

**College of Engineering Recognizes  
Outstanding Graduate Students and USF Alumni**

**Tampa, Fla. (May 7, 2010)** – The Office of Diversity and Outreach Programs at USF’s College of Engineering recently announced the following graduate student and USF alumni awards and fellowships.



**Garcia**



**Cure**



**Afroz**



**Rogers**



**Grady**



**Register**



**Cooper**



**Benabe**

Four current students and alumni were recognized by the 2010 National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP). The highly competitive fellowship program recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in NSF -supported science, engineering, and mathematics disciplines pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees in the United States and abroad. Three students will receive three-year fellowships of \$30,000 per year plus tuition and fees, a \$1,000 international travel award, and TeraGrid Supercomputer access.

- **James Cooper** a M.S. student in the Department of Electrical Engineering and graduate research assistant with the Center for Wireless and Microwave Information Systems (WAMI). James will begin his Ph.D. at Georgia Tech University in fall 2010.
- **Joseph Register** earned his B.S. from the Department of Electrical Engineering in 2008. Joseph will return to USF for his Ph.D. in bio-MEMS in fall 2010.
- **Andre Garcia** received his B.S. from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering in 2008. Andre is a second-year Ph.D. student at MIT.

**Frank Alexander**, a first-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Electrical Engineering, received Honorable Mention designation. Students in the Honorable Mention category are granted TeraGrid Supercomputing access throughout their graduate program. Frank is working in the bio-MEMS group with Professor Shekhar Bhansali.

**David Cure**, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Electrical Engineering and a graduate research assistant in the Center for Wireless and Microwave Information Systems (WAMI), was awarded a 2010 NASA Graduate Student Researchers Program (GSRP) Fellowship. The goal of the fellowship program is to foster closer ties between NASA and the academic community by increasing the numbers of highly trained scientists and engineers in space-related disciplines. The fellowship will provide financial support for up to 3 years and research opportunities with a collaborator at NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. David is working with Professor Thomas Weller.

**Evelyn Benabe**, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Electrical Engineering and a research assistant in the Center for Wireless and Microwave Information Systems (WAMI), was awarded a 2010 IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Society (MTT-S) Graduate fellowship. This international fellowship program recognizes outstanding graduate students who show exceptional promise in microwave engineering. Annually, only six fellowships are awarded. Evelyn is working with Professor Thomas Weller in the Department of Electrical Engineering.

**Al-Aakhir Rogers**, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Electrical Engineering, was recognized as Honorable Mention/Alternate by the Ford Foundation Diversity Dissertation Fellowship Program. Each year, only 20 dissertation fellowships are awarded from a nationwide pool of over 500 applicants. Al-Aakhir is working under Dr. Scott Samson of SRI International –St. Petersburg and Professor Shekhar Bhansali in Department of Electrical Engineering.

**Alisha Peterson (Chemical and Biomedical Engineering)**, and **Michael Grady (Electrical Engineering)** were McKnight Doctoral Fellowships by the Florida Education Fund (FEF). The fellowship provides up to five years of support (stipend and tuition waiver). Alisha will work with Professors Vinay Gupta and Mark Jaroszeski for her Ph.D. in fall 2010. Michael is an incoming Ph.D. student (fall 2010) and will work with Professor Thomas Weller.

**Michael Grady (Electrical Engineering)** was awarded a GEM Ph.D. fellowship by Corning, Inc. The fellowship provides a stipend, tuition support for up to five years, and a one-time research internship with the industry sponsor.

**Shamima Afroz (Electrical Engineering)** was awarded a USF Graduate School Diverse Student Success Fellowship. The fellowship provides financial support for three years, including a stipend and tuition coverage. Shamima is working with Professor Sylvia Thomas.

**Michael Celestin**, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Chemical Engineering, was one of 10 students selected from a nationwide pool of applicants to participate in a NSF-funded graduate internship during summer 2010 at Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque. Michael will be working under research teams led by Dr. Steve Wix and Dr. Frederick McCormick on the design, modeling, fabrication, and

testing of polymer dielectric-based tunnel junction at the Sandia National Laboratory National Institute for Nano-Engineering (NINE). Michael's Ph.D. is supervised by Professors Yogi Goswami (Chemical and Biomedical Engineering) and Shekhar Bhansali (Electrical Engineering).

**Quenton Bonds**, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Electrical Engineering, received the best student poster award at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual IEEE Wireless and Microwave Technology Conference (WAMICOM 2010 [http://www.mwjjournal.com/News/article.asp?HH\\_ID=AR\\_8962](http://www.mwjjournal.com/News/article.asp?HH_ID=AR_8962)) from April 12-13, in Melbourne Beach, FL. Quenton is working with Professor Thomas Weller in the Center for Wireless and Microwave Information Systems (WAMI).

**Ophir Ortiz**, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Electrical Engineering, was awarded a National Research Service Award (NRSA) postdoctoral fellowship in Tissue Engineering and Biomaterials Science at the New Jersey Center for Biomaterials in Piscataway, New Jersey. Ophir completed her dissertation under Professors Ryan Toomey (Chemical and Biomedical Engineering) and Jing Wang (Electrical Engineering).

**Dr. William Mondy**, a Ph.D. graduate of the Department of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering (Summer 2009) had his article "Computer aided design of microvasculature systems for use in vascular scaffold production" cited in *Biofabrication* Highlights of 2009, a special collection of papers published in the journal last year. Only seven articles were selected for their presentation of outstanding new research, highest praise from the journal's international referees, and number of downloads last year. Dr. Mondy's dissertation was supervised by Professor Les Piegil (Computer Science and Engineering).

*The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of only 25 public research universities nationwide with very high research activity that is designated as community engaged by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF was awarded \$380.4 million in research contracts and grants in FY 2008/2009. The university offers 232 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. The USF System has a \$1.8 billion annual budget, an annual economic impact of \$3.2 billion, and serves more than 47,000 students on institutions/campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.*

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