The department celebrated the accomplishments of this year’s Outstanding Achievement and Advocacy (OAA) Award winners along with undergraduate and graduate student award recipients during a banquet held at the Mullins Center on Friday, May 6, 2011. Over ninety people joined the celebration.

In 2009, the department initiated the OAA award program to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of graduates of the department’s degree programs and to acknowledge the support of important friends of the department.

The ability to provide a holistic view of an individual’s activities, physiology, and environment has profound implications across several disciplines. One tantalizing possibility is large-scale behavioral health studies, where thousands of participants provide data through self-reports, on-phone sensors, and off-the-shelf body sensors as they proceed in their daily life. “Behavioral studies today are expensive, cumbersome, and often limited to a few dozen participants,” says Ganesan. “Most of us have never participated in a behavioral study because it is far too time-consuming. But a more affordable and scalable alternative is on the horizon.” This new model, which Ganesan refers to as “crowdsourced behavioral studies,” uses mobile phones and on-body sensors to reduce the burden of participation. Ganesan is working with researchers at the Yale Department of Psychiatry to explore these ideas in substance abuse studies — participants wear chestbands with EKG, respiration, and skin conductance sensors, together with phone-based sensing of location and activity, enabling better understanding of patterns and triggers of drug use.

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Awards ceremony held to celebrate our alums and students

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Nominate a fellow alum

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2012 Outstanding Achievement and Advocacy Awards. Nominations should be sent by email to Leeanne Leclerc (leclerc@cs.umass.edu). The information below would be appreciated with your nomination:

- The name, title, email, phone number, and organizational affiliation of the nominee,
- The name(s), email(s), and phone number(s) of the nominator(s),
- A brief biography summarizing the nominee’s career (no more than one page),
- A statement of the nominee’s outstanding achievements in the award category,
- A very brief (no more than 25 word) suggested citation to be written on the OAA winner’s award plaque.

Details on the 2011 event can be found at www.cs.umass.edu/oaa2011

We need your support

Your gifts are invaluable in helping the department fulfill its goals of excellence in research and teaching. These gifts are important in augmenting our regular programs by promoting undergraduate and graduate research, supporting seminars by outstanding scientists, and helping new faculty establish their research programs. Those contributions that are designated for specific programs also fund activities that enrich our educational and research programs.

One of our goals is to enhance the undergraduate experience to more accurately reflect the excitement that the field of computer science offers. To meet this goal, we must provide awards and scholarships for our students, new equipment for our labs, improved classrooms, and more seminar series. In addition, donations to our CS Endowment fund will have continuing benefits to the department’s graduate and undergraduate programs.
Department Chair Andrew Barto and Steve Goodwin, Dean of the College of Natural Sciences, welcomed the attendees and gave an overview of the department. Professor Leon J. Osterweil presented awards to the following 2011 OAA recipients:

- **Outstanding Achievement in Research:** Ronald Craig Arkin (Ph.D. ’87) - Regents' Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Space Planning in the College of Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology. He is also the Director of the Mobile Robot Laboratory.
- **Outstanding Achievement in Management:** Renu Chipalkatti (M.S. ’87) - Global Head, Vertical Industry Solutions: Product Management at Verizon business.
- **Outstanding Achievement in Entrepreneurship:** A. Anthony Gee (B.S. ’90) - co-Founder and Managing Partner of Carthage Capital Group.
- **Outstanding Achievement by a Young Alum:** Irene Ros (B.S. ’06) - Research Developer at the Visual Communication Lab, a group within the Collaborative User Experience group at the Center for Social Software at IBM Research; as of July: Senior Programmer at Bocoup.
- **Outstanding Achievement in Public Service:** John L. Woods (Ph.D. ’80) - retired in 2006 as President and General Manager of TRW’s Electromagnetic Systems Laboratory.
- **Outstanding Achievement in Education:** Wei Zhao (Ph.D. ’86) - Rector and Chaired Professor of the University of Macau.
- **Outstanding Achievement in Technology Development:** Michael Zyda (M.S. ’78) - Director of the Game Pipe Laboratory and a Professor of Engineering Practice in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Southern California.

More details on the careers of the OAA award recipients, along with photos of the event, are posted at www.cs.umass.edu/oaa2011.

During the evening’s celebration, current students and recent alums were also recognized. The undergraduate and graduate awards were generously sponsored by Yahoo!, a member of the Department’s Industrial Affiliates Program. Professor James Allan, Graduate Program Director, presented the following Outstanding Graduate Student Awards:

- **Outstanding Dissertation Award:** Michael Hay (Ph.D. ’10)
- **Outstanding Dissertation Award:** Siddharth Srivastava (Ph.D. ’10)
- **Outstanding Synthesis Award:** John Altidor
- **Outstanding Synthesis Award:** Michael Bendersky
- **Outstanding Synthesis Award:** Mastoor Salajegheh
- **Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award:** Bruno Castro da Silva
- **Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award:** Dirk Ruiken
- **Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award:** Borislava I. Simidchieva

Professor Robbie Moll, Department Associate Chair, presented the following Outstanding Undergraduate Awards to students in this year’s graduating class:

- **Overall Achievement in Computer Science:** Sean P. Dooley
- **Achievement in Artificial Intelligence:** Jonathan B. Leahey
- **Achievement in Networking:** Felipe Ribeiro de Mello
- **Achievement in Security:** Anthony R. Duran
- **Achievement in Software Engineering:** Ryan C. Hurley
- **Achievement in Systems:** Demetre E. Lavigne
- **Achievement in Theory:** Nicolas A. Scarrci

The department would like to thank all those who participated in these successful events. We look forward to seeing more alums at next year’s event.