said, "turned out to be a cheap gorilla costume frozen in ice."

However, the question of Bigfoot's status as a mammal presented a great moment to teach students—another passion of Dr. Nelson's. "Scientists can't prove that



The natural: Dr. Thomas Nelson is the newest dean of Arts & Sciences



something doesn't exist, but we require good evidence to agree that something does exist." In other words, absent a body to study, science cannot disprove Bigfoot's existence.

Dr. Nelson's love and passion for the sciences, particularly ecology, began with his undergraduate studies. He started his freshmen year intending to major in chemical engineering at Colorado State University. However, after taking two required biology classes, he was hooked instead on the life sciences and earned a degree in biological studies.

He also holds a masters' degree in zoology and a doctorate in ecology, both from Southern Illinois University-

Carbondale. Through his studies, Dr. Nelson has enabled his students to formulate and ponder research questions and answers about land-use—urbanization, agriculture, and forestry—and its effect on wildlife populations.

Having headed several university biology departments, Dr. Nelson is a seasoned administrator. At NGCSU, he led a department of more than 20 faculty members, managed nearly 600 majors, and also took part in the intensive programming of the University System of Georgia's 2010-11 Executive Leadership Institute.

The newest dean of Arts and Sciences has also spoken at more than 30 conferences and has had more than 70 professional articles published during his career that mainly focus on research data he and his students collected on the social organization, genetics, demographics, and adaptive behavior of mammals.

"I have been very lucky to have had a series of enthusiastic, talented students to work with. They make the research a lot of fun," he said of his work in directing undergraduate and graduate studies and research.

In his new role at SPSU, Dr. Nelson intends to be hands-on with the university's new teacher education preparation program, SPSUTeach, citing it as "a really

good program that could potentially increase the number of educators in the technology and science fields in the Atlanta area significantly."

He is married to Dr. Dianne Nelson, a NGCSU associate professor of nursing and undergraduate nursing program coordinator. They are the parents of three grown children.

Dr. Nelson looks to have a long, successful career at SPSU. His experience, dedication, and enthusiasm are adding a new perspective to the management of a thriving university.

New business chief is “just Bill”

When Dr. Bill Prigge took the reins in March as Southern Polytechnic State University's vice president for Business and Finance, he arrived with enthusiasm, but admitted he wasn't sure how long he'd remain on the university's staff.

“If you would have asked me [if I'd be here for the long-term] four months ago, I would have said ‘probably not,’” confessed Dr. Prigge, who has moved so often that he has held driver's licenses in 10 states. When he was offered the job at SPSU, he figured, as do many administrators, that he'd stay a few years before moving on to a larger university.

Now, with a little more than a semester at SPSU under his belt, he said he's ready to settle here permanently.



“I look around and see things that are going on, and I can see myself here until I retire—or as long as they'll have me,” he said.

Dr. Prigge, who manages the university's business operations, oversees SPSU's budget, fiscal affairs, facilities, human resources, police, auxiliary services, and procurement departments.

“I knew what a chief business officer did and what areas I would have. I guess my expectations were that I'd come in and pick up where things were and try to make improvements,” he said. “But, to me, what has exceeded my expectations are the collegiality of the senior staff and the eagerness of my division to succeed. It's more the environment and the culture that I've felt the most.”

The friendly campus is clearly a good match for Dr. Prigge, who relishes the opportunities he has to “get out and be visible on campus,” chatting with everyone from members of the grounds crew to the students.

“Just being able to be a part of the campus fabric is important to me,” he explained. “I want everyone to feel like I am somebody who is approachable and who they can come to with their need or issue and have it taken care of.”

It's no surprise, then, that improved customer service is

“There are so many ways for me to get engaged in the university outside of my job.”

—Dr. Bill Prigge

among his top priorities. Dr. Prigge said he is working to identify ways in which he can better serve SPSU's staff so that they can, in turn, better serve the university.

Open communication is part of his plan; he has already introduced more opportunities for his departments to understand the university's budget process and for employees to have their questions addressed. He also encourages his staff to pitch their own ideas by taking advantage of regular meetings and his own everyday accessibility.

“I'm not Dr. Prigge. I'm just Bill. They can come see me. My door is open,” he said.

