

summer 1998

@csc.calpoly.edu

## Some things change ~ Some things don't . . . Alumni Visits to Cal Poly

**O**ne of the most valuable contributions you can make to the Computer Science Department at Cal Poly is to share your insight and experience with current students. Faculty and students alike appreciate the effort you put forth to visit the department and address classes and student organizations. We spoke with several recent visitors about their impressions of our current students, the industry, and how it has changed since they were students here. Here's what they said.

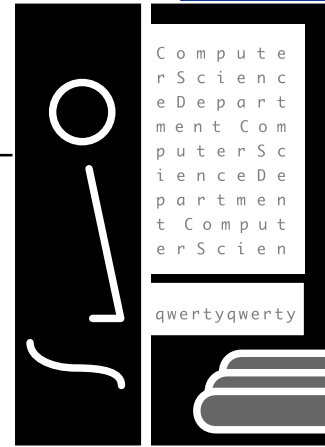
**Eddi Looy** is an investment representative with Protective Financial. She graduated from Cal Poly in 1974 with a bachelors degree in Statistics, when it was part of the Computer Science Department. Since then, "The whole field has changed!" she explains.

***"Our only labs were for  
hand-held calculators."***

She recalls learning assembly language and the punch cards used for programming, which did not allow for the quick feedback students are so used to today at Cal Poly.

**Sean Albright** is a Senior Associate at Cambridge Technology Partners. He is

*Continued. page 10*



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### YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE TO US!

*We thank the following contributors to the Computer Science Department. One hundred percent of this money goes to the department and is used to benefit both the students and faculty professional development, which indirectly benefits the students.*

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## Students & Faculty Benefit From Alumni Contributions

Your personal and corporate gifts continue to have an enormous impact on the Computer Science programs at Cal Poly, as funds from the state continue to come short of full funding of the programs' needs. With your support, we have funded hardware and software purchases, student awards, faculty travel and professional development, student employment in our laboratories and in support of faculty research, and student events such as the annual banquet and New Student Open House. We thank you, knowing that without your support, the excellence of our programs would be diminished.

For those of you who contribute in general support of the Computer Science Department,



**Erika Rogers,**  
*Associate Professor, uses the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory to have students apply AI techniques and methods to develop software, in keeping with the Cal Poly philosophy of learn-by-doing. Funding is being sought to build a facility with sufficient resources to run the complex software used in AI.*

we anticipate spending \$60,000 to replace our aging department file servers (phoenix and galaxy) and are

looking to match the anonymous endowment for Ph.D. support (see page 5) with a similar program for Computer Science master's students.

Many of you have expressed interest in supporting specific needs. We currently have separate funds for the following purposes. In each case, every dollar you donate goes directly to the stated purpose.

### Computer Science Scholarships:

This scholarship program was established to honor donations from individuals who wish to award excellence in Computer Science. Typically, department scholarship programs receive gifts such as alumni donations and memorials which are not expected to reach endowment levels. Funding will vary from year to year and individual donations may be combined to make any given award. Donations may be made to the fund at any time during the year. The Computer Science Awards Committee, made up of Computer Science faculty, selects the recipients.

### Computer Science Student System Administration:

This fund was established to support student system administrators in the Computer Systems Laboratory. These students, who have called themselves Lab Rats for as long as anyone around here remembers, are essential to the operation of the nearly \$3 million of computer equipment in the department. This fund augments state funding used.

### Computer Science Professional Development:

This fund supports professional development of the faculty and professional staff. It is primarily used for travel to conferences and is used to supplement limited state funding in this area.



# Alumni Enjoy Mini-Reunion in Santa Clara

Computer Science alumni from the late 1970s and early 1980s gathered at Pedro's in Santa Clara for a small reunion. Alums **Kathy DeMartini** and **Janet Morris** brought the group together to catch up on news and find out what everyone is doing.

Bay Area alumni who attended included **Kathy DeMartini** (PDH Inc.), **Louis DeMartini** (Tasso Group

Inc.), **Gary Bloom** (Oracle), **Joe Pasqua** (Adobe), **Janet Morris** (Hewlett-Packard), **Farzad Nazem** (Yahoo), **Mark Swanson** (Network General), and **Kim Rogers** (Hewlett-Packard). Professors Jim Beug, Chris Buckalew and Emile Attala represented Cal Poly, along with College of Engineering's Director of Development, Linda Kristenson.

