Aerospace students map out bright futures

2 land Southwest internships

by Bridgett Buckles
news@mtsu.edu

S
outhwest Airlines flew in from Dallas early this year, interviewing more than 300 college students from all over the United States for internships for summer and fall 2010. Now two hand-picked MTSU aerospace students are ready to move about the country—or at least into the workplace—with the popular air carrier.

After two phone interviews and one flight, Lauren Lipe, an aerospace major who graduated May 8 with a concentration in air traffic control, knew she would be traveling to Dallas this summer to work in the Operations Control Center. She’ll be working side-by-side with Southwest dispatchers in conjunction with the meteorologist station.

Lipe has only been on the aerospace track for two years. She obtained a private pilot’s license while working with FedEx in Memphis.

“My father, grandfather, uncle and brother have all been pilots and love everything involving aerospace,” Lipe said.

Lipe is also involved with Women in Aviation, an MTSU organization that plans to tour FedEx this summer. Women comprise about 10 percent of the aerospace program at MTSU.

“If I didn’t pack my things and I was going to school full-time. I’ll build up enough hours as I’m going through school that I’ll be able to go ahead and find an airline job shortly after I graduate.”

The recipient of the new Tiara Foundation Chair Award of Excellence is selected from applicants with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Each must submit an essay describing the attributes of an aerospace professional and how to exemplify those attributes. The aerospace program at MTSU aerospace is also working with FedEx this summer.

by Claire Rogers
news@mtsu.edu

M
TSU’s Department of Aerospace has announced a new scholarship, the Tiara Foundation Chair Award of Excellence, and named its first recipient, professional-pilot major Kevin Horst, a junior and native of Monterey, Tenn.

The scholarship, established by an alumnus who wishes to remain anonymous, will be presented annually to one student from the aerospace program. The first award of $10,000 will be presented to Horst at the aerospace awards banquet in September.

Horst, 23, who works part-time at the MTSU Flight School, said he will use the scholarship to pay for his flight training. He has already completed the four required flight ratings for pro-pilot majors and plans on working toward complete certification as a flight instructor this summer.

“To get a job in the airline world or commercial aviation, you have to have flight hours and experience,” Horst said. “I hope to flight-instruct part-time and keep going to school full-time. I’ll build up enough hours as I’m going through school that I’ll be able to go ahead and find an airline job shortly after I graduate.”

The recipient of the new Tiara Foundation Chair Award of Excellence is selected from applicants with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Each must submit an essay describing the attributes of an aerospace professional and how to exemplify those attributes. The aerospace program at MTSU aerospace is also working with FedEx this summer.

Power tool for reading: Ph.D. in literacy studies

by Tom Tozer
tozer@mtsu.edu

T
he National Assessment of Education Progress consistently shows that an average of four out of 10 children fail to read at grade level by the fourth grade. Reading-test scores tell us that Johnny can’t read, but those test scores don’t measure where learning has broken down.

Students pursuing a doctorate in literacy studies at MTSU, which may be the only degree of its kind in the nation, are looking beyond the

See ‘Literacy’ page 7

Will it float?

A CLOSER LOOK—Jeff Steffen, left, of Union, Ky., University of Kentucky sophomore Michelle Steffen and senior concrete-industry management major Andy Steffen view the inner workings of the MTSU Solar Boat during the Engineering Technology Open House April 29 outside the Tom H. Jackson Building.

photo by News and Public Affairs

IN BRIEF

CHANGE ROUTE NEAR COPE

The sidewalk on the south side of the Cope Administration Building, which handles foot traffic to and from the Wood-Stegall Center, will be closed for a few weeks for updates and repairs. Pedestrians should use the sidewalk alongside Alumni Drive into campus instead. For more information about the project, contact the Construction and Renovation Office at 615-898-5699.

NSF names MTSU as top site for physics teachers

by Randy Weiler
jureiler@mtsu.edu

M
TSU’s Department of Physics and Astronomy has become a National Science Foundation-funded Physics Teacher Education Coalition site. This is a great achievement for the department and places us among the top programs in the country,” said Dr. Ron Henderson, department chair. “There are currently only 12 PhysTEC sites in the nation, and this round of (NSF) funding increases the total by just
Toward the end of fall 2010, students who want assistance with their term papers, essays or short stories will be able to get help only steps away from the research materials they may need.

The Margaret H. Ordabedian University Writing Center at MTSU is moving this summer from its two locations in Peck Hall 325 and Ezell Hall 119 to a new site in Room 362 of the James E. Walker Library.

