CS Alum Returns to Tech

The CS Department hired 3 new assistant professors this fall, and one just happens to be a familiar face. Larry Pyeatt received his BS and MS from Tech in 1988 and 1991 respectively. In addition to his teaching (he taught our Intro to CS course back when we used Pascal!) and research experience at Tech, Dr. Pyeatt was also a member of the programming team as a student.

After receiving his Masters from us in 1991, Dr. Pyeatt went to work for Texaco, Inc in Houston for a few years. While there, he received a patent for Texaco on his method for interpretation of fluorescence fingerprints of crude oils and other hydrocarbon mixtures using neural networks with Marilyn V Reyes. When asked about his decision to return to Texas Tech, Dr. Pyeatt stated:

“Last year, as I finished my PhD and began interviewing, I had no idea that I would end up at Texas Tech. Don’t get me wrong. I believe that I received an excellent education here: not many CS graduates can build a mnemonic memory circuit using only stone knives and bear skins. Texas Tech CS graduates learn about computing at a deeper and more fundamental level than graduates of most other CS programs. Still, I remembered how resource poor the department was in comparison to other CS departments and other departments within Texas Tech.

“When I came for the interview here, I was startled at the change that was developing in the department. Physically, the condition of the department has not changed much since I was a student here, but mentally, a revolution has occurred. The department is preparing to take its place as one of the premier departments at Texas Tech. On my way back to Colorado, I decided that I wanted to be a part of that change.

“As I see it, the major need of the department is, and always has been, one of computing resources, particularly Unix resources. A great deal of my effort over this semester has been devoted to securing a Unix network and laboratories. I am currently involved in three grant proposals along with Dan Cooke and other members of the faculty. We are working hard to build a comprehensive support structure for our students and our research.

“The faculty is over-worked and under-staffed, but these are exciting times in the CS department, and I am happy to be back in my new role.”

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Faculty/Staff Updates

Michael Gelfond will join the Computer Science Department in January 2000. Dr. Gelfond has been a Professor at the University of Texas at El Paso for several years, and is one of the nation’s leading researchers in logic programming and non-monotonic reasoning. We are thrilled to have someone of Dr. Gelfond’s reputation join us here at Tech!

As we continue to hire new faculty, we had to hire additional staff to support them all! This fall the CS department hired Pam Otto to the secretarial staff. She will be supporting the faculty & staff housed in the 3rd floor office suite, as well as coordinating the textbook orders for the department. Pam is originally from Nebraska, and comes to us after working for a local CPA firm for several years.

We also hired a new Technician III this fall. Derek Birkenfeld has been the Technician for the College of Engineering for 2 years, and transferred to Computer Science in October. And having him around has certainly helped to reduce Joe’s workload!
Greetings fellow Alumni!

Wow, another year has come and almost gone and it’s time once more to nominate folks for the CS Alumni of the Year for 2000 and the Friend of CS for 2000. For those new alumni out there, the Alumni of the Year recognizes an alumni for outstanding contributions to the field, their community, and/or the CS program. The Friend of CS recognizes someone who, though not an alumni, has contributed greatly to the CS department.

To nominate someone for either of these awards, please send their name and the reason you think they should be nominated to Mysti in the CS department. You may even nominate yourself. Nominations may be submitted via email or snail mail but they must be received by January 28, 2000 at 5:00pm CST. Ballots will then be mailed out, voting done via snail mail or via the Alumni website, and the winners will be honored at the CS banquet in the spring.

These are two honors which are most special because it is the alumni themselves who chose the recipients, so please take the time to nominate and to vote.

Thanks and have a wonderful holiday season.

TomP.

Faculty Bytes

Dr. Larry Pyeatt presented a paper entitled “A Parallel Algorithm for POMDP Solution” at the European Conference on Planning in Durham, United Kingdom back in October. He also is a Co-PI on a 3-year $495K NSF grant for curriculum development in Markov Decision Processes and Reinforcement Learning. His paper titled “Evaluating Robustness in a Two Layer Simulated Robot Architecture” was accepted for publication in the Journal of Experimental and Theoretical Artificial Intelligence. And last by not least, he has been invited to serve on the program committee for the Workshop on Teams with Adjustable Autonomy at the Conference on Autonomous Agents, Barcelona, Spain, 2000.