The group exchanged contact information and came away determined not to wait so long before getting together again.

If you are interested in hosting or helping with an alumni gathering, informal or formal, large or small, please let us know. We would be delighted to assist you and faculty would be honored to participate in your event.

# Web Page Helps CSC Alumni Keep in Touch

Nearly 250 Computer Science alumni have listed themselves on the alumni web page [www.csc.calpoly.edu/~alum](http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/~alum), or go through the Computer Science web page at [www.csc.calpoly.edu](http://www.csc.calpoly.edu). If you haven't had a chance to check it out, take a few minutes to do so. Enter your own data, find out where your old classmates are working, send them email! Listings can be accessed by year of graduation or by last name.

If you are already listed and have changed jobs, be sure to update your information. If you have any suggestions for increasing the usefulness of this page, please let Professor Dan Stearns (MSCS 1974) know.



*Joshua Lober, Class of '94, is one of many alumni who have linked their personal or business web-site to the CSC Alumni web page.*

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## Student Java Work Earns National Recognition

Several Cal Poly students have won national recognition from ACM for their work in Java.

Computer Science undergrads **Brian Kurotsuchi** and **S. Fouzi Husaini** were published in the Winter 1998 issue of *ACM Crossroads*. Their articles, "The Wonders of Java Object Serialization," and "Using the Java Native Interface," were included in the Java-themed issue.

Cal Poly Computer Science graduate student, **Ken Wingerden**, received second place honors in the ACM/IBM "1997 Quest for Java" worldwide development contest. The contest for ACM student members was created to motivate and assist the next generation of computer professionals in their understanding of business and educational benefits of Java.

Mr. Wingerden's submission was "Remote Java Draw," an applet and application for a

collaborative drawing tool for the Internet. It was the test applet for his master's thesis. All "Quest for Java" applets and applications must solve real-world problems or enable typical businesses or transactions.

According to Lillian Israel, ACM director of membership and ACM coordinator of "Quest for Java", "The scope of the Java projects we received, and the innovation and creativity they exhibit, reveal a great enthusiasm for Java among university students around the world. The high quality of the top winning projects proves that Java has a strong future – its uses are limited only by the imagination."

Java is currently being used at Cal Poly in CSC 435, Introduction to Object Oriented Design Using GUIs.

## CSC Program Stays in Good Company with Continued Accreditation

The undergraduate program in computer science has received continuing accreditation by the Computer Science Accreditation Commission of the Computing Sciences Accreditation Board, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors.

Accreditation is based on satisfying minimum educational criteria. Cal Poly's computer science program was first accredited in 1986 and is one of only 13 accredited computer science programs in the California State University system. Other accredited institutions include such programs as University of California programs at Berkeley, Davis, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, United States Air Force Academy and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A complete list of accredited computer science programs can be found at [www.acm.org/~csab](http://www.acm.org/~csab).

# Anonymous Bequest Funds CSC PhD Study

An anonymous donor who took Computer Science classes at Cal Poly 15 years ago has made a bequest which will enable selected Cal Poly students to study for doctoral degrees in computer science. The bequest of \$1 million includes an immediate endowment of \$600,000, the income from which will provide fellowships to several students each year. The first awards are anticipated in Fall 1998.

According to the wishes of the donor, recipients will be determined by a committee of professors from Cal Poly's Computer Science Department.

Because Cal Poly offers no Ph.D. programs, recipients will use the funds to study at other universities, or come as Ph.D. candidates to perform

applied research at Cal Poly.

The nationwide shortage of doctoral students in computer science is caused in part by the robust job market for undergraduate students. When students weigh the time and cost of graduate school against their immediate earning potential, there is a tremendous disincentive. These fellowships will offset the disincentive.



The Computer Science Department also seeks support for a matching endowment for students entering the master's program in computer science at Cal

Poly. Please contact Jim Beug if you are aware of a potential source of funds or would be willing to help with the effort.

## A Ph.D. in Computer Science? Opportunity knocks!

Thinking of returning to school to earn a Ph.D. in computer science? If so, opportunity knocks.

