Welcome to our new biannual CS@VT newsletter, which we hope will update alumni, friends, students and faculty on news and activities in the department. When I came to Virginia Tech in August 2008 as a new department head, my main goal was to achieve top 30 ranking for our department (i.e., ranking approximately among the top 10% of PhD granting CS departments). Encouraging an atmosphere of excellence and achievement in the department contributes to achieving that goal. In 2008, we won an Exemplary Department Award from the university for the strength of our interdisciplinary research. Since then, our junior faculty have been awarded 6 NSF or DOE CAREER Awards, prestigious grants for early career researchers; this record is unprecedented in our college. The Wall Street Journal poll of recruiters in fall 2010 selected our department as fifth in the US among CS departments as a desirable place to recruit students. Several newly formed research centers involve CS faculty: Center for Systems Biology of Engineered Tissues with Dr. T.M. Murali as co-director and Center for Discovery Analytics with Dr. Naren Ramakrishnan, as director. Three of our faculty, Drs. Bowman, Feng and Ramakrishnan have been selected as ACM Distinguished Scientists during this period. Dr. Ramakrishnan won the Alumni Award for Research Excellence in 2011. Dr. Wu Feng led a successful NSF Major ResearchInstrumentation proposal effort which has led this spring to the arrival of HokieSpeed, a GPU/CPU supercomputer for campus-wide use.

Our graduate students have won 6 NSF Graduate Research Fellowships over the past three years and have fielded a first place team in the 3D User Interfaces competition for the past 2 years. CS undergraduates have won the university-wide C.T. Tate Senior Co-op Award each of the past three years (2009-2011); this is especially impressive as students across the university are nominated for this award by their co-op supervisors. Two undergraduate students placed at Honorable Mention in the Computing Research Association’s Undergraduate Research Competition in 2009, with one Finalist in 2010. Our strong corporate partners program (CSRC) includes more than 50 companies nationwide.

The academic year 2010-2011 was the 40th anniversary of our department. We held several celebratory events to mark this occasion including a Reconnect Weekend for Alumni in November 2010 (the photo below shows women alumni, faculty and students with the HokieBird at the networking reception). We also hosted an Alumni Reception in Seattle in March 2011 and an Open House for the University in March 2011. These events helped us to revisit and preserve the history of the department and to inform alumni of the department’s current status and activities.

We added social networking sites for the department as part of our 40th Anniversary activities. Search for Virginia Tech Computer Science on Facebook and look for the Virginia Tech Computer Science group on LinkedIn. We have restarted these regular newsletters to help keep us connected to alumni and friends. Feel free to contact us with any questions you may have about CS@VT today.

Dr. Barbara G. Ryder
J. Byron Maupin Professor
Department Head, Computer Science
Spring Commencement Ceremonies

On Saturday, May 14, the Virginia Tech College of Engineering conferred degrees on the class of 2011, including approximately 60 Computer Science undergraduate students. Graduate degrees were conferred at the Graduate Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 13. On Friday evening, Computer Science graduates, their guests and families, enjoyed a reception in the Torgersen Museum. Several students were recognized for outstanding achievements and contributions, including Ben Reid and Andrew Street for undergraduate academic achievement, Kristin Whetstone for service to the department, and Elizabeth Timmons as the Outstanding CS Senior. Three graduate students were also recognized: Shaimaa Lazem for outstanding teaching, Mayank Daga as the outstanding Master’s student and Dong Li as the outstanding doctoral student. Both Michael Lapping and TC Jones were awarded the George Gorsline Memorial Scholarship Award, given each year to a rising senior who has made the most significant rebound from his freshman year.

The CS Department is proud to have had two of only three students graduating with a 4.0 GPA, which is considered “first in class” in the College of Engineering. Congratulations to Andrew Street and Ben Reid for graduating first in class.

CS Enrollments and Scholarship Applications Continue to Increase

Computer Science undergraduate enrollments continue to grow. The latest enrollment report of students in the major shows 375 students after May graduation. At this time last year, there were 331 students listed as a CS majors. We are also seeing an increase in the percentage of women in the program, from 7.89% last year to 8.8% this year. There has also been an increase in our number of undergraduate scholarship applications. With a combination of College of Engineering, Computer Science endowed scholarships, and additional funding from the department’s corporate partners program (Computer Science Resources Consortium—CSRC), the CS Department was able to award a scholarship to every student who applied, who was also making sufficient progress in the CS degree, and had an overall GPA of at least 2.7. To make this possible, the CSRC added over $70,000 to the available funds for scholarships.

