College's first Research Day showcases strengths

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Robots, food waste, cardiovascular health, vaccinations, transportation, neurological health, thermal structure imaging, utilizing Big Data for traffic management. This is just a microcosm of the research topics being undertaken by University of Missouri College of Engineering researchers and students. And they were all on full display at the College's first-ever Research Day on Tuesday.

Posters covering all of these research topics and more filled a large room near the College's library in the late afternoon, followed by four brief TED-style talks on subjects related to each of Mizzou Engineering's four Pillars of Pursuit: Educating Engineering Leaders, Big Data Analytics, Biomedical Innovations and Sustainability in FEWSed (Food, Energy, Water, Smart Cities).
"We wanted to highlight the research in our four Pillars of Pursuit, research that the College faculty have been doing," said Civil and Environmental Engineering Professor Praveen Edara, who co-organized the event with Associate Dean for Research Sheila Grant. "We had to actually stop at 50 because that's what the room could fit."

The poster presentation was full of attendees. Faculty, staff, students and members of the public, including a member of U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill's office, and faculty from other MU schools and colleges milled around and discussed key research breakthroughs with the researchers and students directly responsible for their success.

One of those researchers was Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering Assistant Professor Kangwon Seo. Seo, a relatively new hire by the College, viewed Research Day as a wonderful opportunity to not only share his own research with people outside of his department, but also to learn about the breadth and depth of high-impact research going on in other areas of the College.

"The main objective for me today is not really showing my work, but I really want to look at everyone else's work," Seo said. "Secondly, I can meet other people and communicate with them."

For IMSE majors Molly Laird and Bailey Washer, meanwhile, it was an opportunity to continue flexing their presentation muscles while also illustrating the great work done by undergraduate and graduate researchers in the College.

"It's pretty great to see the interest in our projects and all these research projects," Laird said.

"There's a lot of projects here that are obviously different than industrial engineering projects, which we're used to, and it's really cool to see the vast span of research that we do at Mizzou," Washer added.

The day wrapped up with four presentations in a near-capacity Ketcham Auditorium. The energetic, enlightening talks were:

- "The Leadership Academy" – Marlon Taylor, senior, Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering major, and Samantha Warren, senior, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science major
- "Got BigData?" – Prasad Calyam, assistant professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- "Pharmaceutic Formulations for Pets and People" – Bret Ulery, principle investigator of the Biomodulatory Materials Engineering Laboratory and assistant professor of Chemical Engineering
- "Rubbish to Roads" – Bill Buttlar, director of the Mizzou Asphalt Pavement and Innovation Laboratory and the Glen Barton Chair of Flexible Pavements in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

In all, Edara said he was thrilled with the turnout and was looking forward to growing the event even more for next year.

"We had faculty from other colleges like Education, Life Sciences, CAFNR (College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources) and so forth, and we've had a lot of people talking about collaborations," Edara said.
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