

# CECS to Offer Program for Women from Middle East to Further Careers in Science, Technology

**The College of Engineering and Computer Science will host 16 women from the Middle East** with advanced degrees in science and technology. The eight-week program—which also includes an opportunity to work in research laboratories in local technology companies—is sponsored by a \$350,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State.

The program is a logical extension of the mission of the Henry W. Patton Center for Engineering Education and Practice (HP-CEEP). The center is primarily concerned with building partnerships between industry and faculty to further engineering research. In this case, the center will be helping women from the Middle East and North Africa to achieve these same goals.

"The main objective of this program is to provide young Arab women in the professional fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with a fellowship that will not only enhance their technical training, but also familiarize them with the research environment in the U.S.," said John Cristiano, director of the HP-CEEP. "The long-term goal is to establish a sustainable network of relationships not only with their American mentors but also among participants."

The program will recruit women from countries in the Middle East and North Africa, including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, West Bank/Gaza, and Yemen.

During their stay, participants will split their time between university courses and research in their areas of expertise at a local company, said Barbara Peitsch, project manager. The Arab-American Women's Business Council (AAWBC) and the Detroit Regional Chamber, partners in the program, will assist in recruiting and identifying placements with local companies.

To recruit participants, the AAWBC will notify partner organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. CECS



ASMAA JAMIL AND JUMANA JUDEH OF THE ARAB AMERICAN WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL WITH BARBARA PEITSCH AND JOHN CRISTIANO OF UM-DEARBORN

faculty members and U.S. ambassadors in eligible countries will also be permitted to recommend applicants. Final selections will be made by a committee by the end of January. The program will run in April and May.

After completing the fellowship, participants will engage in follow-up programs in their home countries. The goal is to foster long-lasting relationships that will enhance participants' careers and also establish the university as a destination for future graduate students from the Middle East.

"The mission of HP-CEEP is to be a leader in incorporating engineering practice at all levels of engineering by integrating the teaching environment with the world of practice," Cristiano said. "This program provides a unique opportunity to leverage our talented and diverse faculty to extend the mission of the center internationally by combining the professional development of participants with the building of long-term, collaborative relationships."