For more on the CSRC, please see page 10.

CS Department Hosts High School Teachers Workshop

For a third year, the CS Department hosted a summer workshop for high school teachers. Dr. Manuel Pérez obtained support from the Google CS4HS initiative to supplement last year’s NWCIT-Microsoft Seed Grant Award to make this year’s workshop possible; the first workshop was funded by NSF, Villanova and CS@VT. Manuel describes the workshops: “The goals of the workshops are to provide professional development opportunities to teachers, to share ideas about teaching computing in high school, and to create a network of teachers interested in addressing the shortfall of computing professionals.”

“In previous years (http://happy.cs.vt.edu/highschool/), the workshop offered a variety of activities including research talks, orientation about computing careers, technical talks about using Python in the classroom, etc.”

This year, the workshop covered in more detail the topics that were named as the best received presentations at last year’s workshop, including using the ACM JTF Class Library, Using Python with Media Computation, and Teaching Computational Thinking.

Congratulations to Dr. Manuel Pérez for finding additional funding for this departmental outreach activity.
VTURCS Holds 10th Annual Spring Symposium

On Wednesday, April 27, the Computer Science Department held its 10th annual VTURCS Spring Research Symposium. Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research in Computer Science (VTURCS) encourages Computer Science undergraduate students to become involved in research. This year’s symposium featured twelve projects from 26 students, including three capstone projects from the CS 4284 Systems and Networking Capstone course.

The organizers of VTURCS wish to thank all of the judges, including faculty Dr. Barbara Ryder, Dr. Cal Ribbens, Dr. Andrea Kavanaugh, and Professor Dwight Barnette, and industry representatives Jay Winkeler (Lockheed Martin), Brian Hartsoek (Rackspace), Peter Árapov (CSC), Jonathan Gill (Cisco) and Rosie Hall (Cisco).

All participants received a bag of CSRC giveaways to take home. The VTURCS organizers thanked CGI, General Dynamics, Google, Intel, Lockheed Martin, and Northrop Grumman for sending items specifically for this event.

Awards with advisor in parenthesis:

Faculty Choice Awards:
1. Kyle Morgan, “Multi-threaded Execution of Javascript Tasks in V8!” (Dr. Godmar Back)
2. Eeshan Shah, “Androider: Automated Translation of GUIs from the Desktop to Smart Phones” (Dr. Eli Tilevich)
3. Weston Thayer and George Zhang, “Going Green with Android” (Dr. Scott McCrickard and Dr. Michael Evans)

Industry Choice Awards:
1. James Cook, Michael Lowman, Kyle Morgan, and Conor Scott, “Implementing Enterprise-level Quality of Service Using Variable Resource Allocation in the Xen 4 Hypervisor” (Dr. Ali Butt)
2. Brett Jones, Scott Luxenberg, David McGrath, Paul Trampert, and Johnathan Weldon, “RabbitMQ Performance and Scalability Analysis” (Dr. Ali Butt)

CS Senior Participates in Linux Orchestra World Tour

Andrew Street, a graduating CS senior, was unable to attend his college commencement ceremony because he was on a world tour with the Virginia Tech Linux Laptop Orchestra! According to Andy, the group was formed two years ago from a diverse group of students with majors in math, biology, political science, and computer science. The students “embarked on an ambitious journey to explore the evolving field of computer music. Led by Professor Ivica Ico Bukvic, we founded the Linux Laptop Orchestra (L2Ork) using wiimotes, netbooks, and speakers made in-house. While the concept of a laptop orchestra wasn’t unheard of (VT was the third university to found one, after Stanford and Princeton), L2Ork aimed to emphasize the performance aspect, with scores actually being played out live using wiimotes like some sort of prototypical conductor’s wand as opposed to furious typing and clicking. L2Ork also sought out to prove that all of this could be done using commodity hardware, with complete stations costing less than the price of a single station’s speaker in comparative orchestras.”

From May 13 through June 1st, L2Ork toured Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Croatia.

