Faculty Feature: Michael Gelfond

Last spring Dr. Michael Gelfond joined us, coming from the University of Texas at El Paso. He received his PhD in logic and theory of algorithms from the prestigious Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, then spent several years teaching and working as a programmer. In 1977 he and his family immigrated to the USA. After working for a few years as a software engineer in the Silicon Valley, he became seriously interested in better understanding the programming process and in finding ways to make it more transparent and more reliable. This led to his research in declarative programming, knowledge representation, artificial intelligence and software engineering.

Since coming to Texas Tech, he and Dr. Richard Watson have organized the new Knowledge Representation Lab (www.krlab.cs.ttu.edu) which currently includes several PhD and MS candidates. They have already published 5 papers (a few more are accepted for publication), given talks at several conferences, enjoyed visits from colleagues from both the US and Europe, established a close collaboration with researchers at Austin, and completed a project relating their theoretical research to the problem of Space Shuttle control. When asked what he has in mind for Computer Science at Texas Tech, he stated that he and his fellow researchers are well on their way to the department’s goal of establishing Texas Tech University as a world center in logic based approaches to artificial intelligence. The success of this goal is closely connected to the further development of our graduate and undergraduate programs, and improved ability to attract first class PhD students.

We thrilled to have Dr. Gelfond here at TTU, and if you’re interested in more information about him and his research, you can visit his site at http://www.cs.ttu.edu/mgelfond/ or email him at Mgelfond@cs.ttu.edu.

Faculty/Staff Bytes

Susan Hobbs joined the CS department in March as our new Secretary II.

Joe Pizzi, Director of Undergraduate Labs, received his MS from us in December 2000, and accepted a position with Lockheed in the Dallas, TX area. Rachel McDonald-Lamp (a former CS student) took his place on May 5th. She comes to us from Academic Computing Services.

Susan Mengel, Assistant Professor, was elected to the IEEE Computer Society Board of Governors for 2001-2003. She is also one of the investigators on the USDA Agriculture YieldTracker Grant, a joint research effort with the Ag Department here at TTU. YieldTracker is a web-based database system that will allow farmers to go onto the web, select their field from a satellite image, and run crop and weather models to determine which parts of the field will have the greatest potential for crop yield. Donald Bagert, Professor, is also involved with this research.

Dr. Mengel is also a Co-PI on an NSF grant in collaboration with five other schools: Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Drexel University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology and University of Milwaukee. The grant (called SWENET) will develop a software engineering education web-based system for the storing and review of education modules and bringing software engineering education/training professionals together into a community.

Dr. Bagert is also involved with an NSF project – Process-Based Scholarship and Retention Program for Low-Income Students.

Inside This Issue

1 Faculty/Staff Bytes
2 15th Annual ACM Banquet
3 Alumni Updates
4 Missing Persons
21st Century Computer Science Education in the 21st Century this year, as well as several papers published. He will also be traveling quite a bit this summer. He went to Toronto, Ontario in May to present “Academic Software Engineering: What is and What Could Be?” at the 23rd International Conference on Software Engineering, as well as going to Seattle, WA to attend meetings IEEE Education Activities Board. Then he’ll be serving on an NSF panel review for CS, Engineering And Mathematics Scholarships in Washington, DC, before going to Albuquerque, NM to attend an IEEE Software Industrial Advisory Board/Editorial Board Annual Meeting in June.

Dr. William J B Oldham, Professor, and his MS student Chengcheng Li had their paper “Image Recovery and Segmentation Using Competitive Learning in a Neighborhood System” accepted at the International Joint Conference on Neural Networks for July.

Dr. Larry Pyeatt, Assistant Professor, presented a paper on “Decision Tree Function Approximation in Reinforcement Learning” at the International Symposium on Adaptive Systems 2001 in Havana, Cuba this spring. He and CS students Brett Moore and Todd Quasny will travel to Cancun, Mexico to present “Performance of a Single Action POMDP in a Recognition Task” at Artificial Intelligence and Soft Computing 2001 at the end of May. This paper was also authored by Dr. Eric Sinzinger, another Assistant Professor in CS.

Dr. Noe Lopez-Benitez will have another Summer Fellowship at NASA-Ames. He will be assigned to the NAS division, working with the high performance group. This is his second summer at NASA.

He also will have his PhD student, Ahmed Tarek, travel to Orlando, FL to present their paper “An Effective Method for the Dynamic Search of Legal Firing Sequences in Large Petri Nets” at the Joint 5th SCI 2001 and 7th ISAS 2001 International Conference in July. In September, Dr. Lopez-Benitez will travel to Valencia, Spain to present the paper "Task Assignment Heuristics for Distributed Fluid Dynamics Applications," a joint work with M. J. Djomehri and R. Biswas from NASA-Ames at the 2001 International Conference on Parallel Processing.

15th Annual ACM Banquet

The 15th Annual ACM Banquet was held on April 24, 2001 this year, at the Lubbock Inn banquet rooms. We had so many attendees, we thought we were going to run out of food! Luckily, the catering department came through for us, and everyone got fed.