While he said he loved his day-to-day role on campus, Dr. Prigge truly lit up when he spoke about the chances he's had to step beyond the boundaries of his job description.

“One thing I've found so exciting is there are so many ways for me to get engaged in the university outside of my job; above and beyond being the person who makes sure the budget is balanced, so to speak.”

An initiative that Dr. Prigge is especially excited about is a newly formed Corporate Foundation Relations Council that will explore partnership opportunities between SPSU



Bill chats with Tara Williams and Teresa Street from the Facilities Department, and Cheryl Hammock from the Advancement Office.

and technical industries. The group, under the direction of Cheryl Hammock, campaign development officer in the university's Advancement Office, will work to identify ways in which the university and businesses can mutually benefit by sharing resources. Dr. Prigge said the initiative could lead to student internship opportunities or new revenue streams for SPSU. While his involvement in the effort is not required, he said he jumped at the chance to engage in the process.

Dr. Prigge holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Alabama and worked for several years on technology development at Lucent Technologies. Before coming to SPSU, he spent seven years as associate dean for Administration and Finance at Georgia State University's College of Law. He enjoyed those years, he said, but added, "I wasn't a lawyer."

At SPSU, whether he is pursuing partnerships with technology experts or attending events in conjunction with National Engineers Week, he noted, "Well, I am one (an engineer). It's nice to get back to my roots."

Dr. Prigge said he's also following the path he established as a doctoral student at the University of Nebraska in 2002, where he earned his Ph.D. in educational leadership and

higher education.

As he prepared his application essay for the doctoral program, he recalled writing, "Ultimately I would like to settle at a smaller university in the southeast in a position that would allow me to play a major role in setting the strategy and leading it towards achieving its goals."

"This is my dream job," he said.

That's not to say the responsibility doesn't include challenges.

Dr. Prigge acknowledged that new revenue sources will need to be tapped as the state budget continues to shrink. Tuition has increased in recent years, as state funds were reduced by 6 percent in 2010 and another 3 percent this year.

External funds would assist the university with

projects such as renovations of older buildings on campus, he said, adding that he will also work to identify cost-saving opportunities.

"My focus this year I think is going to be less strategic and more operational so we can save some costs along the way," he said. Longer-term goals include supporting SPSU's financial, staffing, and programmatic needs by following the master plan, he added.

In the meantime, there is much to celebrate at the university, which introduced the academic Engineering Technology Center in late 2010, recently opened its new dining hall, and augmented its previously understaffed facilities department, said Dr. Prigge, who reiterated his growing passion for SPSU.

"This is just a wonderful opportunity. I love the people I work for and work with," he said. "It's far exceeded my expectations as to what the job would be. It's far surpassed anything I could hope for."

UNIVERSITY NEWS BRIEFS

SPSU adds STEM teacher prep program, awarded \$1.4 million grant

Southern Polytechnic State University obtained approval from the Board of Regents to launch a teacher education program that will focus on helping the state meet a critical need for educators in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The governor's Office of Planning and Budget also awarded SPSU approximately \$1.4 million in Race to the Top funding to help the university launch the program.



of Arts degree in Mathematics. The school already offers degrees in each of these disciplines, but students who earn these degrees with the new educational tracks will be qualified to teach at the high school level.

In concert with the Regents' goal of increasing production of STEM teachers throughout the state, SPSU's School of Arts and Sciences will begin offering programs in the spring that lead to secondary school teacher certification through Bachelor of Science degrees in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, and a Bachelor

SPSU's new teacher education program requires students to major in the science discipline they will be teaching to ensure that they have a solid understanding of their discipline.

The Race to the Top funds will allow SPSU to replicate UTeach, a successful national model for teacher preparation programs.

"Everyone needs to be able to understand and apply basic concepts of science and mathematics to understand an increasingly technological world and to secure workplace opportunities. SPSU's new teacher certification programs will help ensure a solid pipeline of future scientists and mathematicians who will be in strong demand in tomorrow's economy," said Dr. George Stickel, SPSU's education program director and former Cobb County Public Schools science supervisor.

**Coca-Cola New Century Scholar**

A transfer student from Gainesville State College is Southern Polytechnic State University's first student to earn recognition as Georgia's Coca-Cola New Century Scholar.