The CSRC was glad to be able to provide travel funding to Andy Street!
CS Senior John Ryding Wins C.T. Tate Distinguished Co-op Award

For a third straight year, a computer science student has been awarded the prestigious C.T. Tate Distinguished Co-Op Award. On May 5, 2011, graduating senior John Ryding was awarded the C.T. Tate Distinguished Co-Op Award. To be eligible for the C.T. Tate Award, a student must have completed at least three co-op terms and earned distinction through academic, extracurricular, and professional achievements.

John was a co-op for IBM in the positions of IES developer and software engineer. Bill Higgins, Senior Software Architect for the IBM Tivoli CTO Team, recommended John for the award and was on hand to help recognize John’s achievements. According to Bill, "John has not only made solid contributions to the Rational Jazz project, he has become a top contributor, which is unheard of for a co-op. John is the most talented person of his age I have ever met in terms of technical capability, passion for his work, and ability to work in a team setting. Over the course of John's time as a co-op, he's met and exceeded these early high expectations. He's made regular significant contributions to the Jazz.net web site and more importantly to the core Jazz Platform code base. John has essentially taken ownership of the UI code for a significant new strategic web application and is delivering on time with high-quality. I have always been a star at IBM but John is substantially farther ahead than I was at a similar age. I know he is going to be a leader in the IT industry and I feel very fortunate that we made an early connection via Steve [Choquette] and his co-op with us. I can't wait to begin to work with him full-time when he graduates.” Bill Higgins was also the guest speaker at the Co-Op Recognition Ceremony and Reception.

John is truly a well-rounded student. In addition to his co-op work, John has earned high marks academically and has participated in many extra-curricular activities. Both departmental advisors recommended John, writing that while at VT, "John has embraced VT's motto, Ut Prosim, That I May Serve. He has served as a Resident Hall advisor and as Director of Technology for the Student Government Association. As Director of Technology for the Student Government Association, John managed a team of developers to create web sites for SGA events and created a new SGA portal website to engage new students in campus events. John has also been active in the student chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery. He has presented Tech Talks to the ACM on topics such as team collaboration and programming languages."

Congratulations to John!

Upsilon Pi Epsilon Inducts New Members

On Thursday, April 28, 2011, Upsilon Pi Epsilon (UPE) held its 55th induction ceremony. UPE inducted thirty-one new members to their VT chapter during the 2010/2011 academic year.

Upsilon Pi Epsilon (UPE) is the first and only international honor society for the computing sciences. The UPE Alpha Chapter of Virginia was chartered at Virginia Tech in 1975.
Four CS Students Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa

On Friday, May 13, Virginia Tech’s Mu Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa held its Spring 2011 initiation ceremony in McBryde 100. According to their official web site, PBK was founded at the College of William and Mary in 1776 and is the nation’s oldest and most widely known academic honor society. Among the Spring 2011 initiates were four Computer Science majors: Barry Bragg, Jeffrey Jankowski, Kyle Morgan, and Elizabeth Timmons. Kyle Morgan was unable to attend the initiation ceremony.

3D Interaction Group wins Grand Prize and Best Paper

Members of the 3D Interaction Group, including several graduate students and faculty advisor Dr. Doug Bowman, associate professor of computer science, captured both the Grand Prize for a second consecutive year, and the Best Paper Award at the 2011 IEEE 3DUI Symposium in Singapore.

According to Dr. Bowman, the Fighting Gobblers team, “designed, implemented, and evaluated a novel 3D interface called ‘Building Blocks’ for solving puzzles. The entry was judged by a jury and by the conference attendees based on two videos and a short paper describing the submission. We achieved first place out of eight teams from universities around the world.” The Grand Prize winning team consisted of graduate students Felipe Bacim, Cheryl Stinson, and Bireswar Laha.

Also at the same symposium, graduate students Regis Kopper and Felipe Bacim, and Dr. Bowman won the Best Paper Award. Their paper was titled “Rapid and Accurate 3D Selection by Progressive Refinement.”

CS Student Attends Google FUSE Program

Rising computer science sophomore Sloane Neidig, was selected to participate in the Google FUSE program. Google FUSE brings up to 50 aspiring computer science students for an all-expences paid retreat at their New York, NY offices in mid-July.