The Cal Poly Computer Science Department has received a generous endowment bequest to be used in support of Ph.D. study in Computer Science. Proceeds from the funds, given by an anonymous donor, will provide a fellowship for a Cal Poly graduate to pursue a Ph.D. at an accredited university of his/her choice. For further information, contact the CSC Graduate Committee, Computer Science Department, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407; or send Email to [jlbeug@calpoly.edu](mailto:jlbeug@calpoly.edu).



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## New Hires, Retirements Change the Face of the Faculty

**T**he Computer Science Department is proud to announce the addition of four new faculty, while several retirements have forced us to bid farewell to some favorite faces.

**Dr. Lewis Hitchner** joined the Computer Science Department faculty in Fall 1996 following three quarters as a visiting lecturer. Dr. Hitchner's research interests are virtual reality systems and real-time visualization/simulation software, 3D interactive computer graphics, and digital image processing software. He has previously been a faculty member at UC Santa Cruz, a researcher in virtual reality at NASA Ames Research Center, and an employee or consultant for both established and start-up companies.

**Dr. Sigurd Meldal** came to Cal Poly in Fall 1997 after serving as a Visiting Professor at Stanford University, and Professor and Chair of the Department of Informatics at the University of Bergen (Norway). His research focus is the systematic design and implementation of distributed software architectures. Recently he has turned his attention to the automatic instrumentation of Java-based systems, showing how such instrumentation can identify incorrect system behavior. Dr. Meldal is an editor of the *Nordic Journal of Computing* and has published one book and more than 60 technical papers.

**Dr. Erika Rogers** was an Associate Professor at Clark Atlanta University in Georgia before joining the Computer Science Department at Cal



**Some faces stay the same** - Professor **Elmo Keller** goes over a lab assignment in CSC 453, *Introduction to Operating Systems*, where students gain experience in the modification and maintenance of time-shared operating systems.



Poly in Winter 1998. Her research interests emphasize the use of cognitive science and artificial intelligence techniques for developing cooperative intelligent computer assistants for visual problem-solving. She worked in industry for several years and brought with her to Cal Poly several collaborative funded projects, including the prestigious National Science Foundation POWRE (Professional Opportunities for Women in Research and Education) Program grant.

**Dr. Chris Scheiman** received a joint appointment with the Computer Science Department and the Computer Engineering Program in Fall 1996. His current area of

interest is the fast communication of mechanisms needed to connect personal computers or workstations together to form a parallel platform. He recently completed a post-doctoral research assignment at University of California, Santa Barbara.

Retirements have included some of the most senior members of the department.

**Dr. Daniel Stubbs** is pursuing his interest in C/C++ in his retirement, effective Fall 1997. **Dr. Emile Attala** retired in Spring 1997 and will devote his time and energy to travel as well as Year 2000 consulting assignments.

**Dr. S. Ron Oliver** has fulfilled one of his lifetime

goals by retiring from the sunny Central Coast to the mountains of Colorado in Summer 1997. He and his wife, Joy, are constructing an "earthship", an alternative earth-friendly human habitat! **Dr. Patrick Wheatley** entered a faculty early retirement program in Spring 1998, which will allow him to continue his contributions to the department on a half-time basis.

In related news, **Reino Hannula** has moved from the San Luis Obispo area to San Diego and **Dr. Roger Camp** and his family have moved to Austin, Texas.



## Keeping in Touch

A Message From Department  
Chair, Dr. James Beug

In support of life-long learning and our ongoing commitment to our graduates, the department would like to help organize alumni get-togethers in your neighborhood. Initially this would be to provide a chance for Poly CSC alums to network with one another and to learn what members of the department are currently doing. We would also like to provide support for ongoing alumni learning in the form of industry seminars in your area, or in San Luis Obispo.

In the next year I hope to pay visits to the Pacific Northwest,

Denver, Chicago, and the Research Triangle Park area. If you would be interested in attending such events, or better yet, would like to get involved in organizing alumni events, please contact me at: **jlbeug@calpoly.edu**.

Another way to stay in touch is to visit our web site at **www/csc/calpoly.edu**, and follow it's link to our alumni page.

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# Graphics Program Continues to Enjoy Success and Visibility

by Chris Buckalew

**T**he last year has seen more changes in the Computer Graphics Laboratory. It has now become the most powerful workstation lab on the Cal Poly campus with the generosity of Silicon Graphics and others. We now have 14 Indys, each with 96M of memory, several with R5K processors, and two with Indy Video boards, plus the Presenter projection panel used for class demos.