David Spencer was awarded the prestigious New Century Scholar honor for finishing first among Georgia students in the All-USA Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team competition. Judges consider grades, extracurricular activities, and how a student applies his or her knowledge outside the classroom.

Spencer maintained an outstanding grade point average of 4.0 while earning dual degrees in computer science and communications at Gainesville State.

The New Century Scholar program is sponsored by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and the Coca-Cola Foundation and administered by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. There are 52 New Century Scholars chosen each year, one from each state, one from Canada, and one from outside of North America.



Spencer
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NEWEST ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

M.S. in Architecture

Southern Polytechnic State University was approved to add a Master of Science (M.S.) in Architecture degree to its existing five-year Bachelor of Architecture professional program beginning in fall 2012.

The post-professional graduate degree program will be housed within the School of Architecture, Civil Engineering Technology, and Construction.

"The M.S. in Architecture will build on the university's strengths in the areas of architecture, construction, and civil engineering technology," said Zvi Szafran, vice president for Academic Affairs. "Graduates of the program will possess advanced skills in architectural design, urbanism, and emerging new and existing complementary building technology. There is a strong and growing need for this program within the professional community and within industry."

The M.S. in Architecture is structured as a general degree with concentrations in two critical areas. The Technology of Architecture will focus on sustainable design, digital design and fabrication, and digital communication. The Urbanism

concentration will focus on historic preservation, adaptive reuse, community design, and urban infrastructure planning and design.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of architects is expected to increase by 16 percent between 2008 and 2018, faster than the average for all occupations. The demand for architects with knowledge of "green" or sustainable design is also projected to increase.

New Media Arts

The Board of Regents approved a Bachelor of Arts in New Media Arts for Southern Polytechnic State University this past spring.

Beginning this fall, the New Media Arts degree provides students with an opportunity to develop the technical and artistic skills needed to serve as practitioners in the fields of multimedia development and design, web design, and video production. The degree incorporates elements of the fine and applied arts with technology and as such encourages both creativity and practical application.

The degree will meet the demand for individuals with the skills to produce video games, movie and television

special-effects, and three-dimensional media. Based on the growing number of mobile technologies, additional job openings will arise from increased demands for Web site development and computer graphics adaptation.

The program provides students with a competitive edge in meeting workforce needs by emphasizing both the aesthetic and technical aspects of new media arts and production.

Since 2006 SPSU has added 19 new academic degree programs, bringing the total of undergraduate degrees offered to 41 and graduate degrees to 12.

Aerospace engineering courses offered

A variety of aerospace engineering courses are being added to the SPSU curriculum. The courses, Aerodynamics; Propulsion; Aircraft Design and Performance; Helicopter Theory; and Senior Design Project will be offered periodically, beginning with Aerodynamics this fall.

The courses are offered through the Systems Engineering program but are open to all majors. The prerequisite for the Aerodynamics course is Calculus III.

Gates Millennium Scholars

Jasmine Kinard, a fifth-year architecture student and president of Southern Polytechnic State University's chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students, and freshman Erick Rodriguez are the first SPSU students, to date, to receive the Gates Millennium Scholarship (GMS).



Kinard

Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the GMS Program is designed to assist outstanding African-American, American-Indian/Alaska-Native, Asian-Pacific Islander-American, and Hispanic-American students throughout their undergraduate college education in any university and field of study of their choosing. The program also provides students with mentoring services, internship opportunities, and possible



Rodriguez

funding through post-graduate studies. To be eligible for the scholarship, students must have a high school GPA of 3.3, demonstrate leadership abilities and community service, and meet the Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria.

The scholarship pays for everything that other financial aid does not, including supplies and travel expenses.

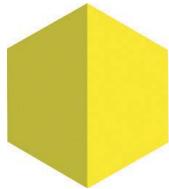
Kinard is considering getting a master's degree at Harvard after she graduates in 2012, but she is unsure of which program she will choose. Rodriguez plans to earn a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and an advanced degree, before ultimately working for NASA.

