Here it is February and time for my January “welcome back” note to our members, friends and students. We got together for the annual Dick’s burgers event and shared our holiday stories.

Several students attended the TAPPI Student Summit in Kalamazoo. In addition to the contacts and interviews they made we received a note from an industry attendee that the “group from the UW was well prepared, professional and represented the BSE program very well.”

Classes are underway and our first year students are settling in after their first quarter at the UW. Our seniors are evaluating their job offers and making plans to start a career. We continue to see graduates taking jobs across the country, wherever the best professional opportunity presents itself. Our students can compete with any of the graduates from other schools.

Kurt continues to upgrade the capability of the Wollenberg lab. The paper machine is running faster, making a heavier sheet and using unique furnishes. He is providing contract services for a growing number of clients. Contract work provides our students the opportunity to work on real projects, with real schedules and results that are important.

It was a good year for member info sessions. More than a dozen firms hosted our students and conducted interviews. Our members continue to appreciate the opportunity to engage students without the crowds and impersonal connection often encountered at job fairs.

We are in the early stages of organizing our approach to maximizing the opportunity provided by the College of Engineering “Direct to College” (DTC) program. Briefly, DTC admits students to the College of Engineering as undeclared majors. Students will select a major at the end of their first year with BSE as one of the engineering options. We hope to attract up to 12 students each year from this program with the balance from community college transfers and College of the Environment pre-BSE majors.

Stay in touch and don’t hesitate to contact us if there is anything we can help with here at the UW.

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