Our very own Bharti Temkin has been chosen as one of the consultants for the National Library of Medicine’s NGI - Next Generation Internet - project. Our fearless leader, Daniel Cooke, worked on the NASA Ames Research Center Review of the Numerical Aerospace Simulations Division, in August. He also has several papers that were published, including "A Realtime Version of SequenceL," in Annals of Software Engineering, Volume 7 (1999) with David Dampier; "Specification Languages for Distributed Processing" an invited article for Encyclopedia of Distributed Processing; “Automatic Concurrency in SequenceL,” which will appear in Electronic Notes in Theoretical Computer Science with Vladik Kreinovich; “Automatic Parallelisms in SequenceL for Supercomputing Applications,” to appear in Science of Computer Programming (also with Vladik Kreinovich); and “New Directions for NASA Ames Research Center,” with Scott Hamilton, to appear in COMPUTER. When not writing papers, he somehow found time to agree to serve as Program Chair for the Year 2000 International Conference on Software Engineering and Knowledge Engineering.

Dr. Cooke wasn’t the only one busy this year. Noe Lopez-Benitez will present "Fast Generation of Minimal File Spanning Trees", at the Communication Networks and Distributed Systems Modeling and Simulation Conference, CNDS'00, San Diego, CA, in January 2000 with Neelakanth Nadgir. He also had a paper entitled, "Petri net-based Performance Evaluation of Distributed Homogeneous Task Systems” accepted by IEEE Transactions on Reliability to be published next year.

Susan Mengel attended the Frontiers in Education Conference in November 1999 where she presented the paper: “Multidisciplinary Education through Software Engineering.” She also attended the Software Engineering Education and Training Working Group Meeting where they started work on a proposal to map the ACM/IEEE Software Engineering Body of Knowledge work to Curricula and Industry Best Practices, as well as the Conference on Software Engineering Education and Training 2000 program committee meeting (where she is serving as general chair for the conference).

Richard Watson and Michael Gelfond have a paper titled “On Methodology of Representing Knowledge in Dynamic Domains" which has been selected for publication in the journal "Science of Computer Programming" for sometime in 2000.

Visit the Computer Science Alumni Directory http://www.cs.coe.ttu.edu/Alumni
Candy Anthony Thornton (BSCS’93) married Jimmy Thornton (also BSCS’93) and now has 2 little boys. She is a stay at home mom, while Jimmy works at Micro Chemicals.

Jon Burgin (PhDCS’98) and his wife Amy welcomed their first child in October. Joy Harvest Burgin entered the world on 10/17/99 at 11:02 a.m. Congrats!

Dennis & Amy Carroll (PhDCS’91 & BSCS’93) also had a daughter this year. Amber Diane was born at 9:02 a.m. on 10/11/99. Another Congrats!

John Castileman (MSCS’94) is working for Siemens ElectroCom in Arlington, and loving it. He married Carrie Smith in 1994 and they had their first child (Allison Ruth) in April.

Bobby Cude (BSCS’95) and his wife also had a daughter last spring. Peyton Nicole was born 3/6/99 at 12:44 p.m. on her daddy’s birthday.

Denton Fell (BSCS’96) is now working as a consultant/contractor for MCI.

Angel Giordano (BSCS’87) wrote to say that he had recently joined Comverse Network Systems, IN Division as an Account Development Director in Plantation, FL.

Jason Hart (BSCS’99) just accepted a position with NTS Communications here in Lubbock.

Kevin L. Jones (BSCS’87) tells us that he is a Senior Information Specialist for Alcon Labs in Arlington. He supports online systems as well as their version of an EIS/OLAP systems.

Toby Kinslow (BSCS’97) is working as a software engineer at Luminex Corporation (www.luminexcorp.com) in Austin.

James Ledbetter (BSCS’96) has been with Nokia Telecommunications for almost 3 years. He is a Group Manager in their Software Engineering section writing software for Nokia Mobile Switching Centers. He tells us that they are developing code for intelligent networking protocols between MSC and service control points.

Daniel Martin (BSCS’98) is working for Lockheed Martin in Houston and is currently working on a NASA contract. He helps develop software for the space shuttle simulator.

Eric Monson (BSCS’96) is still working for Sprint in the Dallas area.