The new center will be across the mezzanine from the newly relocated Learning, Teaching and Innovative Technologies Center, where faculty members learn how to integrate creative educational methods and instruments into their teaching. The Writing Center also offers assistance to professors with their writing needs, including grants and proposals.

The mission statement of the Writing Center notes, “We want to cultivate the importance of writing as a process. We want to help UWC users become independent writers, capable of recognizing and capitalizing on their strengths as well as identifying and correcting their weaknesses.”

The proximity of the Peck Hall center to the academic center of the university,” says Faye Johnson, assistant to the executive vice president and provost for special initiatives. “It will be the centralized location for learning about teaching.”

Johnson says the newly relocated center will provide plenty of room for the center’s many resources, including workshops, learning sessions and other professional development activities designed to improve the quality of instruction.

In its new location in Room 348 of the library, the UWC will maintain its regular hours, which are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Friday.

For more information, contact Kristen Keene at 615-898-5376 or kkeene@mtsu.edu.
MTSU alumnus Kim Greenwood, May 8 graduate Trish Perry and faculty member Dr. Janet McCormick are the first recipients of EXL Scholars Program Awards.

Dr. Jill Austin, chair of the Department of Management and Marketing in the Jennings A. Jones College of Business and one of the original organizers who brought experiential learning to the forefront on campus, recently announced the awards.

Perry, a nursing major in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, and Greenwood, who graduated in May 2009 with a degree in organizational communication from the College of Liberal Arts, received Outstanding EXL Student Awards. Both earned $500 and were recognized during their respective colleges’ awards days in April.

McCormick was named Outstanding EXL Faculty and received $1,000 for the honor. A faculty member at MTSU since 2002, she is an associate professor in the Department of Speech and Theatre and specializes in organizational communication.

“The award means a lot,” said Greenwood, who now works for the U.S. Social Security Administration. “The EXL program required a lot of extra out-of-class work and volunteering. The extra assignments ... helped me put the elements that I was learning into practice. I led and helped complete multiple group projects, some of which required the entire semester’s worth of work.”

Greenwood said she met SSA representatives through an MTSU career fair. “I am very thankful to have the experience and education needed for such a lasting career, mostly due to the EXL program,” she said. “The EXL program gave me experience as well as my education, which was a tremendous help when looking for jobs. I was hired with SSA only three months after graduation, which is proof of how beneficial the program is.”

Perry said she is honored to be one of the first EXL Scholars Award recipients. “I was actually nominated by the nursing faculty because of my community service while at the university,” she said. “However, I had to submit a 20-page packet of information with papers, projects, etc., throughout my five semesters of nursing school in order to be considered. I am very honored to represent the EXL Scholars with this award and appreciate my college achievements being recognized.”

Academically and in a volunteer role, Perry has involvement in numerous community organizations and professional activities.

“What an honor to be nominated for this award!” McCormick wrote. “… To me, the value of the EXL program speaks for itself through the actions and responses of the people involved (students, faculty, administration, recruiters/employers and the community as a whole). … Experiential learning could serve to enhance all traditional classroom work through the integration of theory and practice. The sky is the limit with a program such as this.”

Other faculty finalists included Laura Clippard of the University Honors College, Dr. Beth Emery of human sciences and Hal Newman in recording industry.

This year’s deadline to submit nominations is Monday, Nov. 15. For more information, contact Austin at 615-898-2736 or e-mail jaustin@mtsu.edu.

by Randy Weiler
jweiler@mtsu.edu

EXL Scholars Program names 1st award recipients

Flying high with Basic and Applied

ZOOM!—MTSU’s new MTeach program, the focus of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences’ recent biannual Advisory Council meeting at the Smyrna Airport Authority, gives participants a chance to practice what they teach. Program coordinator Leigh Gostowski instructed them to make paper airplanes, and the designers later flew their planes indoors. At left, May 8 graduate Kaitlen Howell, left, daughter of event host and Corporate Flight Management CEO Allen Howell, shows off the plane she made with advisory council member and alumnus David Augustin (B.S. ’82), president of Corporate Flight Management. In the photo below left, Dr. Walter Boles, chair of the Department of Engineering Technology, checks the front-end design of his plane. And in the photo below right, Jennifer Allen, CBAS development director, observes the added element of a pen to the plane of Dr. Warren Gill, chair of the Department of Agribusiness and Agriscience.

photos submitted
**Please note:**
Event dates, times and locations may change after press time. Please verify specifics when making plans.

**Radio Schedule**

“MTSU On the Record”
8 a.m. Sundays, WMOT 89.5-FM

**May 17**
Monday, May 17
May Term, Summer Full Term classes begin

**May 24**
May 24-29
TSSAA Spring Fling
For information, visit www.tssaa.org or contact: 615-889-6740.

**May 26**
May 26-27
CUSTOMS Orientation
Special scholarship session
For information, visit www.mtsu.edu/customs or contact: 615-898-5533.

