VT STARS

VT STARS—the Virginia Tech Summer Training Academy for Rising Students—has been a program to motivate economically disadvantaged high school students to pursue advanced education in information technology or IT-intensive careers in the sciences and engineering. Funding was, in part, from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education.

This past year was the final year of the program. During its nine-year run, students from urban and rural high school districts in economically depressed areas of southwest Virginia were engaged through a summer program, receiving guidance and interaction to support their application to post-secondary degree programs.

There were 118 students in three summer residency cohorts, during summer 2005, 2006 and 2007. Two-thirds of the eligible students returned for a second summer. In addition, eight high school teachers worked as residence counselors and program chaperones. Supplemental funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund provided 100 Virginia Tech graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity to become involved with VT STARS. More than 30 university faculty and staff members were involved over the past five years.

VT STARS program participants are seeking admission to post-secondary degree programs in science and math related disciplines. Two of the 17 female participants in the first cohort were admitted to Virginia Tech, and have successfully completed their first year studies—one in math, and one in human nutrition, foods and exercise. At least one other male student from the second cohort of 21 males was admitted, and a second was wait-listed for admission in 2009. Other participants have enrolled at other colleges.

For more information, contact Ed McPherson, Learning Technologies.

Courses are still available this semester through FDI on GIS, taught by Virginia Tech Geospatial Information Sciences.

Course registration is through FDI’s website, www.fdi.vt.edu.

Introduction to GIS
Introduction to Google Maps
Conferences

**Educause Online.** Virginia Tech’s viewing and participation in the Educause 2009 Online Conference, November 4-6, will be in 1120 Torgersen Hall sponsored by Learning Technologies, and in RB14-115, sponsored by NI&S. Program details for this three-day event can be found at [www.educause.edu/E2009/Online/Program](http://www.educause.edu/E2009/Online/Program). The schedule times shown are Mountain time zone, so sessions each day begin at 10:00 Eastern.

Commonwealth Security and Risk Management is holding the First Annual **Commonwealth Information Security Conference** for state and local government attendees to assist in fulfilling our shared mission of securing information. The conference is being held in Richmond on November 2. Among the speakers are the auditor of public accounts, personnel from VITA and from Northrop Grumman, and VT’s own Randy Marchany, speaking on “Unintended Consequences: Don’t Create New Risks.”

**SC09.** Supercomputing 2009 is being held in Portland, OR, November 14-20. Virginia Tech in its 6th year of exhibiting at the conference. Nicholas Polys is a panelist for “3D Cross HPC: Technology and Business Implications.“

Google Apps for alumni

Virginia Tech alumni will have access to Google e-mail with a university address beginning in November. Mail sent to their @vt.edu domain will be routed to a Virginia Tech-related domain within Google’s service.

The new service fulfills goals of the Alumni Association to promote close connections with alums, including using the @vt.edu e-mail domain “for life,” while reducing the load and resources of the university that are dedicated to alumni mailboxes and services.

Current employees who are also university alumni will continue to have their @vt.edu mail at Virginia Tech. To be eligible to establish a VT-related Google e-mail account, one must be an alumnus and must **not** be a current employee, a current student, or a retiree. Alumni who have attended Virginia Tech within the past year (affiliation of vt-student-recent) may keep their VT-managed mail (until they are no longer “recent” attendees) or they may choose the Google service.

Once the Google service is established for an individual, the account will remain active, even if the individual subsequently returns to Virginia Tech as an employee or student, and their university mail service is re-established. However, mail addressed to the @vt.edu will remain in the university mail system and not be routed to Google. Information on alternate ways to access the Google account will be provided to them.

Software in HokieMart

ITA’s Departmental Software Sales moves to HokieMart for software and laptop leasing orders in November. Orders will be reviewed according to specific guidelines before the purchase order is finalized. Directions are posted on the ITA website (www.ita.vt.edu).