

CEE Teams with Patel Center to Establish Partnership between USF and UNESCO-IHE



The UNESCO-IHE Institute of Water Education (<http://www.unesco-ihe.org/>) in Delft, Netherlands is widely regarded as one of the preeminent institutions in water education and research. On June 15, 2007, USF formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IHE to develop collaborative educational and research programs. As one of only two US universities to have an agreement with IHE, USF continues to build critical global partnerships on a path to help solve the global water crisis.

The MoU is a major milestone of a process that began more than a year ago. The journey began in March 2006 at the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico City, when **Dr. Daniel Yeh** approached representatives from IHE and introduced them to USF and its strengths in water research and education. Discussions continued to evolve after Mexico City about a USF-IHE partnership. In June 2006, faculty from IHE's Hydroinformatics Program, **Dr. Andreja Jonoski** and **Dr. Ioana Popescu** made an invited initial visit to USF and met with **Dr. Mark Amen** and other staff members of the Dr. Kiran C. Patel Center for Global Solutions, as well as former CEE Chair **Dr. Sunil Saigal**, **Dr. Mark Ross**, **Dr. Jeff Cunningham** and Dr. Yeh.

Last December, programmatic development with IHE became one of the main objectives of a proposal submitted by Dr. Yeh, **Dr. Linda Whiteford** (Anthropology), **Dr. Ricardo Izurieta** (Global Health), and **Dr. Norma Alcantar** (ChE) on developing sustainable water and sanitation technologies to help the world meet the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The project was one of four selected as part of the USF Graduate School's initiative on *Sustainable Healthy Communities*.

In March, the Rector of IHE, **Dr. Richard Meganck**, visited USF and presented an outline for collaboration with USF (<http://www.eng.usf.edu/~dhyeh/Presentations/IHE/>). During his visit, Dr. Meganck met with **Provost Renu Khator**, representatives from Tampa Bay's water community, as well as CoE faculty members including **Dr. Peter Stroot**, **Dr. Andres Tejada-Martinez**, **Dr. Wayne Echelberger**, **Dr. Mark Stewart** (Geology), Dr. Alcantar and Dr. Cunningham. Later, Dr. Meganck rolled up the sleeves with **Director Betty Castor**, Dr. Amen and staff of the Patel Center, **Dr. Maria Crummett** (Dean of Internal Affairs) and Dr. Yeh to develop the framework of the MoU.

In April, Dr. Yeh visited IHE to further the relationship between the two institutions. With assistance from the Provost's Office and International Affairs, he made a presentation to IHE faculty and students about USF and its strengths in water, with focus on the EWRE program (<http://www.eng.usf.edu/~dhyeh/Presentations/IHE/>). During the same trip, he also participated in a course on Dutch water management with other Florida participants including water managers from SFWMD, SJRWMD, USCOE and private consulting firms (please see related story).

In May, the Patel Center, in collaboration with Florida Earth Foundation, hosted a group of IHE students during their 3rd annual visit to south Florida. Their two day visit of the Tampa Bay area was hosted by **Dr. Thomas Crisman** of the Patel Center and Biology Department.

In June, IHE celebrated its 50th anniversary with a three-day symposium entitled: "Water for a Changing World: Enhancing Local Knowledge and Capacity" (<http://www.unesco-ihe.org/symposium>). **Dr. Maya Trotz** attended the celebration to represent USF (one of 286 participants from over 56 countries). On June 15th, she finalized the MoU between USF and IHE at a ceremony showcasing the institute's history and accomplishments and headlined by 1998 alumnus **Prince Willem Alexander**, Chairman of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation.

Built on interactions between USF and UNESCO-IHE faculty over the past year, the MOU will develop mutually strengthening and enriching international educational and research experiences for faculty and students. The Patel Center has tasked Dr. Yeh to serve as lead facilitator to advance the MoU on behalf of USF. In the coming years, the EWRE group of CEE will play a key role in the development of this process. Items discussed include joint degrees, curriculum harmonization, student exchanges, and research collaboration. For more information on the USF-IHE partnership, please contact Dr. Yeh.



Dr. Yeh at IHE



Dr. Trotz and Dr. Meganck at the Ceremonial Signing of the MoU



Dr. Trotz at the Water Security Workshop of the 50th Anniversary Celebration



Participants at the 50th Anniversary Celebration of IHE