An engineering connection spanning continents and countries

Cullen College of Engineering alumnus Hasan Onur Keles (BME 2015) was recently appointed chair of the electrical and electronic engineering department at Istinye University in Istanbul. He also serves as an assistant professor in the department.

“My department was established not just out of a need to educate and train the next generation of engineers for Turkey, but also a commitment to create a first-class institution of education and research in the engineering in the world,” Keles said. “We believe that the collaborative efforts between the engineering and medical doctors will promote the biomedical research and industry to grow in Istanbul and Turkey.”

He aims to continue building the department through collaborative efforts, responding to the needs of the healthcare sector, building a healthcare-focused curriculum and continuing to hire exceptional faculty from around the world.

Keles earned his doctorate in biomedical engineering from the UH Cullen College in 2015, focusing on multi-modality imaging, clinical applications for neuroscience and nano/microscale technologies for global healthcare.
The biggest advantage offered by the Cullen College is it really cares about hands-on experience and the engineering faculty is very responsive. They encouraged me to use my knowledge to develop engineering tools to meet market needs and demands, Keles said. In addition, I learned how to collaborate with researchers from different fields — including medical doctors at the nearby Texas Medical Center — during my Ph.D.

Afterwards, he did two years of post-doctoral training at the Massachusetts General Hospital through the Harvard Medical School.

Keles has published and contributed to more than 30 scientific journals and conference papers. In addition, he serves as a visiting researcher at the Dankook University in South Korea, Xi'an Jiatong University in China and Lubeck University in Germany.

Istinye University, founded in 2015, brings together three different hospital brands — Liv Hospital, Medical Park and VM Medical Park. It is part of the largest healthcare group in Turkey with over 30 hospitals located in 17 Turkish cities. Istinye engineering focuses on research and teaching related to robotics, biomedical imaging, control systems and cyber-physical systems.

Hasan is our first BME graduate to hold a faculty position and become the chair of a major department, said Metin Akay, founding chair of the biomedical engineering department and the John S. Dunn Professor of biomedical engineering at UH Cullen College offering congratulations. We're very proud of him.

Keles credited the experience as a UH biomedical engineering student for his career in academia. The guidance and encouragement during my Ph.D. was invaluable. I'm always proud of being a UH BME graduate!

Keles added he hopes to collaborate with the Cullen College in his new role.

My department will be happy to provide opportunities for UH Engineering faculty and students, he said.