Sujatha Mysore (MSCS’96) is developing and maintaining VLSI CAD tools for chip design at Intel.

David Seese (BSCS’96) recently Co-founded Junot Systems (www.junotsystems.com) down in Houston. They make Enterprise Application Integration software products.

Scott Terrell (BSCS’95) joined the ranks of alumni having daughters this year. Jordan Elizabeth was born on 2/18/99. Scott is still working for Sprint and often joins the recruiting team on visits to TTU.

Scott Thompson (BSCS’91) was just promoted to Technical Lead for the Macintosh product on the Macromedia FreeHand Team. He and his wife are still in Plano, TX.

Tara Wein (BSCS’92) dropped by the office last spring to let us know that she’s teaching math for Ector County ISD in Odessa these days.

Dennis Whitmer (BSCS’92) is also teaching. He is teaching 9th grade physical science as well as coaching cross-country and tennis. He and his wife Dana (who is ADA for Panola county) have two boys.

Mark Workman (MSCS’96) and his lovely wife Diana had their first baby last spring. Neal Alexander was born on 3/24/99 at 2:09 p.m. in the Dallas area. Mark is still with Alcatel.

Pramod Yenamandra (MSCS’98) wrote to let us know that his is working with Dell Computers in Austin, TX.

If you have any alumni news, email me at mysti.digby@coe.ttu.edu. Also, if you’d like to have your ICQ number or Instant Messenger ID included on the Alumni Directory webpage, let me know and we’ll add it. The Alumni Directory is up, just let me know if you’d like to be added!

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**Exxon Establishes New Scholarship!**

The Exxon Foundation established a new scholarship in Computer Science this fall. The Exxon Scholarship in Computer Science is for CS students classified as a junior or senior of good academic standing. We will be awarding two $1,000 scholarships a year. We should have the names of the first two recipients of the Exxon Scholarship by the 1st of January.
Missing Persons

Mikyeong Ahn  MSCS'95  Sajini Katta  MSCS'96  Scott Robertson  BSCS'96
Sai Arigala  MSCS'94  Matthew Kennedy  BSCS'92  Geetha Sankaran  MSCS'95
Ajoy Asok  MSCS'97  Veera Khaja  MSCS'94  John Smith  BSCS'88
Michael Bullington  BSCS'89  Jungyoon Kim  MSCS'97  Ramandeep Sohal  MSCS'97
Manish Bhattia  BSCS'93  Sukir Kumaresan  MSCS'94  James Spence  BSCS'93
Ka Lam William Chio  MSCS'93  Muralidhar Kundeti  MSCS'94  Begonia Tai  MSCS'86
Mario Condit  BSMSCS'94  Subhendu Lahiri  MSCS'85  Madhukar Tammireddi  MSCS'96
Swamidas Dalvi  MSCS'98  Yi-Chih Lee  MSCS'87  Jeffery Tanner  BSCS'85
Nishiganha Deo  BSCS'83  Shakeel Iqba Lodi  MSCS'89  Chih-Wei Tseng  MSCS'97
Parthiban Durai  MSCS'95  Jerry Low  BSCS'93  Vijay Venkataraman  MSCS'95
Deba Prasad Dutt  MSCS'88  Yun “Annie” Lu  BSCS'97  Tim Watson  BSEECS'97
Thomas Hayes  BSCS'87  Chvodary Manne  MSCS'94  Ching Fung Wong  MSCS'98
MD Zakir Hossain  MSCS'95  Shaju Mathew  MSCS'96  Rama Yanegalla  MSCS'96
Ja-Young Hyon  MSCS'98  Mohammed Mubeen  MSCS'96  Wei Zhang  MSCS'98
Rajaiah Karanam  MSCS'96  Srinivas Pogiri  MSCS'98  Zhibin “Ben” Zhu  MSCS'96
Mikyeong Ahn  MSCS'95  Sajini Katta  MSCS'96  Scott Robertson  BSCS'96

CSAN
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Computer Science Department, Texas Tech University.
Please direct comments about this issue to:
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Mdigby@coe.ttu.edu
(806) 742-3527
CS WWW site:
http://www.cs.ttu.edu
http://www.cs.ttu.edu/alumni

Happy Holidays
From all of us in
Computer Science!