In Fall 2003, Villanova University signed a first-of-its-kind study abroad agreement with Vatican representatives whereby Villanova computer science majors could work in Rome on the Vatican website (www.vatican.va). Over the past year the program has expanded to include Communication majors and to incorporate computer science projects with emphasis on delivering multimedia presentations through the website.

Bjorn Sayers (BSCS '04), John Fiedler (BSCS'05), Thomas Huffner (BSIS'06), Matthew Del Preore (BSCS'06), and Jason Williams (BSCS '06) have worked at the Vatican under this program. The department looks forward to sending more students to Rome next year to work on new interdisciplinary projects.

VATICAN INTERNSHIP EXPANDS

The Villanova Center of Excellence in Enterprise Technology (CEET) was established by the Department of Computing Sciences in the Fall of 2005. The purpose of the research center is to coordinate projects for faculty working in Software Engineering and related areas, particularly focusing on problems related to large-scale development and interoperability.

CEET Director John Lewis describes the new center as an "exciting opportunity for the department and for Villanova." CEET is the first such research center created in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In November, 2005, CEET began work on a project referred to as ARCES: Applied Research in Computing Enterprise Services. The ARCES project focuses on the modeling and simulation of service-oriented architectures (SOAs) designed for the U.S. Air Force. The sponsorship of the project by Dr. Peter DePasquale (BSCS '90, MSCS '97), a current faculty member at The College of New Jersey, is also contributing to the research effort.

CEET is partnering with Gestalt, LLC on the ARCES project. The initial SOA being analyzed in the project is one designed and implemented by Gestalt. Bill Loftus (BSCS '85, MSCS '96), the CEO of Gestalt, has worked with CS faculty members on various projects for many years.

Teenagers in the Summer 2005 Science and Theatre Magic Program created a fantastic day-long adventure that brought younger children from Philadelphia by train to a "School of Magic." The teens acted as guides or teachers, and delivered science-inspired "magic lessons" to more than 100 children that "enrolled" in their school. The program is a new outreach initiative, designed to encourage children to pursue careers in science, engineering, and mathematics. Conceived by Computing Sciences faculty— who developed the ideas for the multidisciplinary program in collaboration with faculty and administrators from many other departments—the project has grown into a partnership involving academic, corporate, civic, and non-profit organizations across the Delaware Valley. Find more at : magicschool.villanova.edu
CS STUDENTS RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Recently, two graduate computer science students had papers accepted at the SIGCSE Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education, while two other students were accepted to the Google Workshop for Women Engineers. The papers will be presented at the annual SIGCSE symposium in Houston, Texas in March. They represent the research efforts of Dr. Thomas Way's Applied Computing Technology (ACT) Lab and We. Tim White's paper is entitled "FAST: A Java Finite Automata Simulator". Sebastian Nezgoda's is "SNIITCH: A Software Tool for Detecting Cut and Paste Plagiarism." The Workshop was established by Google, Inc., to promote technical research aptitude, to encourage representation in science and engineering, and to provide an educational program for shaping future technologists. The application process was open to women studying computer science and related disciplines. Villanova computer science graduate student Pingping Ma and undergraduate Amy Tam were accepted. They received an all-expense paid trip in January to the Workshop venue in San Jose, CA.

MICHAEL HELWIG MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Computing Sciences Department has available a new partial tuition scholarship starting in the 2007–2008 term. The initial amount is $20,000. Professor Catherine Helwig, M.S. ’97 and her husband, Carl, have funded a scholarship in memory of their son, Michael, who died in 1991. It is a one-year scholarship, renewable each year, that will be awarded to an incoming freshman who demonstrates academic merit and an interest in pursuing a degree in the Department of Computing Sciences. Professor Helwig is currently teaching in the Computing Sciences Department. She is a member of the Upsilon Pi Epsilon Honor Society, and she is a recipient of a popular GUI competition in the data structures courses that she teaches. This scholarship competition is open to all incoming freshmen who are interested in a career in computing.

CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

The ACM has been having another great year! We started with our traditional welcome luncheon for the incoming CS majors. And our biggest outreach effort yet is getting underway as we organize support for the TeamChilen project, which feeds up older computers and sells them at minimal cost to provide economically challenged families with computers in order to promote computer literacy in low-income communities. Of course, we look forward as always to our annual ACM Spring Picnic, a day filled with tasty barbeque, great prizes, and the always competitive student-faculty volleyball game!

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It has not been quiet in the Department of Computing Sciences over the past year. We have celebrated the opening of the Center of Excellence in Enterprise Technology and its initial project that has been funded by a contract from the Electronic Systems Command of the Air Force. Dr. John Lewis serves as the Center director and principal investigator. Since the summer of 2002, the Department has received almost $1.3 million in grants from the National Science Foundation. Recipients include Dr. Lillian (Boots) Cassel, who has three active grants in the area of digital libraries; Dr. Giorgi Japaridze, who is well along in his work on computability logic; and Dr. Frank Klassner, who continues investigating the Lego Mindstorms robot platform as a tool for teaching many different areas of computer science.

Our enrollment in the undergraduate major has rebounded. The opportunities for internships and full-time employment have expanded greatly. Gestalt, LLC and Lockheed Martin continue to offer scholarships and summer internships. Many other companies, such as The Vanguard Group, will hire us.

CS STUDENTS SERVE THE COMMUNITY

Five computing sciences seniors – Jessica Byrnes, Zackary Zweber, Thomas Huffner, Lauren Pisciotta, and Michael, who died in 1991 – were co-authored with Dr. William Fleischmann, began eight years ago when Computing Sciences minor, Lance Roujeux, accepted a teaching post at the school. This year’s project, under the direction of Professor William Fleischmann, began eight years ago when Computing Sciences minor, Lance Roujeux, accepted a teaching post at the school. In this year’s project, the seniors are teaching computing classes for Broy graduate students. This project, under the direction of Professor William Fleischmann, began eight years ago when Computing Sciences minor, Lance Roujeux, accepted a teaching post at the school. In this year’s program, they offer to CS majors. Our biggest outreach effort yet is getting underway as we organize support for the TeamChilen project, which feeds up older computers and sells them at minimal cost to provide economically challenged families with computers in order to promote computer literacy in low-income communities. Of course, we look forward as always to our annual ACM Spring Picnic, a day filled with tasty barbeque, great prizes, and the always competitive student-faculty volleyball game!

NEWS BITS AND BYTES

- Karthik Asala holds the newly created Falvey Memorial Library technical assistantship. Karthik will work with Andrew Nag on the digital library infrastructure for Falvey.
- Christian Tecca (BSCS ’08) is currently teaching at Concord University in Montreal and ReMed Rehabilitation Center in Paoli.
- Following his graduation in May, Zackary Zweber (BSCS ‘06) will embark on a year of service at a San Diego orphanage.
- Lea Taylor (BSCS ‘05) is a member of the Technology Leadership Program at The Vanguard Group and is using her research work on web site evaluation.
- Dr. Robert Beck (BSCS ‘05) will join Gestalt, LLC after graduation.

CS STUDENTS RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Many good students as we can send them. The graduate program has received a substantial amount of support from grants and special projects so that in Spring 2006, 26 graduate students are receiving assistantships or tuition scholarships. Look for the article in this Newsletter about the students we have sent for a study abroad and internship opportunity at the Vatican Web Office. The program has expanded to include communication majors who will develop stories and edit video to be placed on the Vatican’s web site.

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