# illuminator

*a monthly publication of the batten college of engineering and technology*

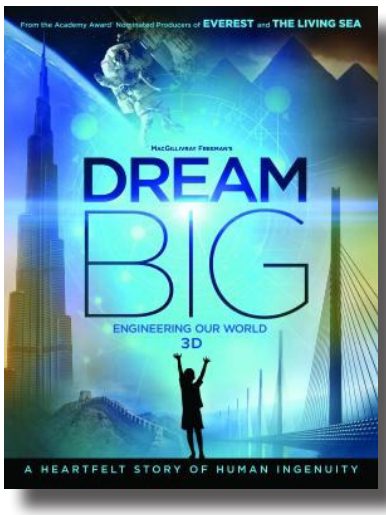
volume 2, issue 6


# Engineers week

*The Batten College of Engineering and Technology celebrates National Engineers Week February 17-23, 2019*

Founded in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers, (NSPE), and organized nationally by DiscoverE, Engineers Week brings engineering to life for K-12 students, educators and parents. With a goal to ensure a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce, the weeklong celebration aims to increase understanding of and interest in engineering and technology careers, while recognizing the contributions engineers make to society and to quality of life.

From cookies and cocoa and giant lawn games, to lab tours and an evening of dining and dancing aboard the Spirit of Norfolk, the Batten College of Engineering and Technology will celebrate Engineers Week with events and activities related to the national theme: ***Engineers: Invent amazing***.




One of the highlights of the week is "Girls Night Out," taking place on Thursday, February 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. Engineering organizations and societies will provide middle and high school students with hands-on engineering activities, as well as the opportunity to meet engineering professionals from throughout the Hampton Roads area. Participating engineering societies include:

- ***American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)***
- ***American Society of Naval Engineers (ASNE)***
- ***American Water Works Association***
- ***Engineers Without Borders (EWB)***
- ***Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)***
- ***Newport News Shipbuilding***
- ***Girls with Engineering Minds (GEMS)***
- ***Virginia Lakes and Watersheds Association***

The evening will also include a screening of the inspirational film, "Dream Big." A full calendar with detailed information can be found at Tinyurl.com/EngWeekODU.

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| CANSTRUCTION COLLECTION WEEK FEB 11-15 | Faculty, staff and students bring in canned goods for Canstruction during Engineers Week. Canned goods will be donated to the ODU IGNITE Food Pantry after use in Canstruction. |
| MON 18 FEB 12:00 PM TO 1:30 PM | COOKIES & COCOA with deans and department chairs ESB atrium |
| TUES 19 FEB 12:30 PM TO 2:30 PM | ENGINEERING FIELD DAY including the Swamper Stomper, Pedestal Joust and lawn games including Jenga, and Corn Hole Kaufman Lawn |
| WED 20 FEB | CANSTRUCTION Society of Women Engineers student chapter (SWE) to host Canstruction |
| THUR 21 FEB 6:30 PM TO 8:00 PM | GIRLS NIGHT OUT #GIRLEDAY Engineering societies hosting hands on engineering activities for middle and high school students at ESB atrium |
| FRI 22 FEB 9:00 AM TO 12:00 PM | ENGINEERING IN PRACTICE Laboratory tours for high schools |
| SAT 23 FEB 7:30 PM TO 10:00 PM | ENGINEERING GALA A night of dining and dancing on the Spirit of Norfolk. Sponsored by SWE |

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Batten College of Engineering & Technology

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: REBECCA WESCOTT '92

## High rising engineer

*By Keith Pierce*

While other kids were playing chase, Rebecca Wescott could be found sketching giant trusses in the barn. Today the Old Dominion University civil engineering graduate approaches structures with that same enthusiasm.

"As a child, I was just fascinated with buildings, I thought they were magnificent. I've loved structural engineering ever since," Wescott says. "I am now blessed every day to help my clients create powerful dreams."

Wescott was born in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and grew up in Virginia Beach. Today she is one hundred percent owner and CEO of Wescott Structures, PA, a five-person structural consulting firm in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she is the Engineer of Record for three of the city's most prominent high-rise buildings. She is also the Engineer of Record for hundreds of high profile projects in Charlotte and all over the South-Eastern United States.

Before enrolling in ODU in 1988, Wescott had been a structural steel draftsman for nearly ten years.