According to the Google FUSE website, the program aims to:

- Form a network among top young students from underrepresented backgrounds in computer science that will allow them to learn about research, academic, and industry opportunities in the years to come.
- Make connections between students and Googlers that will allow students to discover career paths, create meaningful academic experiences, and take advantage of the college years in computer science.
- Give students an insight into the diverse and exciting careers in computer science and show how rewarding, challenging, and fun they can be.

Congratulations to Sloane!

Sloane Neidig attended the Google FUSE program in July 2011.
Drs. Wu Feng, Heshan Lin and João Setubal Win NSF Award for Cloud Computing

Congratulations to Drs. Wu Feng, Heshan Lin and João Setubal on their new NSF Award entitled "CiC (RDDC): Commoditizing Data-Intensive Biocomputing in the Cloud." This award is under the "Computing in the Cloud" solicitation, a joint venture between NSF and Microsoft (see http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=116336). In this program, as part of the NSF grant, Microsoft will provide three years of access to its Windows Azure platform for selected researchers. Microsoft researchers and developers will work with grant recipients as well.

This project was one of three life science projects chosen in this program. (see http://www.genomeweb.com/informatics/nsf-gives-three-life-science-projects-12m-grants-test-microsofts-azure-cloud). This award and another award given to a VT ECE professor Kwa-Sur Tam, were featured as 2 of the 13 successful research teams in the Computing in the Cloud competition, written up in the ACM Tech News on Friday, April 22nd.

Dr. Feng describes the project: "The Microsoft Azure cloud holds the promise of commoditizing high-performance computing by enabling the capability of provisioning large amounts of compute and storage capability via an easy-to-use interface to the cloud. However, unlike traditional HPC platforms that offer high-speed data-management techniques via parallel file systems and parallel I/O libraries atop high-speed network interconnects, cloud infrastructures like Microsoft Azure do not offer such environments. To address this void while not making any changes to the cloud infrastructure itself, we propose to:

1. create a new generation of efficient data management and analysis software for large-scale, data-intensive scientific applications in the cloud.
2. enhance the robustness of our data management and analysis software for large-scale, data-intensive scientific applications in the cloud.
3. extend, refine, and optimize our semantic-based data management framework, to massively accelerate the data movement of large volumes of data."

Dr. Naren Ramakrishnan has been selected to attend the CRA’s CCC Leadership in Science Policy Institute in November in Washington. This meeting is intended "to educate a small cadre of computing researchers on how science policy in the US is formulated and how our government works." The participants were selected from among those nominated by their departments. This institute is part of the mission of the CCC, namely the development of the next generation of leaders in the computing research community.

More information about the institute appears here: http://www.cra.org/govaffairs/blog/tag/lispi/

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Dr. Chang-Tien (C.T.) Lu, Associate Professor of Computer Science at the Northern Virginia Center, was elected Vice Chair of ACM SIGSPATIAL.
Dr. Wenjing Lou Joins CS Faculty

Dr. Wenjing Lou joined our Northern Virginia Center faculty in August 2011. Her research focus is in the area of cybersecurity.

Dr. Lou earned her doctoral degree in electrical and computer engineering at the University of Florida in 2003. Since then, she has been a faculty member in the ECE Department of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She was named the Joseph Samuel Satin Distinguished Fellow at WPI in 2006-7 in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments and promising future. She is the recipient of an NSF CAREER Award (2008) and the WPI Sigma Xi Outstanding Junior Faculty Researcher Award (2009). Her current research interests include data security and privacy in cloud computing and e-healthcare systems, and security in mobile and wireless networks. She serves as an editor of several journals, including IEEE Transactions on Wireless Communications and IEEE Transactions on Smart Grid. She has actively participated on many technical programs and organizing committees of conference in her field.

We welcome Dr. Lou!

Dr. T.M. Murali is the PI on NIH Award

Congratulations to Dr. T.M. Murali, along with Dr. John Tyson, Biological Sciences, and Dr. Jean Peccoud, Virginia Bioinformatics Institute, on their new NIH R01 award entitled “Integrating Top-Down and Bottom-Up Models in Systems Biology with Application to Cell Cycle Control in Budding Yeast.”