**Get noticed in The Record!**
Submit your Campus Calendar items and other news tips to gfann@mtsu.edu by 3 p.m. Wednesday, May 19, for the May 31 edition of The Record or 3 p.m. Wednesday, June 2, for the June 14 Record.

**The race is on**

**SPEAKING UP**—Four challengers for the job of Tennessee’s governor speak during the 2010 Gubernatorial Forum April 29 in Murphy Center, which was broadcast live via satellite and on the Web with the expertise of staff and students in MTSU’s Department of Electronic Media Communications. In the photo above, U.S. Rep. Zach Wamp, R-Chattanooga, left, answers a question during the forum as his fellow candidates for the governor’s office listen. Seated on the Murphy Center stage are, from left, candidate Mike McWherter of Jackson, Tenn., a Democrat; Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey of Blountville, a Republican challenger for the office; and Republican candidate Bill Haslam of Knoxville. In the photo at right, Randy O’Brien, left, news director of WMOT/Jazz 89, waits for Ramsey to answer a question during a media briefing with the candidates after the forum in Auxiliary Gym A. Tennessee’s gubernatorial primary will be held on Thursday, Aug. 5; the general election is set for Tuesday, Nov. 2. For more information on registering to vote in Rutherford County, please visit www.rutherfordcountytn.gov/election.

MTSU Photographic Services photos by Andy Heidt and Jack Ross
Three (among 50 university applications).

“This further demonstrates the high quality of the faculty and program at MTSU in physics and astronomy.”

Henderson said MTSU’s physics and astronomy department will be joining similar departments at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Cornell, Arizona, Colorado and Arkansas with the distinction.

In an e-mail sent to Henderson, MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee offered “congratulations to you and your colleagues. I appreciate your good work.”

“Congratulations to everyone involved in writing the proposal and supporting this initiative,” Dr. Diane Miller, interim executive vice president and provost, wrote in an e-mail to Henderson.

The department has a successful program of study that has, historically, appealed to physics majors intending to attend graduate school in physics or engineering.

In the past year, physics and astronomy has worked to expand the program to be more attractive to students interested in a career in high-school physics teaching.

In addition to active involvement in PhysTEC conferences, faculty members said the department has sought outside funding and recently earned a $900,000 Robert Noyce NSF scholarship grant for students interested in teaching both physics and math in seventh through 12th grades.

Introducing a new physics-teaching concentration has helped increase the number of students interested in secondary-education careers from zero to more than a dozen, faculty members said. They added that they’re excited about the department’s potential to make a significant impact on the number of physics teachers graduating from Tennessee each year.

They said that the average yearly output of 3.7 new physics teachers for Tennessee will not be hard to exceed, because the department now has much higher goals and the momentum continues to build.

They added that they owe a special thanks to colleagues at the University of Arkansas’ PhysTEC site for their consultation and advice in helping MTSU’s department receive its site status.

The department includes 11 full-time faculty, four temporary and adjunct faculty and two staff members. It is one of 10 departments in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences.

MTSU seniors Merranda Holmes and Shannon Murphy were among 75 undergraduates from across the United States—and the only two from Tennessee—selected to display their biology research during the “Posters on the Hill” event in April in Washington, D.C.

The women, accompanied by their mentor, biology professor Dr. Stephen Wright, presented their work to members of Congress and other officials.

“There were about 300 entries, and I was a little nervous because they accepted only two from each state,” said Murphy, a biology major.

“We were both doing our honors thesis on the same general topic but were working separately,” added Holmes, also a biology major. “We brought our work together and had so much information that we had trouble getting everything on the poster.”

The women submitted their work last November and were notified of their acceptance in February. Murphy’s research was on “A Label-Free Method for Detection and Differentiation of Bacillus spp Endospores,” and Holmes researched “The Production, Quantification and Fluorescent Detection of Anthrax-Simulating Endospores.”

“MTSU has been an amazing experience,” said Murphy, who along with Holmes graduated May 8. “Being part of the biology department and Honors College has given me the opportunity to do so many things that I otherwise would not have had a chance to do.”

Holmes agreed. “Being in the Honors College with smaller classes, everyone knows the teacher. That’s how I got to know Dr. Wright and do the research.”

Southwest

go to Dallas, I would be crazy, because it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” Lipe said.