UNIVERSITY NEWS BRIEFS

International Knowledge and Research Center launched

The Southern Polytechnic Applied Research Center (SPARC) has a new addition that is indicative of the growing integration of sustainability in the university's operations and curriculum – the International Knowledge and Research Center for Green Building (IKRC).

In recognition of the launch of this new Southern Polytechnic State University center, Gov. Nathan Deal proclaimed June 8, 2011 as Green Building Awareness Day.



**INTERNATIONAL
KNOWLEDGE AND
RESEARCH CENTER
FOR GREEN BUILDING**

Working in partnership with the Georgia Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council, the staff of IKRC envisions providing creative, practical, and sustainable solutions for green buildings worldwide. Their goal is to become the virtual and physical destination for educators and professionals of green-building sustainability through research, teaching, curriculum development, and community outreach.

In the future, IKRC will house a products and technology showcase so that students of green-building can see, touch, and experience the latest in sustainable products, systems, and technology.

Students, faculty, and staff interested in learning more about IKRC are encouraged to visit ikrc.spsu.edu or send e-mail inquiries to ikrc@spsu.edu. There are several programs already underway that explore possible research topics and data as well as potential internships.

Georgia engineering schools form consortium

Southern Polytechnic State University is one of five engineering schools involved in the formation of the Georgia Consortium of Engineering Schools (GCES), which is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of engineering education in Georgia.

"By providing opportunities for Georgia's engineering deans to gather and discuss the crucial issues facing their schools, as well as the engineering profession, the GCES seeks to expand the depth and breadth of engineering educational and professional opportunities in the state," said Dr. Tom Currin, associate dean of the Division of Engineering.

SPSU hosted the inaugural meeting of the consortium on May 23.

Summit attracts diverse crowd

The third annual Polytechnic Summit, hosted by Southern Polytechnic State University this summer was attended by approximately 145 participants, including polytechnic educators, students, and alumni from throughout the United States, Brazil, China, Cameroon, and Germany.

"I thought the summit went fabulously," said Dr. Zvi Szafran, vice president for Academic Affairs, who chaired the planning committee. "It gave us all a chance to share information, to see how others are doing things, and to showcase our best ideas."

SPSU will also host the 2012 Polytechnic Summit, and then Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston will host the event in 2013 and 2014.

SPSU and High Museum of Art form an alliance

Southern Polytechnic State University has established a unique affiliation with the High Museum of Art in Atlanta that gives students and faculty access to the High's exhibitions, collections, and programs.

"I'm happy to note that we are the first University System of Georgia institution to have such an affiliation," said Dr. Zvi Szafran, vice president for Academic Affairs.

He cited the following benefits to the university:

- Faculty members will be able to take their classes on field trips to the High at no cost to the students or faculty members.
- Students can visit the High free of charge at any time by showing their SPSU ID; faculty and staff members will receive a discount with ID; and a \$20 discount on individual, dual, or family memberships.
- The High will conduct two SPSU campus lectures or programs per year and will provide faculty members and students with access to visiting artists and scholars.
- The High will provide internships in the Collections and Exhibitions, Education, Marketing and Communications, or Advancement departments for up to two undergraduate students per year (one per semester).
- The High will host an SPSU event each year.

The benefits are definitely more than museum discounts. Glenn Allen, retired coordinator of the Mechatronics Engineering program, selected students in SPSU's mechatronics program with training in robotics to assist with the installation and servicing of one of the pieces in the MoMA exhibition recently on display at the High. "Digital Matter" is a major work of art by iconic Dutch designer Joris Laarman. This kinetic installation features a robot that constructs, disassembles, and reconstructs an object over an extended period of time.

Moving forward by looking back

Desegregation across University System of Georgia deeper than what it seems

The history of desegregation across the University System of Georgia is more complex than most people are aware of. Two years ago, the University System asked each campus to make a presentation on diversity for an upcoming Diversity Summit. Dr. Zvi Szafran, vice president for Academic Affairs at SPSU, and Dr. Jeffery Orr, director of the Advising, Tutoring, Testing and International Center (ATTIC) decided that among the questions they wanted to answer was: "Who was SPSU's first black student?" It turned out that the answer to that question wasn't so easy to find.

The histories of SPSU and other universities across the state are a reflection of the changing times. While many Georgia schools are diverse today, the history of these universities showed this was not always the case.

