

Kappe Lecturer Visits, Speaks on NYWEA

By Liz Urban

Speaker Gary Logsdon, D.Sc, P.E., DEE, The 2004 Kappe Lecturer, visited Clarkson University Thursday October 20 to give a presentation to the New York Water Environment Association Chapter (NYWEA) on campus. Logsdon also gave presentations in Introduction to Environmental Engineering (CE 340) classes earlier in the day. Logsdon has attained both national and international recognition for applied research in water filtration for protection of public health.

After spending 26 years doing research for the United States Public Health Service, Logsdon retired at the age of 49 and has now worked part time for Black and Veatch as a consulting engineer for the past 20 years.

Excited about the new opportunities in the field of Environmental Engineering, Logsdon stressed the fact that there is much more available to those in the field than there ever was before, and you are not restricted, for example, just Waste Water. To begin his lecture and make his initial point, a video by the American Academy of Environmental Engineers was shown. The video listed and explained the eight different environmental projects throughout the United States that have impacted and improved certain areas to become more environmentally healthy and beneficial. Each of the eight were project winners by the Association and marked the best of 2003.

To extend his lecture on the importance of careers, a general overview of the Fundamental Engineers (FE) Exam, and more importantly, the Professional Engineers (PE) Exam were given. It is important to take into consideration when exactly you take your PE exam. It is definitely for your benefit if you take it earlier when you graduate versus later in your career. Taking it early will keep things fresh in mind, make things easier to locate in texts, and allows more opportunities to arise with your new certification.

Communication was also greatly stressed for its importance. Logsdon could not say enough good things about knowing how to present your ideas and work well through good vocal and written communication. When given a student that got all A's in math and science versus one who did so-so in math but got all A's in English, he said he would value the second student more. It is a given that you need to do well in math to handle the work and have a scientific mind to do the work that engineers and scientists do, but communication skills are just as important. It is very important to have a good strong background in English because it is used all the time. Throughout your career there times where written proposals, oral interviews, conferences, lectures, public meetings, and travel opportunities arise, and those who are good speakers and present themselves well are the ones that benefit and are valued for the task.

Advancements in technology were also touched by Logsdon, speaking about how there is a downside to technology: mental estimates become harder. "Reality check on your arithmetic," stressed one of his college professors, and in turn he stressed this to the listeners of the lecture. Ask yourself, does your answer seem realistic and make sense? With the progressions in technology such as calculators, it has become so easy to come up with an answer that we no longer get a feel for whether or not our answer makes sense. Students do not realize when we make mistakes and just figure it is the right value. It is important to understand the need to learn to step back and learn to have a feel to whether the answer is good or bad using common

sense, not technology.

To finish up the evening, Dr. Logsdon reflected back on his experiences in the engineering fields, comparing and contrasting his research work for the Public Health Department and as a consulting engineer for the Consultant Firm. Several students asked questions concerning the PE exam for engineers as well as his work. Logsdon's visit and lecture was very interesting and informative concerning Environmental Engineering and was very well appreciate to those who attended the lecture.
