Congratulations, Spring 2003 Graduates!

Dr. Edward L. Jones, Chair

Sixty (60) students applied for Spring 2003 graduation. Join me in congratulating our candidates for their hard work and perseverance, and in wishing them success starting their careers. The Spring 2003 Graduates Reception will be held in the Sun Room on Thursday, April 24 from 12 noon till 2PM.

Of the 60 B.S. degrees, 9 are in Computer Information Science, 51 in Computer Information Systems. Nineteen (19) graduate with honors: 5 Summa cum laude, 5 Magna cum laude, and 10 cum laude.


Graduates, you have done well. We have seen you grow as professionals and people of character, faith and perseverance. Value the hardships you've endured, the friends you have made, and all those indescribably wonderful Rattler moments. Live gracefully. Godspeed.

Spotlight on Current Students

Dr. Clement Allen

On April 4-5 a team from FAMU CIS participated in the First Annual Spelman College Computer Olympiad. The team, coached by Dr. Clement Allen, included students Felix Simmons, Chris Moss, Sakina McCarthy, and Safiya Henry.

The contest consisted of five events: Cryptography, Hardware/Software Integration, Robotics, Computer Programming, and Web Design. A total of eight teams participated in the contest, coming from Spelman College, Morehouse College, Clark/Atlanta University, and North Carolina A&T.

The FAMU team placed 3rd in the Hardware/Software Integration and Web Design events, and finished third overall in the contest.
Current Students (Cont’d)

March of Dimes

On Saturday, April 12, the CIS Club participated in the March of Dimes Walk for Life. The early-rising team of Valerie Fleurantin, Ketly Jean-Pierre, Gerrin Johnson, Melinda Bean, Gordon Radney, and Dr. Jones, walked the 3-mile course. The team raised money for birth defect prevention.

ACM Programming Contest

On April 19th we held our annual ACM Programming Contest. Six teams competed for top honors and the chance to represent FAMU in the ACM Southeast regional programming contest in Savannah. The winning teams:

1st Place ($100): Hugh Stone, Maurice Cain, Clifton Peters.

2nd Place ($50): Safiya Henry, Felix Simmons; 3rd Place: Marko Skarica, Jermaine Stewart, Ketly Jean-Pierre.

Everyone had fun, plenty of pizza to go around. Some left with extra pocket change. Don’t miss out on the fun next year. Special thanks to the Office of the President for $100 in prize money.

Alumni Spotlight

Alumni are doing well. We start with excerpts from Marica Mitchell ’99, a transfer to FAMU.

Date: Thu, 3 Feb 2000 22:05:06
From: maricam@us.ibm.com
Subject: It’s Marica, Your Student

... I just wanted to let you know how things are going. Well I am currently working at IBM as you know and I am also in graduate school. I am enjoying both right now. I am currently at [NC State] doing a professional Masters Degree in Computer Science. ...

I am blessed to have attended FAMU due to the fact that our CIS program whether, the Business or Science option is the best. So far grad school to me is not as challenging as I expected.

... In addition, my High Speed networks class is quite similar to Dr. Bobbie’s Data Comm. Well, I must say I am grateful for the enriching courses that I took at FAMU. I will definitely keep in touch. Please let me know if there is anything that I can [do for] you. I look forward to coming back to inform students about my experience at FAMU and what it has done for me.

Hope to hear from you soon!!!!!!!!!!

Marica N Mitchell ’99

Lincoln Chandler ‘99, a Life Gets Better scholar, is pursuing a

Alumni (Cont’d)

Ph.D. at MIT.

Date: Tue, 15 Apr 2003 09:58:25
From: Lincoln J. Chandler <ljc@mit.edu>
Subject: Fellowship Update

... Hope all is well with you. Just wanted to share the fellowship results; although I got a Honorable Mention in the Ford Competition, I did receive the National Science Foundation Fellowship, which offers a comparable level of support. Thanks for all of your assistance and support!!

Best, Lincoln

P.S. I also look forward to hearing more from the CIS Alumni Project!

We’ll Miss You, Ms. Black, Ms. Lewis!!

Effective June 30, 2003 Ms. Barbara Black and Ms. Verdell Lewis will retire. Before you leave for the summer or career, be sure to show your appreciation for their contribution to CIS.

Emails: vlewis@cis.famu.edu and bblack@cis.famu.edu.

You’re the best!
Internship? (cont'd)

- **Before you go.** If you want academic credit, pick up a copy of the Internship Guide from the CIS forms rack: not every summer job counts as a CIS internship.
- **While you are there.** Enjoy the experience, making friends, and hard work. Learn all you can. Rise to the challenge! Request a mid-term evaluation with your mentor.
- **Before you return.** Request an exit evaluation using the CIS form. This evaluation is a factor in the grade you earn. Bring back an extra copy.
- **When you get back.** Share your experience with others. Enroll in CIS4942 for general elective credit (1-12 hours).

Internships? Yes! Do it early and do it often. Come back and share what you learned with others.

Research Happenings

Two successful MSES thesis defenses were held this month:
- Supti Chaudhuri (Dr. Evans), "An Interactive Learning Environment for an Undergraduate CS Course."
- Sachin Kurdikar (Dr. Chandra), "Development of a Hierarchical Model for Scientific Data and Formatting the Data Using XML Technology."

MSES graduates, Eric Palmer and Aubrey Rembert will begin **Ph.D. programs** this fall at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Undergraduate students present their research at the June 2003 ADMI Conference in, DC.
- Bronson Pilgrim and Andrew Mims (Dr. Allen), "Building an Extensible Java Robot API."
- Cassandra Jackson (Dr. Riggs), "A Flexible Document Marking Tool."