“She currently is working with FedEx’s Critical Incident Response Program and is certified to work with the FedEx CIRP Team to implement safety procedures in emergencies, such as flying organs to transplant patients and transferring blood.

Antinous “Tony” Basalyous, a junior flight-dispatch major, also is excited about his internship with Southwest Airlines, which is scheduled for this fall. As a flight dispatch intern, his job involves monitoring the progress of each flight, ensuring flight safety and canceling any unsafe flights.

Basalyous, a native of Cairo, Egypt, left home with his family at age 9 because of religious persecution. His family immersed in the aerospace helped to lead him to MTSU for a career.

“My uncle was a chief executive dispatch in Cairo, and he had fun in the air,” Basalyous said.

He said he’s looking forward to his internship and also hopes to land an aviation position with a small airline this summer to gain even more experience.

‘If you meet the criteria, take the time to apply … You’re not going to get it if you don’t apply.’

Kevin Horst, senior aerospace major and recipient of the new Tiara Foundation Chair Award of Excellence, offering advice for scholarship and internship applicants alike

Basalyous is currently working to get his private pilot’s license for recreational purposes. He plans to graduate in May 2011.

If you meet the criteria, take the time to apply. I had no idea I would get this award,” he said. “Filling out the application and writing the essay doesn’t take very long, so why not? You’re not going to get it if you don’t apply.”

Aerospace students interested in applying for financial aid may do so through the department’s website at www.mtsu.edu/aerospace/scholarship.shtml.

Horst attributed his success to Alpha Eta Rho, an international professional aviation fraternity of which he is the current MTSU chapter president.

“I think that really helped; I got a lot of leadership experience from Alpha Eta Rho,” Horst said. “I encourage aerospace majors to check us out. We’re always looking for committed, hard-working people.”

Horst is scheduled to graduate in December 2011.

“My goal is to get a job here in the MTSU Flight School as an instructor. I’m working toward that for now, and then I’ll possibly get into the airlines after I’m done here.”

Pilot

department currently offers more than 20 scholarships totaling more than $20,000 in aid for its students.

Horst said he encourages aerospace students to take advantage of the financial aid available to them.

“If you meet the criteria, take the time to apply. I had no idea I would get this award,” he said. “Filling out the application and writing the essay doesn’t take very long, so why not? You’re not going to get it if you don’t apply.”

Aerospace students interested in applying for financial aid may do so.
lex Kirchhoff stands one year from graduating from MTSU with a bachelor of Science DEGREE in engineering systems technology along with a pre-med program. A transfer from Tennessee Technological University and a veteran of the Iraq war—he’s a member of the Dickson-based 267th Military Police Company—Kirchhoff has a zest and willingness.

Kirchhoff was the first to approach Mike Clemmer, director and plant manager in the division of paints and plastics at Nissan North America in Smyrna, after Clemmer spoke to nearly 60 students and faculty at the second Russell Chair of Manufacturing Excellence seminar April 14 in the Tom H. Jackson Building’s Cantrell Hall.

Clemmer spoke primarily about the new Nissan Leaf and how the vehicle is set to be built at the Smyrna plant in 2012. “He was a Tennessee Tech guy, and that’s where I used to go (from 2005 to 2008),” said Kirchhoff, who has been part of the wheel-hub motor research team led by Dr. Charles Perry, who holds the Russell Chair. “I appreciate him coming to MTSU to present the recent advances in technology and possible jobs opening locally.

“Appearances like that show us that Nissan is taking an interest in students and recruiting out of schools,” the student continued. “Businesses like Nissan, who operate both internationally and locally, should begin to take more of an interest in forming bonds with local universities to spawn innovation and technological advances in America.”

The program began in 2006 to increase opportunities for American students to study critical-need languages overseas and is part of a wider U.S. government effort to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering critical-need languages.

“Arabic is hard,” Mackey said. “The grammar is difficult, but in many ways it’s easier than learning English. We have a large Arabic population in Tennessee.”

Customs sessions begin May 26

from Staff Reports
neto@mtsu.edu

CUSTOMS will get under way soon with the first of 10 sessions spread across May, June and July for new MTSU students and their families.

Starting Wednesday, May 26, and running through late July, CUSTOMS’ two-day sessions will acquaint students to what will be their academic and social home for the next four years. Admissions, Financial Aid, Housing, advising and other departments will be involved with the orientation process that will integrate new students into the intellectual, cultural and social climate of the university. Gina Poff, director of New Student and Family Programs, which oversees the running of CUSTOMS, said organizers “are adding orientation leaders to work specifically with parents” this year. The general-assembly portion of CUSTOMS will move to Murphy Center since Tucker Theatre is under renovation.

