

research grants—this year totalling something near \$750,000.

RESEARCH

OUR LARGE, GROWING AND diversified faculty generates a research program with the same qualities. The program is augmented by outstanding facilities in the Zachry Engineering Center. The remarkable quality of the research laboratories is due in part to the fact that they were designed by the members of the faculty who originally utilized them.

The principle areas of research here are thermodynamics, kinetics, catalysis, coal conversion, rheology, electrochemical applications, process control, pollution abatement, solar energy, alternate fuel sources, heat transfer, separation operations, biomass conversion, tertiary oil recovery, transport phenomena, and polymer studies. The specialized equipment mentioned above forms the hardware base for these projects. Specific topics range from engineering practice and development to fundamental theory and modelling. In general, members of our faculty work together on various projects. This cooperation increases progress and reflects the congenial atmosphere in the department.

Research efforts also take the form of specialized centers at Texas A&M. Two which receive direct involvement by the Chemical Engineering Department are: The Polymer Research Center and the Thermodynamics Research Center. The polymer group is a relatively recent grouping of various faculty members from chemistry, physics and chemical engineering. The thermodynamics group is a well established and respected data correlation and evaluation center best known, perhaps, for its API-44 activities.

THE FORESEEABLE (?) FUTURE

WE THINK OUR UNDERGRADUATE enrollment has finally plateaued and we have stabilized the faculty size at about 20 members. Our goal is to maintain a permanent faculty of about 20 with one or two visitors each year. We are still seeking an increase in graduate enrollment. We hope to have about 5 graduate students per faculty member—we stress personal contact here and prefer to keep the ratio small enough to assure faculty interest and availability. We also expect a small increase in numbers of postdoctoral associates—currently there are six.

SUMMER 1979

Two very important events will have a direct bearing on the future of the Chemical Engineering Department at Texas A&M. The first will be the newly announced J. D. Lindsay Lecture Series. This activity will bring prominent men from our profession to Texas A&M for personal contact with faculty and students and for presenting lectures to the academic community. The series will honor our first department head as both a chemical engineer and as a genuinely appreciated person. The second major event will be construction of the Engineering Research Center. This project will commence in 1981 and will add research space equal in area to the Zachry Engineering Center.

Overall, faculty, students, research associates, and staff are proud of both the Chemical Engineering Department and Texas A&M University. The department and the university are committed to increased quality and productivity. This commitment coupled with a traditional can-do attitude promises a truly bright future. □

LETTERS

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I hope that you will bring the availability of this publication to the attention of the readers of **Chemical Engineering Education**.

Dr. D. R. Woods, Chairman
Chem. Eng. Ed. Projects Committee

ChE news

PIGFORD HONORED

Dr. Robert L. Pigford, University Professor of Chemical Engineering at the University of Delaware, received the first Francis Alison Faculty Award as the most outstanding member of the faculty, at the university's 130th commencement exercises held June 2.

Named in honor of the colonial scholar who established the Academy of Newark to which the university traces its origin, the new \$5,000 prize was established last year by the university's Board of Trustees in recognition of the scholarship, professional achievements and dedication of the faculty of the university.

A native of Meridian, MS, he received his bachelors from Mississippi State College and his masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Illinois.