Dr. Murali describes the project: “[t]wo distinct approaches are being used to study complex cellular systems. The first, top-down approach automatically analyzes large-scale datasets for correlations between genes and proteins. The second, bottom-up approach painstakingly crafts detailed models that can be simulated by computer. These approaches have largely been developed separately until now. This project will meld these two approaches into a single framework, thereby allowing data-driven analysis to augment models that can be simulated. The project will develop a system for hypothesis generation, testing, and validation to be applied to the mechanism of cell division in budding yeast. In the long term, the methods developed by this project can be used to study any complex cellular system, e.g., those involved in the development of cancer and in infectious diseases.”

Dr. T.M. Murali

Dr. Naren Ramakrishnan Receives Alumni Award

The Alumni Award for Excellence in Research is given annually to, at most, two VT faculty members who have made outstanding contributions in the area of research. There is at most one winner from any college in a given year. Dr. Ramakrishnan was recognized for his work in data mining in diverse areas such as intelligence analysis, systems biology, sustainability, and recommender systems.
Dr. Ali Butt Receives a NetApp Faculty Fellowship

Dr. Ali Butt, assistant professor of computer science, was recently awarded a NetApp Faculty Fellowship. The fellowship was awarded from a proposal entitled “Studying the Impact of Storage System Design on Hadoop Performance.” This program funds research on data storage and related topics. Such fellowships have been awarded previously to faculty at institutions such as Harvard, Brown, Cornell, Stony Brook, University of California—San Diego, and the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Butt’s description of the research: “In this project, we will extend and enhance our open-source cloud back-end (Hadoop) simulator (developed earlier through support from an IBM Faculty Award) to study the impact of network-attached shared storage on the Hadoop ecosystem. State-of-the-art Hadoop clusters use node-local storage, which although desirable is not manageable, and thus will not scale well in the era of massive multi-cores. To this end, the project will provide insights into designing next-generation cloud back-ends.”

Drs. Heath, Pereria, and Grene Awarded Interdisciplinary NSF Grant

Drs. Lenny Heath, Andy Pereria (VBI) and Ruth Grene (PPWS) were awarded a new NSF grant entitled “ABI Development: Representation, Visualization, and Modeling of Signaling Pathways in Higher Plants.” Lenny describes the project: “Signal transduction pathways hold the key to understanding the early response of higher plants to abiotic stresses, such as drought, flooding, heat, cold, ozone, and salt. This project builds the community-based Beacon system to provide computational support for biologists’ questions about signaling pathways, thereby empowering those plant biologists to curate and archive signaling pathways for abiotic stress responses in the Beacon database. The user interface is an editing environment that represents and manipulates a pathway in a standard graphical notation. The result will be a curation tool that will allow authorities to enter pathways, edit them, annotate them, and save them to an initial database. The database representation allows the biologist to impose a semantic on a pathway. The Beacon simulation engine is then able to computationally implement those semantics and provide results that can be queried and visualized. Adding or removing relationships in a pathway raises the difficult question of causal inference: Does activity of molecule A cause activity of molecule B? Such questions can be assessed computationally and statistically. Well-established outreach programs at Virginia Tech (i.e., NSF-funded projects such as PREP/PREP-U, S-STEM and the Virginia-North Carolina Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation) will be used to provide training and educational outreach activities.”

Two CS Faculty Receive Dean’s Awards for Excellence

On May 24, 2011, the College of Engineering held its fourteenth annual engineering faculty reception. At the reception, awards were presented to College of Engineering faculty for innovation in teaching, research, service, and outreach. Dr. Manuel Pérez received a Dean’s Award for Service. Dr. Wu Feng was named an Engineering Faculty Fellow.

College of Engineering Dean Richard Benson and Dr. Manuel Pérez

Annette Feng accepts the award on behalf of her husband, Dr. Wu Feng
Successful Women in Computing Day

AWC held its annual Women in Computing Day event on April 15, 2011. This event, which is in its 13th year, invites middle school girls to come to campus to learn about computing and technology. This year, AWC is pleased to report that they hosted 85 girls for the event!

This year, the girls enjoyed a variety of sessions covering a wide-range of topics, including cryptography, modeling/simulations, and systems and networking. They also visited and had a chance to try out some of the equipment in the Human Computer Interaction Black Lab which houses the gigapixel display.

Special thanks to Google and Lockheed Martin, who were the primary sponsors of this event.