Recent and upcoming faculty research presentations:
- Dr. Tseng, "Communication pattern based methodology for performance analysis of termination detection schemes," International Conference on Parallel and Distributed Systems 2002, in Taiwan, R.O.C.
- Dr. Granville, "Teaching principles of fuzzy logic analysis using the BK-products model," Conference of the Consortium for Computing Sciences in Colleges, April 11-12, Jackson, MS.

If you are interested in undergraduate research during 2003-04, just contact Drs. Allen, Evans, Granville, Harmon, Humphries, Jones, Riggs or Tseng, before leaving for summer break.

Going on an Internship?

An internship can change your life! Just ask any of the graduating seniors who received a job offer last summer! What are the secrets to getting that internship, getting academic credit, and turning the internship into a career opportunity?
- **Start early.** Since many out-of-town firms have a GPA requirement, start strong academically.
- **Recruit a company.** Ask others about their experiences. Check out the CIS Internship Fair at the start of the term. Research interesting companies.
- **Have them recruit you.** Go to the Career Expo, talk with company reps, tell them your desire to intern with them.

An SQL Farewell

*Melanie A. Poole '99*

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SQL > spool tribute
SQL > see us walking into Banneker Building Tech A, which one is it anyway
oh, ok we found it.
learning the fundamentals of life (and programming)
why with physics I and II, calculus I, II, AND III,
and numerical analysis
we pondered how we're going to be discreet
about our grades to our parents
so we changed to (or started out in) the business option.
trying to stay ahead in the general assembly of concepts
learned in the 'Real World'
not knowing we were in a long queue of ambitionists
with a sense of programming, file, and data structures.
while we wait for this graduation day,
(tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps...)
we developed an application in projects
some web based - cold-fusion, access based - initially,
and developer2000 based
(by the way, all rights are reserved(r) by each group).
unknown command beginning "see us wal..." - rest of line ignored.
```

SQL >
Questions &
Answers

As promised, answers to questions submitted at the February Town Hall Meeting have been posted on the CIS website. Here are some questions along with answers.

Card 85. Why don’t CIS teachers win the Teacher of the Year awards?

CIS has outstanding teachers. I, too, am disappointed that they are not recognized at the University level. Faculty members are informed of the deadlines for recommending Teacher of the Year. But because it may be awkward for a faculty member to "toot his/her own horn" our excellent CIS faculty may not push the idea to students. This award, based in part on student inputs, can and should be initiated by STUDENTS! In the future I will also inform students of the deadline and encourage students to nominate faculty members. (Hint, hint ... ACM Club.)

Card 59: Why is there so much opposition to us taking FSU courses when there obviously is a lack of diversity in regards to the CIS electives and since we have a small faculty?

There is a need to control the use of the Co-Op agreement with FAMU, not to oppose its use. The rules are that Co-Op is not a mechanism for dodging FAMU instructors or taking a short-cut to graduation. With justification, Co-Op has enabled students who are candidates for graduation to take a required course at FSU that is not offered at FAMU in the term the student will graduate. It is also used, on a case by case basis, to permit students to explore courses not offered at FAMU.

Card 4. Other schools within FAMU actively work with the Business community forming partnerships and other fundraising ventures. What such activities does our CIS program perform and to what extent do you plan to step it up in the future?

The CIS Department Strategic Plan calls for the establishment of an External (Corporate) Advisory Group. This group will have several functions: (a) curriculum review and feedback; (b) recruitment of interns and entry-level professionals; (c) advocacy for CIS to FAMU administration and corporations; (d) fund raising. We expect the group to be functional in Fall 2003.

Card 45. We students need early notification, especially of critical updates.

All CIS students are assigned a CIS username and password. The official means of communication is through these assigned email accounts. Students have a responsibility to do the following:

- Know your CIS username and password;
- Use the departmental email. You can telnet to Unix, login, and use the "pine" mail system - ideal when you're on campus. Or you may use the WebMail available through the CIS website (www.cis.famu.edu).
- If you prefer an outside mail service, such as yahoo.com, you can forward email sent to your departmental account to your private service. To do this, login into Unix, create a file named ".forward" (read "dot forward", all lower case), add a line to the file identifying your private email account, such as "drjones@yahoo.com"; save the file. Then type this Unix command: chmod 755 .forward
- Check your email daily;
- If you change email service, update the .forward file.

Card 53. [Students need] Better ways of having access to computer projects as well as dialing, submission, and safer services while on-line. A CIS Strategic Plan for Computing is being developed. The theme is "ubiquitous computing," which means increasing the options you have for doing the computing related to your program of study. A goal is to enable students to use the full power of their home computers, including telecommunication speed and installed software. The University-level concern is "safe" computing, where the actions of remote users can not jeopardize the integrity of computing resources for other users.

Card 73. Why is it that the CIS department does not make it mandatory for students to have an internship or at least have an internship program where students can receive advanced opportunities?

Internships are strongly promoted but, ultimately, they are voluntary, subject to the acceptance of a student by a company, which imposes its own requirements such as GPA and classification. For these reasons, internship can not be mandated. Having an "internal" internship program requires things we don't have: managers, enterprise-related projects, money to pay students, etc. Opportunities do present themselves through requests from campus offices and area businesses, but these are often not known far in advance, but require an immediate response, often in the middle of a semester after student schedules are set.