

Ellis speaks on energy sources, leadership

By Amira Saleh
Contributing Writer

On Wednesday, Feb. 2, students and alumni gathered in the LeCraw Auditorium of the Management building to hear Admiral James O. Ellis, Jr. speak on "Energy, Prosperity, and Leadership" as part of the weekly IMPACT series.

Ellis completed 39 years in the Navy in 2004. His career included services as a naval fighter pilot, commander of the USS Abraham Lincoln, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier and commander of the U.S. Strategic Command.

Along with holding a bachelor's degree from the US Naval Academy, Ellis, MS AE '70, is a member of the Tech's Engineering Hall of Fame as of 2005.

Ellis is president and CEO of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO), a nonprofit organization which monitors and promotes the safety and excellence of nuclear electric generating plants in the United States.

INPO is sponsored by the commercial nuclear industry.

"Energy generates prosperity," Ellis said in his speech.

For every one percent increase in per capita income, a 0.5 percent increase in electric generating capacity is required. In the U.S., nuclear energy accounts for 20 percent of electricity generated annually. In France,

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Photo by Jonathon Cornwell / Student Publications

Ellis discussed nuclear energy in democratic and nondemocratic settings.

REBUILDING HAITI

By Divya Varahabhatla
Contributing Writer

On Jan. 12, 2010, the Republic of Haiti experienced a massive earthquake which left thousands homeless, injured or dead. As reported by *New York Times*, "the [estimated] total cost of the disaster was between \$7.2 billion to \$13.2 billion, based on a death toll from 200,000 to 250,000." The destruction was not limited to the population, but also the environment.

Now, a year later, the rebuilding of Haiti continues as part of an international effort for the "poorest country in the western hemisphere," according to a BBC article. More recently, Tech professors Reginald DesRoches and Kimberly Kurtis have been researching cheap alternatives to building construction as part of a larger effort to reconstruct the

buildings, shops and homes that once made up the country's infrastructure.

As members of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, DesRoches and Kurtis have conducted the project with Joshua J. Gresham and Brett Holland, CEE graduate students.

Recently, "[the researchers] developed a method to recycle rubble into a strong construction material, which could be a possible solution for safely and inexpensively rebuilding Haiti's structures," according to a press release.

A *New York Times* article reported that "less than five percent of this has been removed since Jan., and even less has been properly disposed of.... The United States Army Corps of Engineers' debris management plan says it would take a dump truck with a 20-cubic-yard bed 1000 days to clear the debris, if it carried 1000 loads a day—or about

three years."

For such a problem, DesRoches and Kurtis developed a research idea to use the problematic rubble and debris as starting materials of concrete.

"The concrete is made from recycled rubble and indigenous raw materials using simple techniques. And it meets or exceeds the minimum strength standards defined by the American Concrete Institute and used in the U.S.," according to a press release.

"We have found we can turn one of the dilemmas—the rubble—into a solution via some fairly simple methods of recycling the rubble and debris into new concrete," DesRoches said.

DesRoches himself is personally invested, as he is originally from Haiti. As part of the project, he and Gresham

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Image courtesy of Ruth Gregory

Spring offers alternative breaks

By Allyn Woodward
Contributing Writer

Although people may have complained of boredom during the unexpected snow days at the beginning of the semester, another break from school is already on everyone's mind: spring break.

As many students think of locations such as Panama City, Daytona and Miami as spring break locations, students from across the country are going to be flocking to the warm weather areas to escape the frigid temperatures of the North or the frigid temperatures in their droning, everlasting lectures.

While some students look for pure relaxation for their breaks, others consider alternatives that combine relaxation and service. With the beaches packed with high school and college students, there are plenty of other opportunities to get some

sun and fresh air and to help improve other communities and the wildlife.

This is exactly what Katie Lebedev, a fourth-year HTS major, accomplished when she went on an alternative spring break to Tucson, Ariz. Lebedev joined Trailblazers in a trip two years ago as several students spent a week in the Sierra National Park to help clear and upkeep the trails for other visitors to enjoy.

"I didn't live on campus anymore, and it was awesome how we all came together in the middle of nowhere, alone. We had to take all our food together and make clean water together. I got to meet a lot of people I would never have talked to, and I still keep in touch with them," Lebedev said.

As part of a small, diverse group, Lebedev met students from different parts of the world such as France and China, while they backpacked through the park.

"It was definitely one of the best experiences I have had at Tech—the best social experience. I plan on going to California on another Trailblazers trip," Lebedev said.

Going to a new place with new students and not knowing the logistics of the area can feel overwhelming, but rest assured, all groups have a leader to help group members safely get to their destinations.

