Mortenson to Sponsor BIM Lab

Mortenson Construction is the latest in a long list of industry partners to commit to advancing the CM program at CSU. On October 10, CEO Tom Gunkel and Denver Vice President Bob Hansen announced Mortenson’s commitment to the construction of a Building Information Modeling lab in Guggenheim Hall. The new space will be called the Mortenson Virtual Design and Construction Innovation Center, and it will allow CM students access to the latest technology in preparation for their future careers in the construction industry.

Virtual Design and Construction is the process of generating and managing data over a building’s life cycle. It is a process that is poised to play a vital and transformative role in the profession of construction management as well as construction education over the next several years. The new laboratory at CSU will provide an interactive and virtual learning environment where students can learn techniques and capabilities of specific modeling programs, as well as gain first-hand knowledge and experience of the power of such tools and methods in construction and beyond. VDC processes will be integrated directly into existing courses, such as surveying, estimating, safety, scheduling, construction methods, and will also be used to facilitate a myriad of expanding research and learning opportunities, such as CSU VDC student competition team training. The laboratory will have cutting-edge software and hardware capabilities including interactive and flexible team-based work spaces, wireless and remote access, and integrated network systems. Most importantly, the laboratory will be designed as a dynamic space, one planned to evolve with emerging technologies.

The announcement was attended by CSU President Tony Frank, Dean Jeff McCubbin, Mortenson CEO Tom Gunkel, CSU President Tony Frank, CSU Vice President of University Advancement Brett Anderson, and Mortenson Senior Vice President Bob Hansen.

Left to Right: CM Department Head Mostafa Khattab, CAHS Dean Jeff McCubbin, Mortenson CEO Tom Gunkel, CSU President Tony Frank, CSU Vice President of University Advancement Brett Anderson, and Mortenson Senior Vice President Bob Hansen.
Graduate Students Nominated for Presidential Fellowships

CM graduate students Sereyrithy Chhun and Sherona Simpson are two of several students to be nominated for this year’s International Presidential Fellows program. The Fellows consists of approximately 30 graduate students and post-graduate visitors with strong international research interests and experience, as well as a desire to work with other researchers across the University. The program was established in 2007 and its purpose is to introduce the Fellows to ongoing research at CSU through activities and academic events throughout the academic year.

Chhun, a Fulbright scholar from Cambodia, enrolled in the CM program this year after completing two bachelor’s degrees in his homeland. "I have always been inspired to become a well-rounded engineer with a balance of knowledge and practical experience in both engineering and management," he said. At CSU, he is particularly interested in researching the acquisition of construction management knowledge and its transfer to the construction industry. After graduation, he hopes to become a certified project manager in Cambodia and eventually teach his expertise.

Simpson obtained a bachelor’s degree in her home country of Jamaica and worked as a quantity surveyor prior to enrolling at CSU. Upon completion of her master’s degree, she hopes to contribute to the development of quantity surveying and construction management classes at the University of Technology in Jamaica to include aspects of sustainable design and facilities management. She also hopes to contribute to the development of sustainable infrastructure in her country by working for the Ministry of Transport and Works or the Ministry of Housing and Water. "I am so grateful for this opportunity and I do hope that I will be able to make a momentous contribution to the program here at CSU," she said.

CMAA Leaders Attend Rising CM Conference

After completing two stages of competition, the CSU CMAA student chapter earned a spot in the 2012 Rising CM Conference, which takes place concurrently with the CMAA National Conference, in Chicago, Ill., October 20-21. Officers Katy Hodson and Rachel Lipton, accompanied by CM department head Mostafa Khattab, travelled to the conference to present their best practices with respect to connecting with industry.

The Rising CM Conference is attended by students and recent graduates who are interested in working as construction managers. There were many different sessions to attend ranging from crane usage and regulation in New York City to progress on the World Trade Center Tower 1 construction. Attendees take advantage of excellent opportunities to meet peers in the industry and to network with seasoned industry veterans, as well as participate in a career fair.

