Alum Matters

A newsletter for alumni of the Department of Computer Science

Special Reunion

Last May, the Department hosted its annual Spring Networking Alumni Event at the Sheraton Lexington Inn in Lexington, MA. GTE Labs (now Verizon) generously sponsored it.

Why GTE Labs? First, GTE Labs has provided employment for many of the Department's graduates over the years; more than twenty alums currently work there, predominantly in research and development. The Department has enjoyed a good relationship with the company and sponsorship of an alumni event was a logical next step.

Alumni Renu Chipalkatti '87G and Jay Ponte '98G, both working in the Interactive Multimedia Department, were featured speakers at the event. Talking about "R&D Innovation in Industry: A Superpages Case Study," Renu and Jay discussed how innovative research and development with an industry focus leads to new business opportunity. The product that Renu and Jay are responsible for, Superpages (www.superpages.com), was used as an example. As students, Renu was a member of the Computer Networks Research Group and Jay was a member of the Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval.

Superpages, an eCommerce web site connecting buyers and sellers, features personal directories, yellow pages, people pages, consumer guides, and city pages. Launched in 1997, it has enjoyed a very successful business model, generating revenue from its first day live. Renu has augmented her technical training with an astute understanding of the business and marketing issues relevant to an online

J.A.Roberts ©

Path of Pride Unveiled

"It is with great joy that we dedicate the Computer Science Path of Pride," announced Jim Kurose, chair of the Department of Computer Science. "Our alumni and members of faculty have sent a message to all visitors to this wonderful building that they are proud to be part of the foundation that defines our fine Department."

On September 14, 2000, the new Computer Science Research Center officially opened. Department staff had volunteered their time, strength, and skill during the preceding weeks enhancing the building's landscape. "We planted trees, shrubs, annuals, and perennials," recalls Marla Michel, external relations director for the Department and manager of the building opening event. "And then added lots and lots of mulch. Many

people chipped in their labor because they wanted the building to look its best for this special event. The lovely Path of Pride truly lives up to its name each time a person enters the building," she continues.

It is still possible to contribute a brick to the Path of Pride since additional bricks can be added to the path each summer. The deadline has been extended to June 15, 2001 for this summer's installation. Bricks can be customized up to six lines, twelve characters per line. To be eligible for a brick, an individual must have donated $250 or more to the Department since January 1, 1999. Donors who have already met this criterion will be contacted individually. Inquiries about the Path of Pride can be directed to alumni@cs.umass.edu.

Bits & Bytes

Direct line to students

Alumni: This is your chance to have direct access to the undergraduate and graduate students of the Computer Science Department. Once a month a mail message is sent out to all undergraduate and graduate students informing them of opportunities for jobs, scholarships, internships, and other academically directed programs. We will collect your notices and send them directly to the students. Send your notices to alumni@cs.umass.edu.

Alum to Alum

Send one paragraph you'd like published to alumni@cs.umass.edu. Content must be originated by an alumnus and be relevant to all alumni.

Alumnus, Barbara Bazemore, '82:

I'm a software engineer at a fast growing internet e-commerce infrastructure company, NetGenesis, in Cambridge, Mass. We've got a lot of bright people, but we need more, especially folks with (quite) a few years of experience. The open positions may change by the time you read this, so please check out our employment listings at www.netgen.com. If you are interested in any of them, please e-mail me. I'll make sure you get extra credit for your UMass education!

Contact Barbara Bazemore, Senior Software Engineer, at barbarab@netgen.com

From Avraham Melamed, '79

Currently, I am employed by Soliloquy, a privately held software developer for a web application using Natural Language Processing (AskJeeves is one of our competitors). The company utilizes object oriented platform, design, and paradigms to build its applications in this challenging domain. The company is vigorously wooing 'top brain' in its current expansion effort. Qualified employees may enjoy equity options based on skills and experience.

