

First Words



FROM THE DEAN: David S. Dolling

I became dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science on September 1, 2008, with the school's 125th anniversary fast approaching. Not wanting to let this moment in the school's history pass us by, I decided to work with faculty and staff—who already knew some of the history of SEAS and were already a part of it—to commemorate it in various ways.

Synergy is one of the ways we decided to do this. Our cover story relates that when SEAS was inaugurated on October 1, 1884, one of our early supporters declared to our students that science (which was then understood to incorporate engineering) was the “companion of industry.” For 125 years, SEAS has prepared engineers—and more recently computer scientists—to be “companion[s] of industry.” We have also been the seedbed for generations of men and women who have provided technological leadership for the U.S. Government. And we have been the home of top-notch teachers and researchers, too.

It is with justified pride, then, that we reserve our cover story for a look *backward*, at our history and our contributions. That said, however, our focus is on the future. Throughout this issue, we highlight the contributions that our faculty and students make to the body of technological progress—in transportation safety, nanotechnology, civil infrastructure, data privacy, information security, and plasma applications, just to name a few areas.

Finally, we decided to have a little fun and invite our faculty and students to look *forward* 125 years and tell us what changes they think engineers and computer scientists will have brought to the world of 2134. Five daring prognosticators stepped forward and offered their visions of the future, which you can find on page 7.

Let me end by inviting you to participate in one, several, or all of the events that we have planned throughout the rest of 2009 to celebrate our 125th anniversary. There is something for almost everyone, since the activities run the gamut from a softball game and cookout, to lectures and seminars, to a 125th gala and events for our students, their parents, and our alumni and research partners. If you would like to receive special reminders of the events, please visit <http://www.seas.gwu.edu/SEAS125/> to sign up for our e-mail notices, and we will make sure to update you as the events draw near.

I hope you will consider joining us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DS Dolling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David S. Dolling, Ph.D.
Dean