CSRC and CS Department Sponsor Grace Hopper Conference

For the fourth straight year, the CS Department and the CSRC will be academic underwriters of the annual Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing.

CS@VT was well represented by thirty-one students at last year’s conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

This year, the gold sponsorship status provides a 20% discount to all students attending the conference from CS@VT. The department will be encouraging new students, either at the graduate or undergraduate level, to attend the conference.

We are pleased to be able to continue supporting an activity that provides networking and career opportunities to the young women of the CS Department. Our most sincere thanks to both Freddie Mac and Northrop Grumman for providing additional travel funding for this very important event.

CSRC Continues Support for REU and C-Tech²

The CSRC is proud to continue supporting two Virginia Tech activities.

For a third straight year, the CSRC has provided support to the VT Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Site for the Center for HCI. The REU programs give students from other universities an opportunity to spend eight weeks at Virginia Tech to work on a variety of projects with multiple faculty members. In turn, CS@VT hopes to see many of these students return for graduate studies in the future.

For the fourth year, the CSRC sponsored an etiquette dinner for young women attending the “Computers and Technology at Virginia Tech” camp (C-Tech²). During the etiquette dinner, members of the CS Department had an opportunity to speak with the campers and encourage them to pursue computer science in college.
CS@VT is Gold Sponsor of the Richard Tapia Conference

The CS Department was proud to send nine students to the 2011 Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing Conference, held April 3 - 5, 2011, in San Francisco. Thanks to generous donations from Freddie Mac and the CSRC, the department was able to sponsor six students’ attendance. An additional three students received scholarships directly from the Tapia Conference. According to the conference website, the “Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing has served as a leading forum for bringing together students, professors and professionals to discuss and strengthen their passion and commitment to computing.”

Pictured (clockwise from top left): Olivia Erickson, Sherley Codio, Jeremy Barksdale, Gregory Wilson, Eric Fouh, Dr. Manuel Pérez, Ashley Robinson, Shaimaa Lazem, Samah Gad, and Elizabeth Timmons.

From the Director of External Relations and Undergraduate Studies

Welcome back to our newsletters! I came to the department in the winter of 2000 as an academic advisor. In early summer 2006, I was asked to take over the CSRC while its previous director was on leave. I became the director of the CSRC in the winter of 2006 and am proud that in the years since, it has grown significantly. From the 13 members in 2006, to the more than 50 companies currently in the CSRC, we have grown a program that offers opportunities, support, and scholarships to our students, as well as support for all of our student organizations.

Earlier this year, I became the Director of External Relations and Undergraduate Studies. I hope to increase the department’s interaction with its 5000+ alumni, as well as continue to find opportunities and support for our current students. The CSRC has been the main funding arm for our students over the past five years.

Each year, the CSRC holds two job fairs for computer science students only. These job fairs have outgrown the Torgersen Museum, the Bowman Room in the Merriman Center, and Owens Banquet Hall; this fall’s job fair will be held in Cassell Coliseum. The companies attending the CSRC career fairs offer many exciting and diverse opportunities for all of our students.

The funds received from CSRC dues go directly back into our student programs. Unlike many other larger, “named” departments in the College of Engineering, the CS Department does not have large endowed accounts providing scholarship money to our students. The scholarships you see listed on the last page of this newsletter provide invaluable financial support to deserving computer science students. Combining the shape of the current economy and the cost of tuition with our growing numbers of students and scholarship applications, scholarship funding is needed now more than ever. For the 2011/2012 academic year, the CSRC provided $70,000+ of additional scholarship funding to many deserving students who would otherwise not have received a scholarship from the university or the College of Engineering.

I look forward to hearing from you and creating a dynamic and vibrant network of alumni of the department!

Libby G. Bradford
Director of External Relations and Undergraduate Studies
Alumni News

Dr. Mary Miller, who earned her MIS degree in 1985, was inducted in May 2010 into the College of Engineering’s Academy of Engineering Excellence. She and her husband, Jim King, are members of the Committee of 100.

At the department’s 40th anniversary celebrations, Dr. Greg Lavender (MS ‘88, PhD ‘93) was presented with the Distinguished Alumnus Award. While on campus, Greg presented one of the department’s distinguished lectures entitled “Perspectives on Complex Systems Software Engineering.” Now based in Silicon Valley, Dr. Lavender serves as VP of Foundation Engineering in the Network Software and Systems Technology Group of Cisco Systems. He is responsible for leading a next-generation Internetwork Operating System for Cisco’s routers and switches.