All interested candidates should send me their resume and I will forward it, possibly after speaking with the candidates, to the company's technical recruiting team.

Contact Avraham Melamed at beymelamed@surfr.com

Industry alumni: Become a lecturer for a day!

You received your degree in Computer Science from the Department but haven't set foot on the campus since that glorious day in May (or August or December), right? Perhaps while sitting behind your desk applying what you've learned to real world problems, you find yourself daydreaming about what it would be like to teach at a university…

You could become a lecturer for a day! Whether as a guest lecturer in one of our undergraduate classes or as part of our Department Colloquium Series, your technical expertise and industrial know-how can greatly enhance a student's experience in our program. Your presentation would provide answers to the ever-present student question, "Am I ever going to use this stuff?" You would also become a role model to students. As an alumnus, you would serve as living proof that there is life after Computer Science at UMass. Finally, in this era of great competition for skilled employees, you would be exposed to groups of very well trained future employees.

Students LOVE hearing from folks in the field. To the degree we can bring alumni onto campus to talk about these topics, we score even higher with them. Virtually any topic related to computer science can be entertained. Technical solutions to hard business problems are encouraged. Sample categories (submitted by students) include:

- artificial intelligence
- robotics
- speech synthesis
- natural language processing
- computer vision
- anything to do with computer or video games
- real-time simulations (computer game programming)
- 3D stuff (games; graphics programming)
- graphic design
- internet startup companies
- internet laws
- starting and maintaining an ISP
- distributed computing
- networking
- audio/video compression standards
- fault tolerant computer systems
- computer security
- UNIX
- alternative OS'es (non Win/Mac)
- databases
- data mining and storage and the organization and searching algorithms involved
- programming related topics
- software engineering
- Java
- development of processors such as the PIII, Athalon, or others breaking current hardware standards

Of course, you would always be welcome to attend one of the lectures in the undergraduate colloquium series, or any of the other activities on the department calendar (**macdb.cs.umass.edu/cal**).

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Marla Michel, external relations director for the Department, at marla@cs.umass.edu and she will connect you with an appropriate faculty member.

SPECIAL REUNION . . . . *(from page 1)*

directory service. Jay's expertise in information retrieval has contributed immensely to the project and has allowed it to exploit the technology towards newer and more innovative revenue models.

The networking event was attended by more than two dozen alumni the greater Boston area. "We would also love to have alumni events outside of Massachusetts," says Marla Michel, external relations director for the Department. "Anyone that's interested should let me know," she adds.

The next event is tentatively set for mid-June on the UMass campus to coincide with the Alumni Association's Alumni Weekend.

Lifetime Email ID Program stalled, but not dead

Previous issues of Alum Matters have announced the launch of a Lifetime Email ID Program.

Although the requirements have been written and the data files initiated, we're still working out some kinks in the quality of our data. (For example, we have email addresses for only 28 percent of our more than 1,600 alumni.) You can help by keeping your addresses (USPS and email) updated. We hope to have this program operational by this summer. Thank you for your patience.

Support the Department in many ways…at your own pace

The Department is extremely appreciative of the generosity our alumni have demonstrated. With the help of your gifts, we have been able to build one of the most distinguished and advanced computer science research programs in the world. The students in our program are the primary beneficiaries of this world-class asset. Within the Department, we strive to create an exceptional environment for students to explore fundamental research in computer science. With all of our graduate students and 40 percent of our undergraduate students involved with research laboratories, we are successful in our endeavors.

Your gifts upgrade the education laboratories, keeping them current with today's technology – a critical element in staying on the leading edge. They provide conference scholarships for students – for example, the Department paid for any female student that wanted to go to the Grace M. Hopper Conference last September but hadn't already received a scholarship (see *Trends for Women* article in Spring '01 issue of *Significant Bits*). They have also outfitted the chair's conference room in our new building. A brass plaque acknowledging alumni gifts that have made the room possible show the students, faculty, and industry visitors who frequently use the room that CS alumni care and make a difference.

