

## — OPTICS LAB OPENS —

### New Lab Created for Three Rivers' Photonics Related Courses

The Fall semester saw the welcome opening of a new laboratory for all of the Photonics related courses offered at Three Rivers Community College. Until the completion of the new space, most of the optics, laser and fiber courses were taught in a variety of shared spaces on the Themes Valley Campus. A small darkroom had previously been converted to a lab for holography and interferometry.

To create a dedicated lab for photonics, electronics lab was completely gutted and walls were painted a dark charcoal gray. Benchtops were also painted a dark gray color, which was chosen among several finishes for its ability to show up dropped pieces of optical fiber. With the addition of room darkening shades, the new lab can be made dark enough for most optics lab experiments. To increase the utility of the new photonics lab, tables have been located in the front portion of the room to use as a classroom as well as a laboratory. It is anticipated that most photonics courses will be taught in this space in the future.

The new lab was partially financed by a grant for lab improvement from the National Science Foundation. In addition, several individuals and companies made donations of equipment, component and supplies that were critical to the lab's success. (See story elsewhere in this issue.) And, of course, thanks to the Electrical Engineering Technology program, which generously donated the space for the newly remodeled optics lab, and to the hardworking and talented maintenance department

### Anderson wins Award

Douglas Anderson, a 1999 graduate of Three Rivers with a dual major in Photonics ET and electrical ET, has been awarded a \$1000 scholarship from SPIE for showing promise in the study of optics. The award was announced in the September, 1999 issue of OE Reports. Doug is currently a student at the University of New Hampshire majoring in physics.

### MENTORET and SPIE OFFER HELP

As part of a pilot project of MentorNet, the National Electronic Industrial Mentoring Network for Women in Engineering and Science, Three Rivers students who are member of SPIE may apply to be the proteges of women who are working in industry as engineers and scientists. Mentors can assist students with topics ranging from technical assistance to job-hunting and time management. All correspondence is done by e-mail. MentorNet is sponsored by grants from the AT&T and Intel foundations and by the federal Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE0). Previously, the support was only available to students from select colleges and universities such as Smith College or Princeton University. MentorNet can be reached at [www.mentornet.net](http://www.mentornet.net).

### SPIE Plans Active Year

The three Rivers Student Chapter of SPIE, the Optical Engineering Society, met early in the semester to plan a year of activities, beginning with a bus trip to Photonics East in Boston.

During its inaugural semester last spring, the SPIE chapter visited several businesses, including Trumf, Inc. (Farmington, CT); Uniphase Telecommunications Products (Bloomfield, CT); and Chromatic Technologies (Franklin, Ma). The group also traveled to Fiberfest in Framingham, Ma, in April. Several speakers were also invited to the campus. Frank Leard of Laserton kicked off the speaker program in March with a talk on holography. Robert Rubino of Cidra Corp. spoke to the group on the use of fiber optic sensors in the oil well industry, and Dr. Malcolm Hodge of Structural Integrity Monitoring Systems (SIMS) explained the use of fiber optics to monitor the health of bridges.

The SPIE group plans to sponsor several industry visits this coming year as well as a variety of speakers from the photonics industry. The group also discussed plans for a fundraising to support, among other things, a scholarship for a student who will be studying photonics. This year's SPIE officers are: Thadd Taraskiewicz, President; Mike Martell, Vice President; Kevin Price, Secretary; and Jason Patch, Treasurer. The Faculty Advisor is

### THREE RIVERS FIBER OPTICS INSTITUTE OFFERS COURSES

Three Rivers is continuing to offer fiber optics workshops this fall, with Introduction to Fiber Optics offered in September and a more advanced course offered in October.

The introduction is ideal for those just starting out in fiber, and features hands-on lab experience in making fiber-optic jumper cables. The advanced class includes lab work with fusion splicing and optical time domain reflectometer (OTDR).

In addition to the regular offerings, a five day conference for educators is planned for the summer of 2000. Teachers from colleges and universities across the country will be given everything they need to begin a course in fiber optics, including the theoretical background material, hands-on lab experience, and suggestions for curriculum, textbooks, and methods of financing a fiber optics lab. All fiber optics courses offered at Three Rivers have been approved by the Fiber Optic Association.

*For more information about the  
Photonics Engineering Technology  
Associate Degree Program or other related  
courses at*

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Contact: Professor Judy Donnelly  
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### Thanks to our Generous Donors

The students and faculty of the Three Rivers Photonics program are grateful for several donations which have been made to the program over the past year, including:

- ❖ 2 photon Kinetics OTDRS and a 220 m reel of 24 fiber outdoor cable from Chromatic Technologies of Franklin, MA
- ❖ 121-KM spools of single mode fiber from Simplex Cable in New Hampshire
- ❖ Electro optic modulators, JDS-Uniphase Telecommunications Products, Bloomfield, CT
- ❖ 2 HeCd lasers and an air cooled Ar laser, plus assorted components and mounts from John Sweinton and Melles Griot
- ❖ More singlemode fiber, from our friends and colleagues at the Northeast Center for Telecommunications Technology at Springfield (MA) Technical Community College
- ❖ Technical advice and fiber optic supplies from Elias Awad of CSS, Boston, MA

### *Evening Courses Available!*

All of the courses in the Photonics program are now offered in the evening as well as in the daytime. Evening courses are offered "off sequence" so that students unable to take a day course during a particular semester may take the course the following semester in the evening.

**PHOTONICS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY**



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