Young universities such as SPSU don't always capture their history, making it difficult to go back and find the "firsts." Records in the Registrar's office were not computerized until the 1980s, so information about the black students who attended in the 1960s was not readily available. Also, the old paper records didn't include pictures and didn't indicate students' race.

"First, we looked through yearbooks. We thought we had found our earliest black students in 1966, but just to be sure, Registrar Steve Hamrick suggested we query our computer records. By a fluke, we found an even earlier black student who had entered the college in 1964 and who came back to take an additional class in the 1990s, thereby getting into the computer records," Dr. Szafran said. Through comparing records and contacting the student, he said, "We were pretty sure we had the right guy."

Confirmation came a year later, from letters found in the archives. SPSU's desegregation story actually began when it was known as the Southern Technical Institute, a division of Georgia Tech.

In a letter dated Aug. 7, 1964, Georgia Tech's president Edwin Harrison wrote to Engineering Division Extension

Director Lawrence V. Johnson: "Please advise [Hoyt McClure, director of the Southern Technical Institute] that Negro applicants are to be processed on the same basis as white applicants just as we do here."

Another letter, dated Aug. 5, 1964, identified four black men as potential students for the fall quarter: Ahmed DuBois Adams, Willie James Hope, Harold R. Adams and William M. Dodd. Of these, Hope is the only man who is known to have actually attended and graduated. References to these letters were found in a footnote in SPSU Professor Richard Bennett's book "Southern Polytechnic State University: The History."

Hope, now 74, earned his Associate Degree in Electrical Engineering Technology in 1967. He started his own business, Hope Electric Enterprises, in 1975.

Hope said he was at Southern Tech to focus on the curriculum, but racial tension was understandably present. He said many of the students there had never been around a black person, and they had to develop a strategy to "deal with me."

"It was like you were there, but they were not going to welcome you and they weren't going to ask you to leave." He said it was nearly three months before some of the students there started to "break the ice."

As a history-making graduate, he said he still attends alumni and recruitments events, talking with current and



Drs. Jeff Orr and Zvi Szafran researched and presented on the desegregation of SPSU, UGA, and other Georgia universities, during 50 Events for the 50th Anniversary of Desegregation of the University of Georgia.

potential students who are black. He has even served as a speaker in the past.

"Mr. Hope was a real pioneer," Dr. Orr said. "He was ultimately quite successful."

An invitation to participate in a series called "50 Events for the 50th Anniversary of Desegregation of the University of Georgia" resulted from Drs. Szafran and Orr's research on desegregation at universities across the state.

"We thought, why give (UGA) all 50 events? At least one should talk about what was happening everywhere else." Their presentation, "The Rest of the Story," shed light on UGA and SPSU, but also included other Georgia universities such as Albany State, Fort Valley State, and Mercer.

Much to their surprise, research indicated that the first state-supported university to desegregate wasn't UGA, it was Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University). It was founded in 1867 as a place of learning for black students but later had a small number of white students as well.

In 1867, Atlanta University received some state funding as Georgia's land-grant college for black students [UGA was the land-grant college for white students]. In 1887, when the state legislature found out that Atlanta University was integrated, they ordered the school to segregate. When the school refused, it was stripped of its land-grant funding.

Another historic incident, known as the Cocking Affair, involved an alleged earlier attempt at desegregation at UGA. This was "the most devastating assault on higher education

in the history of Georgia," according to georgiaencyclopedia.org.

Walter Cocking, dean of UGA's College of Education, authored a report advocating the integration of UGA's graduate programs, as a 1938 Supreme Court decision required. In 1941, Cocking was accused of advocating the integration of a demonstration school in Athens.

Then-Gov. Eugene Talmadge, who was against desegregation, ordered the Board of Regents not to renew Cocking's contract, and the Board complied. When UGA's President Harmon Caldwell threatened to resign, the Board allowed Cocking a hearing, after which they reversed their vote and reinstated him.

This move prompted the governor to replace three regents, which in turn resulted in a new vote, and Cocking was fired. This political interference caused the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS) to remove accreditation from all the state-supported colleges for

whites in Georgia. These actions became the main political issue in the 1942 elections, and Talmadge was defeated by Ellis Arnall. SACS then reinstated the USG's accreditation.

