



Monday, June 17, 2002

# CSE seminar focuses on women

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

To encourage more women to become involved in computer science and engineering, Oakland University is hosting a day-long seminar featuring six women researchers from academia and industry.

The seminar, "**Women in Computer Science and Engineering**," will take place Wednesday, June 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 372 of the Science and Engineering Building. The event is open to the public.

"We'd like to present a more attractive image of computer science and engineering. There was a time when the field attracted more women, but more recently that has been changing," said Fatma Mili, associate professor of engineering at OU and event organizer. "Research has shown that when computer science is perceived as mathematics, the field has attracted more women. But when the perception involves sitting in front of a computer screen for hours and hours, women are less interested. We'd like to change that by attracting more female undergraduates and encourage them to consider going to graduate school."

Each of the six speakers will share stories about all aspects of their careers, including educational curriculum, research interests and accomplishments, and the daily joys, challenges and satisfactions about being a researcher. The scheduled speakers include:

- Grace Bochenek, U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command
- Laura Dillon, professor of computer science, Michigan State University
- Diane Gibbons, General Motors, Research and Development
- Laila Guessous, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, OU
- Christine Hansen, associate professor of psychology, OU
- Yi Lu Murphey, professor of electrical and computer engineering, University of Michigan

The seminar is part of the **UNCORE** (Undergraduate Computer Research) program run by OU's **Department of Engineering and Computer Science** and funded by the **National Science Foundation**. In the 10-week program, eight CSE undergraduates are selected annually to participate in organized activities and work on research projects with the help of a faculty mentor. Students also receive a \$3,600 stipend, meal allowance and travel subsidy to attend a conference. Five of the students are from OU and the remainder are from Cornell, Eastern Michigan University and Michigan State University.

"The whole idea behind UNCORE is to give undergraduates some research experience and make it as enjoyable as possible so they will consider going to graduate school," Mili said. "We try to target as many women applicants as possible. This year we have five women participants, and four of them are from OU. Apart from conducting research, the students also learn things like how to write research papers and how to make presentations. It's really very comprehensive and extremely beneficial to the students."

For more information on UNCORE and a complete schedule and description of the Women in Computer Science and Engineering seminar, visit the **UNCORE** Web site.

## SUMMARY

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