The banquet started with a sequel to last year’s video by Jason Ostermann and Will Braswell. Let’s just say it was less startling than last year’s video!

Our speaker this year was Mark Tempelman, VP of Solution Technologies, Business Unit, from IBM. He gave a talk on the future of the computing technology field.

The banquet included the Terry G Myers Endowed Scholarship (Leah Beal & LeyikuN Taye), the Exxon Scholarship (Christina Anaya & Jason Ostermann), the ACM Scholarship (Robin D’Souza), the SPACE Scholarship (Will Braswell), the CS Alumni Scholarship (Candace Gilzean) and the CS Outreach Scholarship (Michael Peterson). ACM officers for 2001-2002 are Jason

CSAN

Ostermann (Chair), Will Braswell (Vice-Chair), Robin D’Souza (Secretary), Garrett Spradling (Treasurer), Laura Barnes (Social Chair), as well as Justin Ault & Joe Wigner serving as our SEC representatives. And although it wasn’t announced at the banquet, Mysti Digby stepped down as ACM Advisor, and Dr. Richard Watson will be assuming those duties.

Other scholarships not announced at the banquet from the College of Engineering were: Halliburton Scholarship – Richard Garcia Mose Newman Endowed Scholarship – Ayonde Phillips & Srisinroongruang Rattasak.

Graduate Scholarships

This year we were able to award competitive scholarships to several of our graduate students. Congratulations to these outstanding recipients for the 2000-2001 academic year!

Pavan Chinthapanti
Suresh Chodisetty
Sunitha Dammalapathi
Amar Devegowda
Deepak Jindal
Aravind Kannan
Srividya Kona
Sonamnth Lokesh
Krishna Rayavaram
Sanketh Sangam
Ahmed Tarek
Jiyuan Wang

CSAN

Is the biannual Alumni Newsletter of the Computer Science Department, Texas Tech University. Please direct comments about this issue to: Mysti Digby Computer Science Department M.S. 43104, Lubbock, Texas 79409 (806) 742-3527 CS WWW site: http://www.cs.ttu.edu
Thank You!!!!!

We’d like to extend our thanks to all the alumni, corporations, and friends that have contributed to the Computer Science Department in the last few months. All of you make a huge difference in what we’re able to accomplish!

$1,000 & up
Louise Repath

$100 & up
David Baten
Darren Groves
Kevin Jones
Todd Knowlton
Eric Monson

$200-500
Mark Adkins
Donald Bagert
Jon Cave
Bryan Gantz
Christopher Smith

$20 & up
Giri Chodisetty
Mark Gibson
Scott Monroe
William Poole
Steve Sides
Tyson Stephenson
Bob Thorman
Robert Thorpe
Thoraya Zedan

Alumni Updates

Matthew Bevers (BSCS’00) is working in the Mission Planning Systems division of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company in the Ft. Worth, TX area.

Charles Boyd (BSCS’99MS’00) writes that he is a Software Designer for Nortel Networks doing wireless development. He also said that he feels like he is better educated than many of his fellow new hires from other universities!

Nikhil Gupta (MSCS’98) works for Tivoli Systems, Inc. in Austin, TX.

Dwayne Isbell (BSCS’00) is working for Valtech Technologies as a Nomadic IT Consultant (which means he gets to travel the country working on different client projects). He is currently coding Java and working with EJB. He is also working with Dr. Mengel on a Communications in Software Engineering paper that they hope to get published.

Aaron Leininger (BSCS’97) is the Network Administrator at Tigard High School in Tigard, OR the last we heard.

Corey Minyard (BSCS86) is still living in Garland and working for Nortel.

Daniel Sanchez (BSCS’96) writes to tell us he’s still living in Irving, TX and working for Software Architects in Dallas.

Brian Veale (BSCS’97MS’99) has moved to Norman, OK to pursue his PhD at the University of Oklahoma, with former CS faculty member Dr. John Antonio. He was awarded a Graduate Assistantship in Areas of National Need Fellowship to pursue his studies.

Shunguo Yan (MSCS’00) has taken a position with IBM in Austin as a Staff Software Engineer.

Thoraya Zedan (PhDCS’99) was in town this past May and let us know that she is now a member of the Technical Staff at Blueflame in Dulles, VA doing consulting work.

There aren’t a lot of updates in this term’s Alumni Updates! I need more updates from you folk! There are several ways you can let us know what you are up to these days, via email to mysti.digby@ttu.edu or with the CS Alumni Website at http://www.cs.ttu.edu/Alumni/updtfm.html. Or heck, you can send us a letter at Box 43104, Computer Science, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409-3104. Just let us know what you’re doing, who you’re doing it for, or if you received any awards or special recognition for doing it! We’d just love to hear from you!
**Missing Persons**

We’ve found a few, but these are still missing! If you know where to find anyone on this list, please let us know! We’d hate for anyone to miss getting his or her newsletter!

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<tr>
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<th>Degree 2</th>
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<td>Farizu Ahsan</td>
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