The Caxton P. Foster Memorial Fund is accumulating funds to support a graduate fellowship. Professor Foster, one of the founding faculty members of the Department, passed away in April 1999. This fund secures a place to honor his memory in the Department's future.

Other ways to give

There are many ways you can support the Department that don't involve money. You can be a guest lecturer for a day – exposing students to the realities of the workplace. You can be the Department's advocate within your company, enabling research and recruiting relationships. You can write letters to the Massachusetts State Legislature encouraging them to increase funding for public institutions (UMass Amherst, in particular) and to the federal government encouraging them to increase funding for the sciences. You can host alumni reunions at your work location.

If you prefer, however, you can give a gift of cash or securities to the Department. The University's Alumni Association can explain the various ways to do this, but, if you join the Alumni Association, your gift only comes to the Department if you explicitly "restrict your gift to Computer Science." Within the Department, we make things easier for you by providing an envelope that ensures the gift will come to us. There are many very good reasons for joining the Alumni Association, but we certainly prefer to receive your gifts directly!

That's why we wanted to tell you about one more way that you can give to the Department: in installments. Using your credit card, you can now determine your own giving schedule; whether you prefer monthly, quarterly, or annual gifts, you can design a plan that works for you (and the Department). Details for doing so are given on the back page of Alum Matters. If you're interested in donating securities, please contact Marla Michel, external relations director for the Department, (marla@cs.umass.edu, 413-545-3651) who will help you make the necessary arrangements. These options are all geared to allowing you to set your own pace.

The Department is a very exciting place to be right now. Your support, in whatever form you choose, continues to make it an even better place.

Ed. Note: One more way you can support the Department is through your company's matching gift program, if they have one. Matching gift programs can double or triple your donation. All you need to do is forward the appropriate forms to us when making your donation.

To learn about upcoming events, click "Department Calendar" at
www.cs.umass.edu

Updates

Yes, I'd like to be part of The Campaign for Computer Science. Enclosed is my gift.

☐ **$5,000** (specify a name for a Department Workstation: _____)

☐ **$1,000** (specify a name for a Department Work Area: _____)

☐ **$250** (your name on a Brick Paver on the *Path of Pride* to the new building)

☐ **Other**_____

☐ Yes, my employer has a matching gift program.

☐ CONTACT ME about a gift of stock or other securities

Method of payment

☐ Check

☐ Credit card
(complete form below)

☐ Deduct my pledge payment:

　☐ *one payment yearly*

　☐ *quarterly payments*

　☐ *monthly payments*

Credit card authorization
please charge my pledge payment to:

　☐ VISA

　☐ MasterCard

　☐ Discover

　Card number:

_____ - _____ -

_____ - _____

expiration date _____ / _____

Signature

_____

I hope you are enjoying this issue of *Alum Matters.* To assure that you always receive it in a timely manner, please take a few minutes to update your contact information with the University's Alumni Association. That is how we meet all our addressing needs – U.S. mail and e-mail. Please visit www.umassalumni.com and follow the prompts.

　If you prefer, you can complete the update form below and return it to me.

　　　　　　　—Marla Michel, External Relations Director

It's **FREE** to become a member of the Computer Science Alumni Association! Take a few minutes to update us on your whereabouts. Complete this form and mail it to the address below, or send this information electronically to alumni@cs.umass.edu

YOUR INFORMATION

Name _____

Degree received:　☐ BS　☐ MS　☐ Ph.D.　　Year received degree:_____

Home address _____

_____

Phone _____　Fax _____

E-mail address_____

WORK INFORMATION

Employer _____

Title _____

Work Address _____

_____

Phone _____　Fax _____

E-mail_____

URL _____

Vita/Comments: *What have you been working on since you left UMass?*

_____

_____

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May we share this information with other alumni and publish it in the newsletter?

☐ Yes　☐ No

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form

MAIL TO
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