Lebedev and her group went with a leader who organized the entire trip from choosing the location to finding volunteers to join the program. The leader even arranged for someone to come and to pick them up from the airport and take them to the trails.

In addition to the Trailblazers' annual alternative spring breaks, Habitat for Hu-

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traveled to Haiti to gather samples and to study the techniques and tools used by local workers. They also engaged in recycling to eliminate the obstacles to reconstruction, which include getting rid of the rubble that is plaguing the streets and landfills of Haiti and finding a cheap alternative to buying brand-new construction materials. Reusing the rubble also eliminated the costliness of clearing and storing rubble in landfills.

"I feel fortunate to have been involved in this research because

it demonstrates that the rubble which continues to impede redevelopment in Haiti can actually be used in the reconstruction effort. We are hopeful that this research will spur reuse of concrete rubble, when appropriate, in new construction in Haiti," Kurtis said.

The team hopes to share its study with government officials of Haiti and any organizations that are working with the reconstruction of the country. The hope is to help Haiti develop strong materials for construction and to speed along the recovery of the nation.



Image courtesy of Ruth Gregory

In Haiti, the research team met volunteers from around the world, along with journalists who were reporting on the catastrophe.

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on the other hand, 80 percent of annual electricity consumption is due to nuclear energy.

Ellis pointed out, however, that approximately 25 percent of the world has no access to electricity, which means that basic needs of health and well being are not being met globally.

Nuclear energy will lead to economic success and prosperity, and is also "an essential element to democratization around the world," Ellis said.

Tech students wanted to know what the issues were concerning nuclear waste and whether or not the U.S. should be concerned with non-democratic countries around the world that are presently developing commercial nuclear industries.

Ellis discussed the importance of recycling the byproducts of energy generation, and said these nondemocratic countries must place value on a culture of safety. They must be able to question authority to ensure that proper safety measures are in place and upheld.

Along with his discussion of energy options and the economy, Ellis also shared his views on leadership and teamwork with Tech students.

"Leadership isn't management. You manage things and processes, and you lead people," Ellis said.

"Don't fake it. You cannot be what you are not, but [you] can change what you are. You have to find out for yourself what your leadership style is and modify



Photo by Jonathon Cornwell / Student Publications

In addition to his discussion of nuclear power, Ellis spoke about finding the right leadership style by leaving one's comfort zone.

what you don't like about it," Ellis said of practicing and finding different leadership styles.

To Ellis, leadership is a process of continuous learning.

"It is amazing what you can learn by dropping yourself into something that is not your comfort zone," Ellis said.

"In a time of drastic change it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned usually find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists," Ellis said, quoting author and philosopher Eric Hoffer.

Ellis presently serves on the

board of directors for Lockheed Martin Corporation.

Additionally, Ellis has recently served as a Presidential Appointee on the President's Intelligence Advisory Board and has functioned as a member of the Military Advisory Panel for the Iraq Study Group.

The IMPACT Speaker series, which brings business leaders to campus to share experiences and to offer advice to students and to other entrepreneurs, occurs every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. in the LeCraw Auditorium of the Management building.

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manity is hosting an upcoming trip to Jacksonville Beach, Fla., at which students can learn new skills and help give a family a home.

"I enjoyed the alternative spring break not only because it was community service, but also because I was working with people passionate about community service," said Andy Barrenechea, a second-year BME major who participated in the Habitat for Humanity trip during his 2010 spring break. In collaboration with the Office of Community Service, Barrenechea is now planning the 2011 spring break.

During the trip, students will conduct house-building and meet the future residents on-site during the day, and be able to go to the beach, see movies and relax during the evenings.

These alternative programs are offered during the fall semesters as well.



Photo by Ben Keyserling / Student Publications

Students who attend alternative spring breaks often work to clean up wildlife areas, including parks, beaches and riversides.

During one of his fall breaks, Subi Mohan, ISyE '10, went on another program hosted by Georgia Tech Trailblazers to Saint Marks Wildlife Refuge in Tallahassee, Fla., where he helped to clean up wilderness trails.

Another fall semester service

project was a one-week winter venture with Project H.O.N.O.R in New Orleans that Cameron Williams, a third-year MGT major, attended. During his winter break, Williams helped rebuild communities that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina.



Image courtesy of Georgia Tech Communications & Marketing

The Office of Community Service and recreational, corporate and religious organizations host alternative spring breaks annually.

"It was a really friendly environment, and though it was rough waking up in the mornings sometimes, we had time to go out to the city," Williams said.

Different student groups, religious groups, companies and colleges sponsor host trips annually,

offering different perspectives on the respective service projects.

"Spring break is not only a great time to relax, but also a great opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life," Barrenechea said. "The more you give, the more you get back."

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