Wobbly, staggered TinkerToy robots give insight into how humans walk

By Susan Lane

Michael Gorman, left, a lecturer in mechanical engineering and graduate student Mark van der Veght, right, developed a number of simplified models to study the success of the walkers and their walking patterns. Gorman and van der Veght believe these new models can help form a new direction of research in the field of human movement.

"We have a model that can walk stably down a slope without any support," van der Veght said. "This is a very important finding, especially since many people have trouble walking on slopes. Our model shows that it is possible to walk down a slope without falling over."