With a keen mind for engineering, she was encouraged by her superiors to go back to school for engineering. The single working mother of two small children began commuting from Virginia Beach every weekday to study structural engineering at ODU.

"Having worked in the commercial steel industry, I knew exactly what I wanted and needed from my education at ODU," she said. "I loved the small class intimacy and the self-fulfillment I got whenever I walked past the robotics lab. It wasn't my major, but it felt like we were on the cutting edge of technology. I was exhilarated by that."

**"I don't want to be known as a great woman engineer. I want to be known for the great engineer that I am."**

*~ Rebecca Wescott '92*

She admits that as a working mom, it wasn't easy and that time constraints were a challenge. Having to finance her own education, Wescott still worked as a structural steel draftsman while in school.

"I would organize every hour of my day on a color-coded spreadsheet. I blocked out time for classes and would study in my van between classes because it was quiet," she said. "I treated my education like a job, driving to and from school like I was going to work. I'd get up, drive into Norfolk every day, come home,

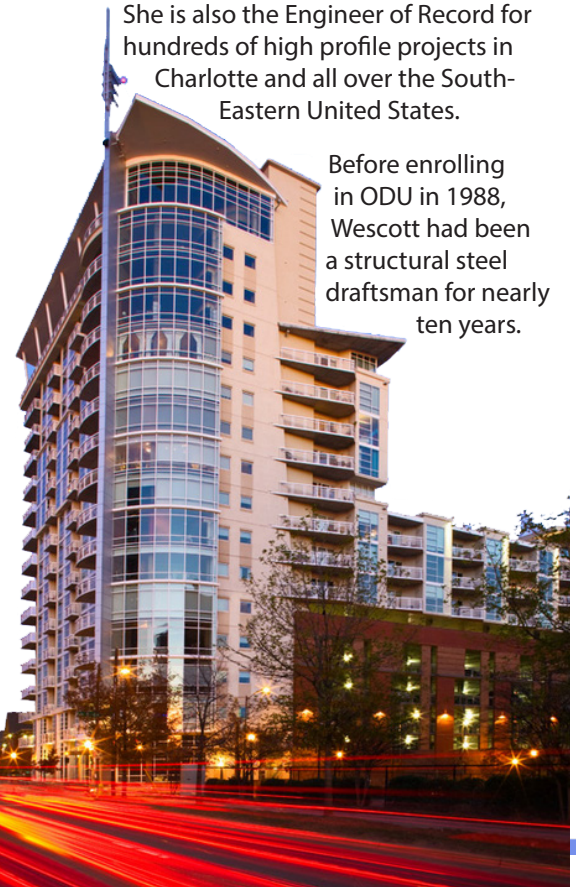
*Rebecca Wescott, '92*

feed my kids, put them to bed, then I'd be drawing on the board until all hours of the night. Thank God for mothers, because mine was invaluable during that time."

Her hard work paid off. In December 1992, the non-traditional student not only earned her Bachelors of Science degree in civil engineering, but she landed her first job as a structural engineer at Stroud Pence & Associates, a Virginia Beach structural engineering firm owned by two ODU alums.

Thankful for the opportunities she received from ODU, today Wescott takes pride in mentoring young structural engineers.

"I tell them the same thing I tell my kids; if something is worth doing, keep your eye on the goal and just do it," she says. "I remind them that graduating and landing your first job is not arriving, it's just the beginning. I've been in this industry for more than 30 years, I love it and I am still learning."



*Samples of Wescott Structures: Left, mixed-use, 17-story high rise condominium in Charlotte, NC (David Furman Architecture). Right, rendering of 180 key, 11 story, mixed-use hotel in Melbourne, Florida (Overcash Demmitt Architects).*
***See more at: WescottStructures.com***

# Inaugural M. Anne Carney lecture on sustainable clean water a great success

Professor David Sedlak set a high bar for future lecturers to achieve as the inaugural lecturer in the M. Anne Carney Lecture Series in Sustainable Clean Water. Dr. Sedlak, the Plato Malozemoff Professor in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department at University of California Berkeley and author of the acclaimed book "Water 4.0: The Past, Present and Future of the World's Most Vital Resource," provided a captivating and engaging discussion on historical water use and the challenges in providing a healthy water supply to over 100 attendees. His discussion extended back to ancient Rome and the creation of centralized water systems and continued forward in time to the present and beyond.