Also during those events, Nora (BS ‘79, MS ‘86) and Dean Kirstein (BS ’78, MS ‘85) were honored with the Department of Computer Science Distinguished Service Award. Since their graduation, Nora and Dean Kirstein have generously supported the Department of Computer Science. They were largely responsible for the creation of the Anne and George Gorsline Scholarship, endowed in memory of Dr. George Gorsline and to honor his wife, Anne. Dr. Gorsline served as the first Department Head of Computer Science, and honoring Anne and George in this manner recognizes their contributions to our Department. Nora and Dean have worked tirelessly to solicit contributions from fellow CS alumni in support of this endowment, which funds several student scholarships annually.

Dr. Rob Capra (PhD ‘06) was recently appointed to a tenure track position with the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina. More information: http://sils.unc.edu/

Karl Falconer (BS ’07) has started a software consulting company, named Falconer Development LLC.

Dr. Peter DePasquale (MS ’00, PhD ’05) was promoted to Associate Professor in Computer Science at The College of New Jersey. Pete teaches introductory level courses and is doing research using “a feedback system to help novice programmers improve source code comments.” His research project recently received funding from NSF and “will have some integration with Steve Edward’s WebCAT system.”

In memoriam: Lyndon Guy (EE ’84), husband of Sue Robinson Guy (CS ’80, MIS ’82), passed away on Tuesday, July 5. Alumni describe him as “calm and gracious” who could “keep the conversation going with witty, thoughtfull comments and stories that were fun to hear, but he didn’t mind if someone else told them first.” His CS friends will miss him greatly.
How You Can Help CS@VT

The generosity of our alumni enables our department to fund many special activities. Donations, matching gifts, gifts in kind and planned gifts are only a few of the many ways that you can give to the department. If you already are a regular contributor to the Department of Computer Science, we offer our sincere thanks, and ask for your continued support. If you are not, we invite you to become part of the future of our department by making your contribution today.

To ensure that your gift reaches our department, you should select the appropriate account for your intended gift. From the Giving To VT page (www.givingto vt.edu), please click to make an “immediate impact” and then click the secure online form. In the section entitled “Gift Information,” please select “Other Designation” and type in the CS account name and fund number to which you would like to give.

See below for CS funds and scholarships.

General CS Fund

To help fund a variety of activities, events and initiatives, please make a donation to the CS Department.

Please type “Department of Computer Science – 881337.”

Investment in Excellence Scholarship

This scholarship fund was endowed in 2007 as the CS Department’s first general scholarship fund. Recipients of this scholarship are among the department’s best and brightest students.

To make a donation to this scholarship, please type “Investment in Excellence Scholarship— 860199.”

George W. Gorsline Scholarship

The scholarship was endowed by many grateful alumni to honor the department’s first department head, affectionately known as “Dr. G” to his students. He was the champion of the “underdogs,” those students who faced unique challenges, but persevered and overcame obstacles to complete a degree in CS. This scholarship is awarded to a rising senior who has made the biggest turnaround from freshman year.

To make a donation to this scholarship, please type “George Gorsline Scholarship—883979.”

Anne and George Gorsline Scholarship

This scholarship was created by alumni after the department’s 30th anniversary celebration. It was created to help encourage young women to continue their studies in CS, in memory of Dr. Gorsline and to honor his wife, Anne.

To make a donation to this scholarship, please type “Anne and George Gorsline Scholarship—885589.”

Griffith-Strader Christian Scholarship

This scholarship was created by Mr. Stephen Strader to help support continuing students from the state of Virginia.

To make a donation to this scholarship, please type “Griffith-Strader Christian Endowed Scholarship—885518.”

CGI Scholarship

After the tragedy of April 16, 2007, CGI and its employees wanted to create a scholarship to provide support to students studying computer science at Virginia Tech.

To make a donation to this scholarship, please type “CGI Computer Science Scholarship—860185.”

You can see if your company will match your gift to make it even easier to provide scholarship support to CS@VT students.

See http://www.matchinggifts com/VaTech/