Engineering School Hosts Fiber Optic Pioneers for the 2001 Marconi Award

BY SUZANNE TRIMEL

The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science hosted Herwig Kogelnik and Allan Snyder, pioneers in the development of fiber optic technology, on Dec. 4, for the 27th annual presentation of the $100,000 Marconi International Fellowship Award in telecommunications and information technology.

The fellowship, the foremost prize in the field, was presented at an evening gala following an afternoon forum on fiber optics with the two honorees moderated by Engineering Dean Zvi Galil. The Marconi Foundation makes its academic home at Columbia’s engineering school.

Kogelnik, a researcher at Lucent Technologies/Bell Laboratories, and Snyder, a faculty member of the Australian National University, were recognized for work that has revolutionized modern telecommunications.

The Marconi Fellowship honors advances in telecommunications and information technology that benefit humanity and is given in memory of Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of wireless transmission. This year marks the centennial of the first trans-Atlantic wireless transmission by Marconi.

Kogelnik, 69, and Snyder, 61, have been at the forefront of discoveries in optical technology, now the dominant means of long distance telecommunications. The Internet is based on packets of laser light transmitted along hair-thin quartz fibers.

“Much of this transformation is attributable to the creativity demonstrated by the two honorees,” said John Jay Iselin, president of the Marconi Foundation. “The work of the two men also is leading developments in optoelectronics. Scientists predict that semiconductors of light — like the electronic semiconductors that are at the heart of all computers and other devices — could lead the information and telecommunications revolution still further by enabling higher-capacity optical fibers, nanoscopic lasers and photo-tic integrated circuits to one day replace today’s microchips.”

A Groundbreaking Day on 110th Street...

From left: Executive Vice President for Administration Emily Lloyd, President George Rupp and Provost Jonathan Cole dig in for a ceremonial scoop of earth at the site of what will eventually be Columbia’s new 110th Street School and Faculty Residence.

Anti-terrorism Issues, International Students Focus of Last Bills in Congress

BY EILEEN SMITH

As Congress works on finishing its annual funding bills, including those with money for student aid and NIH, bills addressing further reporting on international students, bioterrorism, defense funding and research on cyberterrorism are being addressed separately or in the bills.

International Students: The government’s regulations offices has worked with colleges and universities around the country to make certain that a moratorium on not placing on entry international students to the U.S. and no outright entry prohibitions for students from certain countries were incorporated into any bills.

New York Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer were helpful in these efforts as were House Judiciary Committee Members Anthony Weiner and Jerrold Nadler.

Border security legislation (S. 1749) introduced last week by Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) included funding for more rapid reporting of whether or not students had registered for classes and other record-keeping requirements for colleges and universities.

American Council on Education President David Ward was pleased with the willingness of senators and representatives to listen to university concerns and indicated that the administrative burdens would increase but would not be extraordinary for institutions.

Bioterrorism: Provisions included in bills introduced and in part in the Department of Defense appropriations bill would tighten the registration and certification requirements for laboratories that contain hazardous pathogens and agents. Federal Departments would be required to do background checks on the individuals handling these agents.

The bills would impose security requirements on laboratories handling these agents and criminal and civil penalties to enforce the requirements. Exemptions from the requirements would be allowed in order to protect public health and there would be protections from mandatory release of sensitive information.

Defense Funding: Within this bill funding is provided for basic research and applied research as well as funding for military staff and operations. Although no final bill has passed, the Senate’s research funding numbers are currently higher than those the President requested and the House provided. Differences within the two bills will be worked out next week. Funding for New York’s efforts to rebuild after Sept. 11 is included in a supplement to the bill, but the amounts are not as high as New York legislators believe necessary.

Cyberterrorism: House Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) introduced legislation last week to fund new research in cyberterrorism. HR 3394 recommends $568 million for the National Science Foundation information technology research efforts, multidisciplinary centers for computer and network security research, undergraduate and graduate degree programs in cyber security and other fellowship activities. This authorizing legislation would need funding from annual funding bills during the 2002 calendar year.

A summary of the New York Technology Transfer summit can be found at www.columbia.edu/edfed/.

Correction

In the Nov. 30 issue, a Page 1 article on WCRB-89.9 incorrectly reported the school of Philipp Kuerkunz and Michelle Thompsons attend. They are both students in the School of General Studies.

Ninth Annual Core Awards Presented to Faculty

(Continued from Page 1)

On justice.

“I’m really a strong advocate of general education, and we have one of the best models,” says Johnston. Johnston has served on a select committee on the future of the department of political science and is an active member of the governing board of the Center for Law and Philosophy as well as a member of the executive committee of the Society of Fellows in the Humanities.

While Johnston says he does not devote time to the curriculum with the goal of winning awards, he does believe that the annual honor is “a very good thing for those who have a close relationship to the Core. It gives them the sense that what they’re doing is valued.”