His lecture focused particularly on the three technological revolutions in water supply and treatment that were a direct response to poor drinking water quality that arose from contamination by increasing populations and industrial activities. He also discussed his vision for "Water 4.0," the fourth revolution in water he predicts communities will adopt to address water shortages and poor water quality.

In addition to the lecture, Dr. Sedlak, who is editor of the journal Environmental Science and Technology, met with and discussed environmental research with ODU faculty and students and in a meeting organized for graduate students, related the process for publishing their research findings.

*Anne Carney speaks with Dr. Sedlak after his successful talk.*

The Carney Lecture Series was created through the generous support of Ms. M. Anne Carney who attended the lecture and was presented with a signed copy of Dr. Sedlak's book. In addition to the new lecture series, Ms. Carney supports funding for student research in water quality and attendance at professional conferences by students to present their research findings.

# Global firm finds success with ODU grads

***Story and video by Keith Pierce***

Clark Nexsen, a nearly 100-year old architecture and engineering firm, has nearly 400 employees, 10 offices and a global reputation. The Virginia Beach-based firm also happens to employ nearly three dozen Batten College of Engineering and Technology alumni. A few of them share their thoughts about Old Dominion University and offer advice for current engineering students.

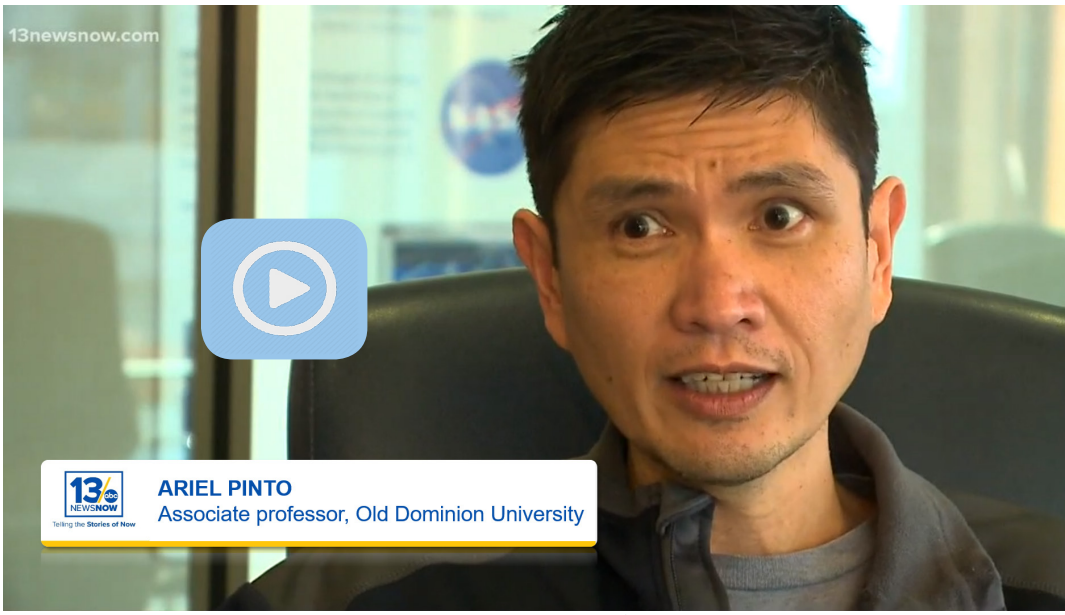
*Watch now: tinyurl.com/Clark-BCET or click on image.*

# IN THE NEWS
# IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

## EMSE Professor addresses cybersecurity concerns on 13NewsNow broadcast

Ariel Pinto, associate professor, Engineering Management & Systems Engineering addressed cybersecurity concerns related to the government shutdown on local ABC affiliate, 13 News Now.

***Watch now at tinyurl.com/13News-Pinto.***

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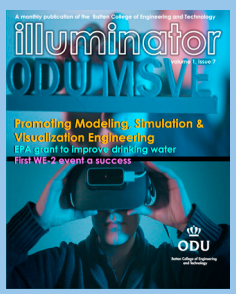


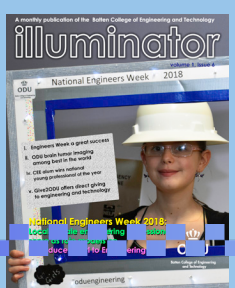

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