Letter from the New CS Department Chair

Dr. Andrew Phillips recently vacated the position of Chair of the Department of Computer Science when he left to become the Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate Studies (still at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire). Dr. Phillips assumed the Chair’s position upon his arrival from the United States Naval Academy in 1998. During his tenure as chair, the department experienced dramatic growth including becoming the first ABET-accredited computer science program in Wisconsin, and being the recipient of the highly-sought state supported funding program called the Chippewa Valley Initiative (CVI). The CVI has brought significant resources to the Computer Science Department, funding hardware and software rotations, student work study, and travel to professional conferences. Dr. Phillips has made a lasting impact on computer science education at the UW-Eau Claire and will be sorely missed. Dr. Michael Wick, Professor of Computer Science, has been appointed as the new Chair in Dr. Phillips’ absence.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Andrew Phillips Leaves the Chair’s Position

Dr. Andrew Phillips, a professor of computer science at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, has recently stepped down from his position as Chair of the Computer Science Department. Phillips, who has held the position since 1998, was widely respected for his leadership and commitment to the department’s growth and success. Under his leadership, the department experienced dramatic growth, including becoming the first ABET-accredited computer science program in Wisconsin. Phillips also showed a strong commitment to education, winning several awards for his teaching excellence. During his tenure as Chair, the department received significant funding, including from the Chippewa Valley Initiative (CVI), which has been instrumental in supporting the department’s growth. Phillips’ departure is a significant loss for the department, but his legacy will continue to inspire and guide future leaders in the field.

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Karlggaard Scholars Announced

Fifteen computer science students have been named as recipients of Karlgaard Computer Science Scholarships, which cover either full or half tuition per academic year. Eight returning students will receive Karlgaard Scholarships: sophomore Eric Lobner; Wisconsin Rapids; sophomore Mark DeNeve, Altoona; sophomore Joshua Burton; Knapp; sophomore Stephen Smith, Cassville; sophomore Yu Fan, Guang Dong, China; junior Brett Allenstein, Wayzata; and junior Chris Andringa, DePere, and senior Michael LeMagy, Eau Claire. In addition, another seven incoming freshmen also will receive Karlgaard Scholarships: Bjorn Hanson, Eau Claire; Jeffery Digmann, Altoona; Kyla Perlongo, Bruce; Benjamin Rogers, Eau Claire; Jordan Rooker, Cottage Grove, MN; John Block, Appleton; and David Green, Wisconsin Rapids. All Karlgaard Scholars are selected based on merit; all freshman applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.5, while all returning students must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. In addition, Karlgaard Scholars must be either computer science or software engineering majors at UW-Eau Claire and must collaborate with a computer science faculty member to produce at least one scholarly publication and/or formal presentation external to UW-Eau Claire in each of their junior and senior years. The Karlgaard Computer Science Scholarship Fund was established in April 2002 as part of the Karlgaard Excellence in Computer Science Program. The program is funded by a $500,000 pledge from David and Marilyn Karlgaard of Fairfax, VA, to the UW-Eau Claire Foundation’s ongoing comprehensive fund-raising campaign — Fuelling the Promise of Excellence. The Karlgaard’s gift also includes a $4 million trust, which ultimately will endow Karlgaard Excellence in Computer Science program in our department.

Consider making a long-term investment in our department

Please consider making a long-term investment in the Department of Computer Science by designating the UW-Eau Claire Computer Science Foundation as a beneficiary in your estate or by pursuing other gift plans that could provide a revenue stream during your lifetime. If you are interested in more detailed gift planning information, please contact the UW-Eau Claire Foundation at 715-836-4045 or hobbsj@uwec.edu.

Professor Moore On-Loan to CNS

Tom Moore, a long-time educator and leader in the Department of Computer Science, has been asked by the University to take a two to three year leave from the Department of Computer Science to assume a technical leadership position in the University’s Computing and Networking Services (CNS) unit. Tom’s duties will be to oversee the migration of the University’s old mainframe administrative computing system to a more modern computing environment. Tom’s extensive knowledge of software development, enterprise software systems, and project management makes him a perfect match for this position. This appointment is a wonderful recognition of Tom’s skills and the Department of Computer Science is proud of his new temporary role at the University.

Jack Tan Promoted to Prof. of Computer Science

At their June meeting in Madison, WI, the UW-System Board of Regents officially approved the promotion of Dr. Jack Tan to Professor. Jack joined the department in 1995 after completing five years teaching and conducting research at the University of Texas - Houston. During his time at UW - Eau Claire, Jack has taken

CS Faculty Prominent at National Conference

The Department of Computer Science continues to be a major contributor to the national computer science education community. At the Thirty-sixth annual SIGCSE Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education, the premiere peer-reviewed conference on computer science education, several faculty and staff members had papers and/or workshops included in the proceedings. In fact, over the past four year period, our CS Department leads the nation in total papers accepted at the prestigious SIGCSE conference. Here is a list of the contributions made by our faculty and staff at the 2005 SIGCSE conference.

• “Using Testing and JUnit Across the Curriculum” (M. W. Wagnner, P. Wagnner, and D. Stevenson)
• “Opening the Eyes of Those Who Can See to the World of Those Who Can’t: A Case Study” (S. Herrick)
• “Teaching Design Patterns in CS 1: A Closed Laboratory based on the Game of Life” (M. Wagnner).

A Shameless Plea from a Naive New Chair

Those that know have explicitly advised me not to include this section in the newsletter as it may serve to alienate some alumni. But I think, maybe, our alumni are different (besides, why should I start listening to those that know now?). As much as you experienced as students, academia is rarely supported by the State at a level that is either appropriate or sufficient. To make matters worse, most funds that come from the State are earmarked for specific purposes such as computers, course materials, office supplies, and so on. This leaves precious little discretionary money with which to support important academic endeavors like student travel to conferences, departmentally supported faculty/student collaborative research projects, and outreach to high school students who might be interested in attending the UW-Eau Claire. This is where you might come to the rescue. If everyone who received this newsletter would pledge as little as one dollar a month, the Department of Computer Science could develop a source of support that could be used to fund many of the student-oriented activities that we must currently fund ourselves. These activities could have far-reaching effects on our ability to attract, retain, and graduate computer science majors and minors. Please consider becoming a monthly supporter of the UW-Eau Claire Computer Science Advancement Program by completing and returning the pledge card enclosed with the newsletter. Remember, every dollar helps! I sincerely thank you.