When it comes to the history of race and higher education in Georgia, Dr. Szafran said, "The desegregation story of the rest of the system is just so strange in many places. People hear about what happened at UGA and they think they know the whole story, but the story is a lot more complicated than what they are aware of."

Looking at other colleges and universities across the state now, it is easy to find greater diversity.

Based on a report issued by the American Society for Engineering Education, SPSU has been recognized as the top school for conferring bachelor's degrees in engineering technology to black males and No. 2 for black females for six years in a row. The University also has the fourth-largest engineering technology program in the country.

Leadership development programs, summer bridge programs, and the establishment of student organizations such as Southern Polytechnic Society of Black Engineers and historically black sororities and fraternities are also examples of opportunities available for black students.

"Once SPSU desegregated [in 1964], the university took it seriously," Dr. Szafran said. "SPSU wanted the black students who went here to be successful, and they were."



Let your name pave the way... SPSU Alumni Walk

A perfect way to commemorate your accomplishments and days on campus! Include your name on the Southern Polytechnic State University Alumni Walk.

The SPSU Alumni Association invites you to help create and enhance the university's picturesque landscape by purchasing your brick now.

Each brick is engraved with 3 lines. Bricks are available for a minimum contribution of \$100 each, which is fully tax deductible.

For more information or to purchase your brick, visit www.spsu.edu/alumni or call 678-915-7351.





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Save these dates!

As these events draw near, information about them will be posted at go.spsu.edu. To stay connected, find the SPSU Alumni Facebook page at facebook.com/spsualumni.

Thursday, December 1, 2011

Hornet Networking Night

6 – 8 p.m. at Bailey's in Kennesaw

Play games and have your first two drinks on us!

RSVP to events@spsu.edu

Saturday, December 17, 2011

Fall Graduation

10 a.m. School of Arts and Sciences, School of Engineering Technology and Management, and Division of Engineering

2 p.m. School of Architecture, Civil Engineering Technology and Construction, and School of Computing and Software Engineering

Both sessions will be held in the SPSU Gymnasium.

Friday, January 20, 2012

Alumni Night at the Gwinnett Gladiators

7:30 p.m. at Gwinnett Arena in Duluth

Bring the whole family to this great venue for a fun night of hockey vs. the Florida Everblades. Parking is free! Center ice tickets are \$10 and include one drink ticket and entry into a Gladiators raffle. Purchase tickets by calling 678-915-7351.

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

Hornet Networking and Trivia Night

8:30 – 10:30 p.m. at Gravity Pub in Atlanta

Play Nerd Trivia and have your first two drinks on us!
RSVP to events@spsu.edu

February 18, 2012

Hoops Homecoming Basketball Reunion

Celebrate basketball at SPSU with our alumni players, current players, and their families.

RSVP to events@spsu.edu

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

SPSU Spring Career Expo

12 – 4 p.m. on campus at the Recreation and Wellness Center

Saturday, March 17, 2012

Bathtub Race and Alumni Reunion

For the third year, we will be racing human-powered bathtubs. Mark your calendars to enjoy the race and a BBQ with classmates, current students, faculty, and staff.

RSVP to events@spsu.edu

April or May 2012

SPSU Alumni Night at the Atlanta Braves

Date TBD

Join SPSU alums for a private pre-game reception before the gates open to the public.

Saturday, April 14, 2012

Baseball Diamond Reunion

12 p.m. cookout; 1 p.m. Double Header vs. Lee University
Celebrating baseball on Senior Day with our alumni players, current players, and their families. RSVP to events@spsu.edu

Thursday, April 19, 2012

Hornet Networking Night

6 – 8 p.m. at Bailey's in Kennesaw

Invitations to this event will include graduating seniors. Play games and have your first two drinks on us!

RSVP to events@spsu.edu

Saturday, May 12, 2012

Spring Graduation

10 a.m. School of Arts and Sciences, School of Engineering Technology and Management, and Division of Engineering

2 p.m. School of Architecture, Civil Engineering Technology and Construction, and School of Computing and Software Engineering

Both sessions will be held in the SPSU Gymnasium.