Students Create Video Tours of CSU Green Facilities

As part of the Sustainable Practices in Design and Construction course, students created video tours of CSU green facilities. Several buildings on campus provide opportunities for students to learn about sustainable design and construction, and instructors Rodolfo Valdes and Caroline Clevenger believe there is no better way to really understand something than to explain a concept to someone else. Therefore, the two designed a midterm project to help students learn about green buildings and educate others. The project allowed students to present the class with a behind the scenes look into the features of buildings that most people would have otherwise never known existed. "Showcasing the sustainable features of LEED certified buildings around campus instilled pride within students about CSU and its green initiatives," said Valdes.
Faculty Receive Grant for Work in Tunisia

CM faculty at CSU are continuing their global research focus thanks to a $77,000 grant from the Education for Employment foundation. Angela Guggemos, principal investigator, along with co-PI’s Jon Elliott, Ron Holt, Mehmet Ozbek, and cultural liaison Mostafa Khattab, are hard at work on a project to educate local trainers in Tunisia to teach unemployed engineering graduates practical and application-oriented construction management skills as part of EFE’s training program.

The local trainer four-day workshop will take place in December in Morocco. The training module will cover 120 hours of curriculum taught over the course of three months, and the project team from CSU will provide the revised CM curriculum and instructional support materials as well as the Training of Trainers workshop.

This is not the first time CSU CM faculty have worked with EFE. Guggemos, Holt, and Khattab worked on a similar project for trainers in Palestine in 2007. That project placed at least 45 unemployed engineers in construction management positions in the area. The training module for the Tunisia project will be an updated version of the module created in 2007.

EFE is a non-profit organization working in the Middle East and North Africa to provide professional and technical training for youth to build a better future for themselves, their communities, and the world. EFE identifies those skills in highest demand in the private sector and receives commitments from company partners to hire EFE graduates.

Valdes Presents at SACNAS National Conference

CM faculty member Rodolfo Valdes presented at the 2012 Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science National Conference in Seattle, Wash., October 11-14. Attended by more than 3,000 people, this conference encourages students to pursue their academic goals, network with professionals in their fields, and meet peers with similar interests. In addition to showcasing his research, Valdes served as a judge and mentor during the poster/oral sessions and throughout the SACNAS conference by providing constructive feedback to students. “For me, this type of mentoring is one of the aspects that set this conference apart from others in helping to develop future leaders,” he said.

Valdes was also proud of the 2012 SACNAS Role Model Award recognition presented to CSU’s SACNAS chapter for Outstanding Native American Member Outreach. Recipients of these chapter awards are evaluated by a committee and selected based on each chapter’s annual report.

CON366 Students Observe Trucks at Work

Many students agree that the best supplement to the classroom is hands-on learning in a real-world setting. Enrollees in the Construction Equipment and Methods course, also known as “Trucks” to CM students, ventured out to a local heavy civil project to observe large machinery and equipment in action on a construction site.

Aaron Pacholek (B.S., ’06), a project manager for Connell Resources, Inc., hosted a tour of the Turnberry Road improvements project currently underway in northern Fort Collins. The 45 students observed the heavy equipment work to move and widen a portion of Turnberry Road for easier access to the newer housing developments in the area. “It was interesting to see the way the equipment worked together,” said Tori Vendegna, CM senior. “I was able to relate what we have been working on in class to an actual project, which was helpful.”

Some students observed more than the functions of the equipment at the site and were able to relate it to information they’d learned in other courses. “For me, the most interesting part of the trip was how well compacted the final lift of road base was before the first lift of asphalt is applied,” noted Robert Olson, CM senior.
Prospective Students Visit CM

Staff of the CM program hosted the second annual Open House on October 12 as an opportunity to inform prospective students of everything the program has to offer. The event included an overview of the curriculum, presentations, a tour of the facilities, and a hands-on activity.

Two faculty in the department, Caroline Clevenger and Loren Funk, presented on two CM courses, including Building Information Modeling and the Construction Leadership course that ties in with the CM Cares initiative. CM student leader Austin Shreve focused on what the program has to offer students outside the classroom, and Ryan Martorano (B.S., ’98) of Hensel Phelps Construction Company shared how CSU’s CM program prepared him for his current career.

Reaction to the Open House was very positive according to a survey sent to attendees after the event. The department is planning another open house for fall 2013.

Annual Skeet Shoot Held October 26

The CM Board of Directors would like to thank all the company and student participants in this year’s skeet shoot held at Kiowa Creek Sporting Club in Bennett, Colo.

Upcoming Events

Fall 2012 Commencement

The College of Applied Human Sciences’ commencement ceremony will take place on Friday, December 14, 2012, at 7:00 PM in Moby Arena. For more information, visit http://commencement.colostate.edu.