



College of Computing and Informatics
UNC CHARLOTTE

ALUMNI NEWS

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>> My name is Marjorie Bray, and I am the new Director of Development for the College of Computing and Informatics (CCI). I have been with the College for seven months, and I am really enjoying it here! In addition to working closely with the College leadership team and faculty to lead and coordinate in CCI's marketing and fund raising efforts, I will also be working with the College's alumni in building an alumni presence for CCI.



This is your first edition of CCI's alumni newsletter, and I hope you find it informative. This publication will be produced monthly and will contain alumni and College updates, as well as CCI alumni events. Over the next year, we are planning some fun-focused CCI alumni events, so stay tuned and please join us! If you have any feedback for the College or a proposed CCI alumni event that you think would be fun, please let me know.

I look forward to meeting you at one of our alumni events in the future!

My best,

Marjorie Bray

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>> A team of students from UNC Charlotte's College of Computing and Informatics' Department of Software and Information Systems (SIS) finished second in the Southeast Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (SECCDC) held recently at Kennesaw State University. The SIS team competed against six other teams from Chattanooga State Community College, Fountainhead College of Technology, Kennesaw State University, Mercer University, Northern Kentucky University, and the University of Louisville.

SIS teams are not new to this competition. Last year, they finished first. Since 2005, SIS teams have either finished first or second in the SECCDC. This year, the team scored its highest point total ever in the competition. In 2006, another group of students from SIS won the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition that is held annually at the University of Texas, San Antonio, and is sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security.

>> **Save the Date!**

CCI will host its 11th annual Cyber Security Symposium on the UNC Charlotte campus on Tuesday, November 2, 2010. What has become the premier security conference in the region will again feature expert guest speakers from around the country who will address the latest issues surrounding cyber crime and what is being done to combat this ever-increasing global problem. Please contact Marjorie Bray for sponsorship opportunities.

>> CCI Computer Science graduate student, Katelyn Doran, has received a prestigious NASA Fellowship. Ms. Doran will receive a total stipend of \$30,000 for the 2010-2011 school year. The award is renewable for up to three years through the NASA Graduate Student Researchers Program (GSRP). NASA accepted Ms. Doran's proposal to address the need for research and statistical evaluation of NASA's education programs. She will be spending ten weeks this summer at NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. and the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD.

>> **The Southeast Visualization and Analytics Center (SVAC) at UNC Charlotte's College of Computing and Informatics (CCI) is now a formal partner in conjunction with two of the Department of Homeland Security's Centers of Excellence.** The VisCenter is playing a leading research role with the Center of Excellence for Visual Analytics for Command and Control in Interoperability (VACCINE) and the Center of Excellence for Natural Disasters and Coastal Infrastructures Emergency Management (DIEM).

"We were asked to participate in these projects because of our longstanding leadership in visual analytics and our development of applications for Homeland Security problems for the last several years," said William Ribarsky, Ph.D., Director of the SVAC and Chair of the Department of Computer Science. "By participating in one of the biggest and most prominent visual analytics efforts with DHS in the United States, we have developed techniques to explore large-scale data that streams in from various sources and sensors. These tools allow for real-time analysis of information during, let's say, a major urban disaster, where immediate emergency response decision-making is critical. No longer will responders be referring to static plans but information that is streaming in live from a crisis situation."

The Department of Homeland Security is very broad now and not just security against terrorist activity or CyberCrime. It's involved with police and firefighters, coastal inspectors, and serves as a responder to natural disasters and pandemics.



"Not only will our research be used on a national and international level, but locally and regionally as well," said Ribarsky. "These tools that are being developed will be used by local power companies, the banking industry, police and firefighters, the regional director of the Department of Homeland Security, others."

CCI joins the likes of Purdue, Stanford, the University of Washington, Penn State, Rutgers, Georgia Tech, UNC Chapel Hill, Mississippi State, and NC State who are all key partners in the Department of Homeland Security's Centers of Excellence.

SVAC has also received funding for visualization and analytics research in conjunction with projects with the University of Constance in Germany, and Simon Frazier University in Canada. Two Ph.D. students have also received DHS Fellowships.

>> **The first graduates of the Department of Bioinformatics and Genomics' Professional Science Master's degree program at CCI have received exclusive bioinformatics positions in North and South Carolina.** Stephen McGee is now employed by Greenwood Genetics



Center, in Greenwood, South Carolina. The Greenwood Genetic Center works closely with the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs to provide diagnostic services, treatment, and prevention programs to reduce the risk and severity of disabling conditions. Eric Keller is now employed by BioCytics™, in Huntersville, North Carolina. Biocytics™ researches and develops novel cellular therapies for diseases and ways to

accelerate personalized medicine to market.

>> As a '98' UNC Charlotte graduate living in Charlotte, I enjoy and take pride in keeping up with "what's happening" at the University. Working in IT, I have always been particularly interested in how the Computing/Engineering programs have progressed and especially the research work that is being performed. Recently I had the opportunity to become more involved as an alumnus and tour the College of Computing and Informatics (CCI). It's been said that UNC Charlotte is one of region's best kept secrets, and, after seeing some of the work being performed at CCI, I tend to agree. Not only was I unaware of the depth of the programs being offered and the specialized labs that are available, but also the important research work being performed within them – from the powerful modeling and analysis methods being developed in the Charlotte VisCenter to the interactive systems being created in the Distributed Artificial Intelligence Lab to the unique expertise within the Cyber Defense/Network Assurability Center, just to name a few. I definitely enjoyed the tour and was very impressed with how CCI is focusing on emerging technology and has adapted each of their programs to the specific needs of businesses within our region.

CCI is looking to reach out and reconnect with alumni, especially those who are employed locally in a computing, informatics, or a related technology field. An email survey was recently sent out and response was very positive. Over the coming months, you'll be receiving more information on CCI alumni events and opportunities. I encourage you to reconnect with CCI!

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