Aaron G. Kroll, a management junior who is minoring in business leadership, and Michelle Klassen, a freshman in economics, have been selected to present their research at the April ACC Meeting of the Minds conference at North Carolina State University. Their presentations will be among six from Virginia Tech at the event, which showcases undergraduate research.

Kroll, who is from Christiansburg, Va., will present a paper about his work with business law professor Janine Hiller on the impact of virtual world communities on intellectual property rights. The emergence of virtual worlds such as Second Life has led to an increasing number of intellectual property questions, Kroll notes. “There are unique challenges to intellectual property rights as the line between the virtual world and the real world slowly blurs.” His research focuses on the impact on traditional concepts and protection of trademarks, trade names, and copyrights.

Klassen, who is from Ellicott City, Md., will present her study of OxyContin abuse and diversion in the Appalachian region, the causes of the problem, and the actions needed to address it. OxyContin, she says, has become a major problem in Appalachia since its introduction in 1995, because of its relative availability and public disregard for the dangers of its abuse.

Identifying the drug’s appeal to users and sellers, she says, would allow actions to be taken to reduce the economic impact of the vast black market in those areas affected by the illegal activity. Klassen’s project advisor is history professor Peter Wallenstein.

Pamplin Dean Richard E. Sorensen has been elected chair of the board of directors of Plastic Packaging Inc., of Hickory, N.C. He has served as a member of this board since 1981. Plastic Packaging manufactures bags and labels at its plants in North Carolina for a wide range of industries.

France Belanger, professor of accounting and information systems, has received the University of Canterbury’s 2009 Visiting Erskine Fellowship. She will spend eight weeks at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand in July and August, conducting research seminars and working with the faculty and doctoral students in the accounting and information systems department. She plans to share her research experience in technology-mediated work and information security and privacy and to offer a public seminar on protecting children’s privacy online.

Teaching Awards and Holtzman Outstanding Educator Awards: Patty Lobingier, accounting and information systems; Laura Clark, business information technology; Randy Billingsley, finance; Pierre Couture, hospitality and tourism management; Lorraine Borny, management; and Eloise Coupey, marketing. Billingsley and Coupey have been selected to receive university Certificates of Teaching Excellence.

Nancy McGehee, associate professor of hospitality and tourism management, has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Award for Outreach Excellence. McGehee has combined her research interests in rural and volunteer tourism development with the university’s outreach mission through her work with the Virginia Tour...
AMA dissertation competition

Bege Saatcioglu, a doctoral candidate in marketing, won the American Marketing Association’s marketing and public policy dissertation competition this year. Her dissertation proposal, “The Practices of Consumer Resistance Among the Working Poor,” received the 2009 Marketing and Society Award. She will present her dissertation at the AMA Marketing and Public Policy Conference in May.

“My research explores the consumption practices of the poor and their acculturation strategies into a marketplace dominated by stereotypes about the poor,” says Saatcioglu. She hopes that her work will be useful for public policy making, she says, given the crisis in affordable housing and increasing financial uncertainties for low-income consumers.

Saatcioglu, who is from Istanbul, Turkey, has accepted a faculty position at the HEC School of Management in Paris and will start teaching there in September.

Last fall, she received the ACR/Sheth Foundation Dissertation Grant Award from the Association for Consumer Research and the Sheth Foundation. Saatcioglu has also been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Outstanding Graduate Student Award for her scholarly accomplishments.

Outstanding seniors honored

Stuart Vyule, of Christiansburg, Va., has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Outstanding Senior Award. Vyule graduated last December with a finance degree and was a recipient of the R.B. Pamplin and Chase Manhattan Banking scholarships. Vyule served as industrials sector head of the student-investing group BASIS. Through the high quality of his leadership and his own work in credit analysis, “he has led the way in getting others to do high quality work,” noted finance professor and BASIS advisor George Morgan, on Vyule’s contributions to the group. (see p. 20).

Adeel Khan, an accounting and information systems senior from Springfield, Va., has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 H. H. Mitchell Outstanding Leadership Award. He is president of the Virginia Tech Class of 2009 and was student government president in his junior year. In the wake of the April 16 tragedy, he helped organize the candlelight vigil, community picnic, and a T-shirt sale that raised more than $250,000 for the Hokie Spirit Memorial Fund. Khan has also been active in Hokies United, the Student Alumni Associates, and the Order of the Gavel.

Jennifer Vaziralli, of Virginia Beach, Va., has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Outstanding College Service Award. Vaziralli, who graduated last December, majored in management and marketing and minored in leadership. Her activities included co-leading the corporate outreach committee of Business Horizons, co-directing community initiatives as a member of the Student Government Association executive board, and serving as the Student Government Association executive board, and serving as the student representative on the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies. At Leadership Tech, she helped freshmen in leadership development. She worked on Hokies United initiatives related to the April 16 tragedy and various natural disasters.

National research honors for HTM

Faculty members, graduate students, and an alumnus of the hospitality and tourism management department received national honors for their research at the 14th annual Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism in January in Las Vegas, Nev.

Professor Muzzo (Muzaffer) Uysal received the Michael D. Olsen Research Achievement Award, given annually for outstanding career contributions to the hospitality and tourism management academy. The award, named in honor of Tech’s emeritus professor, recognized Uysal for his research productivity, service on editorial boards, and mentoring of graduate students.

Doctoral candidate Beom Cheol (Peter) Kim, professor Suzanne Murmann, and doctoral student Gyumin Lee received a best paper award, the Harrah Research Center Outstanding Research Award, for “Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Commitment: a Mediating Role of Management Trustworthiness.” Kim was the lead author of the paper, which was co-written with one other author.

Kevin Murphy (Ph.D./HTM ’06) received the 2008 Emerald/EFMD Outstanding Doctoral Research Award for his dissertation, “An Exploratory Study of High-Performance Work Practices for Unit-Level Managers in the Casual Segment of the U.S. Restaurant Industry.”

Murphy is an assistant professor in the Rosen School of Hospitality Management at Central Florida University.

Christopher T. Edmonds, a doctoral student in accounting and information systems, has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Graduate Student Teaching Award. Edmonds teaches Intermediate Accounting 1. He has taught Intermediate Accounting 2, Introductory Financial Accounting, and Introductory Managerial Accounting. Edmonds, from Birmingham, Ala., is working on a dissertation that focuses on the role of accounting information in investment decisions.

Lance Matheson, an associate professor of business information technology, has been selected to receive the college’s 2009 Award for Excellence in International Programs Director of international programs since 2007, he has led 15 study-abroad programs since 2000. He was a consultant for a new Egyptian executive MBA program and is Pamplin’s representative on the university’s Oman education project.