Poff added that they may use CUSTOMS participants onto the field at Floyd Stadium at the beginning of the morning for a video message from football Head Coach Rick Stockstill.

Session 1, set for May 26-27, will include scholarship and other students from all colleges within the university. Subsequent sessions will be a combination of majors from the various colleges and undeclared majors.

Registration is required and fees apply. Students should register as early as possible, Poff said.

For more information and CUSTOMS dates for summer, visit www.mtsu.edu/customs or call 615-898-2454.
Lockman said educators also are being asked to do more without more time or money. And despite being open to new ideas, she said, many teachers just don’t have the time for a new approach.

The home environment plays a role as well, she said.

“Parents are overwhelmed because they don’t know what to do. Parents are working two jobs, and they may not be educated themselves to help. I think parents want to help, but they may not know there’s a problem.”

After completing her practicum in fall 2010, Miller will continue to take literacy-studies classes. She plans to submit a research proposal for her doctoral once her comprehensive exams are done.

“I would like to be a principal at some point,” she said. “I’ve learned a lot, but not enough.”

Stephanie Lockman started the literacy-studies doctoral program less than a year ago. After graduating from the University of Maine with a degree in special education, she hopes one day to teach on the university level.

“I’m learning how to assess the students,” she said of her doctoral work as well as her work in MTSU’s Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia.

“I’m learning how to look at patterns of errors and find out how best to help the children. We know that sometimes dyslexia is hereditary, and it’s a lifelong problem, but some skills we can give to students that will help them be successful later in life,” she said.

“I’m also learning that it’s a bigger problem than I knew was out there,” she continued. “There are probably teachers in the classroom right now who have kids with dyslexia and they don’t know. The parents don’t know it, and the child doesn’t know it.

So the child is a behavioral problem in class.

“Some school districts are not prepared. We can have a meeting with a parent and say, ‘Your child has dyslexia.’ We can give them a list of programs. But when that child goes back into the classroom, there’s a great disconnect between that and the material the teacher is using,” Lockman, who has worked with the local Read to Succeed program, said the Dyslexia Center and literacy-studies program brought her to MTSU.

“This is a rare program and one of the best in the nation—it’s highly respected. I also have a friend in the program who’s from Alaska. She knew about the MTSU program…. And Dr. Sawyer is so well-known.”

Lockman said one of the program’s greatest attributes is that it’s interdisciplinary. “You’re not only learning literacy, but you’re learning the psychological aspects and the neurobiological aspects. The program is so diverse. No program that I found could provide the diverse outcomes and the research-based teaching methods that this program has,” she said. “That was the real seller for me.”

For more information on the doctoral program in literacy studies at MTSU or the work of the MTSU Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia, call 615-494-8838.
New pact streamlines STCC transfers

Tennessee’s largest undergraduate university and its largest two-year college are teaming up to streamline student transfers and improve access to higher education.

MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee and President Nathan L. Essex of Southwest Tennessee Community College signed a formal agreement, or memorandum of understanding, May 5 at the Memphis institution to assist students in a seamless transition to MTSU.

During the signing, McPhee emphasized that in light of legislation passed in January, there is a greater emphasis and focus on transferring, articulation and access to provide opportunities for students to earn associate and undergraduate degrees.

Courses currently considered in the agreement are those transferable to the recording industry, business administration, education and aerospace programs at MTSU.

“This obvious advantage is that our students are going to have increased access,” Essex noted. “Our emphasis throughout the state right now is retention and graduation. So to have this kind of partnership with a wonderful institution such as MTSU simply means that our students will have increased opportunities to get scholarship support and be able to pursue advanced degrees beyond the community-college level based on that partnership.”

McPhee also stressed scholarship opportunities as well as the ease of the transfer process for Southwest students.

“We are going to be looking at providing special scholarships to these students, connecting them to our Honors College (and) providing a better transition and taking the hassle out of the transfer process,” the MTSU president said, “and so we are really excited. We get great students out of Memphis and from Southwest. We only see this as strengthening our relationship and partnership.”

Southwest Tennessee Community College, which opened in 2000, is a Tennessee Board of Regents institution with seven campus locations in the greater Memphis area. With a fall 2009 enrollment of 13,016, it offers associate’s degrees in multiple disciplines, including allied health, biotechnology and nursing; automotive, electronic and landscape technologies; business; graphic arts; information technology and engineering technologies; hospitality management and food services; human services; education and public safety; and legal, criminal justice and paralegal emphases.

MTSU, founded in 1911 as one of three state normal schools for teacher training, now confers master’s degrees in 10 areas as well as the Specialist in Education degree, the Doctor of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degree.