Additionally, Rhythm & Hues has donated a large SGI file server for the Computer Graphics Lab. The full Alias/Wavefront suite has also been installed on several of the SGIs.

Silicon Graphics has been very generous to the College of Engineering, donating more than \$200,000 of equipment in recent years. We need to continue to update this equipment, and to that end we would like to know how many of our graduates work at SGI. I would personally appreciate it if you could drop me a line via Email to say hi; also, I can add to my list of people to see when I visit SGI! My Email is **buckalew@calpoly.edu**.

On a related note, the Computer Science Department continues to expand its placement of graduates in animation production studios. At last count, there are two at Industrial Light & Magic, three at Disney Feature Animation, one at Digital

Domain, one at Sony Imageworks, one at Pacific Data Images, and one at Motion Factory. Students have also worked at Rhythm & Hues (hence the donation mentioned above), Metrolight Studios, Boss, and Warner. I watch movie credits much more closely than I used to, and I frequently see the names of our grads in the special effects sections!

Although many graphics grads aspire to animation production, others are interested in game development, scientific visualization, Windows app development, desktop publishing, or operating systems support. I meet many of you at SIGGRAPH each year. If you're doing work in computer graphics please let me know! Our current students would be interested in knowing what sorts of jobs our grads are doing, and we always like to arrange for grads to come and give talks about their experiences.

Finally, one of the graphics students (now graduated and working for Pacific Data Images as an assistant effects animator) received special recognition last Spring Quarter: **Scott Peterson** took first place in the CSU Student Research Competition with his senior project implementation of soft objects (blobby models, in the jargon),

*Continued page 11*





## Microsoft Donation Funds NT Access

Thanks in part to the outstanding job performance of our alumni at Microsoft Corporation, the Computer Science Department was the recipient of a \$55,000 cash gift from Microsoft to provide computer science students and faculty access to Windows NT based computers. Under the direction of Dr. Laurian Chirica, the funds were used to purchase 20 workstations and related technology.

Microsoft followed up their gift with the donation of approximately \$54,000 of software. The lab opened Fall 1997.

A server for the laboratory was purchased with a portion of a National Science

Foundation grant and is used as a file, database and Web server. It can be accessed from faculty offices, the new lab, and other department facilities.



*Students in Assistant Professor **Emilia Villarreal's** database course have benefited from recent donations by Microsoft, Oracle, and Borland. The lab provides hands-on experience to solve common data base problems, and DBMS design and implementation problems.*

The new lab supports the database courses as well as the core curriculum in Computer Science, which is currently based on the C++ language.

According to the Microsoft recruiter, Cal Poly Computer Science alumni at Microsoft include: **Paul David, Scott Senkeresty, Chris Ambler, Cy Cedar, Gwenn Krossa-Friesen, Tim Crooks, Eric Stenson, Doron Holan, Malcaam Haar, Mikey**

**Wetzel, Ming Hsuing-Chou, Matthew Wetmore, Robert Paplin, David Perdue, Michele Gamboa and Joel Wiljanen.** (If you work for Microsoft and you're not on this list, please let us know where you're working and what you're doing.)

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## No Surprise: CSC Grads in High Demand

According to the latest Cal Poly Employment Status Report, computer science graduates are part of the upward trend in full-time employment for the university. In addition to the overall trend, the department has seen a sharp increase in the number of recruiters seeking our graduates and in the number and caliber of job offers per student. Graduates from our department are among the highest paid engineers, as well as in the

top salary rankings for Cal Poly as a whole.

According to the latest "Graduate Status Report" from Career Services at Cal Poly, the median monthly starting salary for Computer Science graduates is \$3,750, with amounts ranging from \$2,080 to \$4400. [Figures include part-time positions.]

Job titles include Software Engineer, System Administrator, Programmer, Assistant Effects Animator and

Network Support. Major employers include Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Lockheed Martin and Sun Microsystems. Most graduates continue to live in California, with relatively few leaving the state or continuing to graduate school. For the first time, one-third of those responding to the survey took positions in the San Luis Obispo area, reflecting the increase of professional computer science positions in the community.



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Phillip & Carleen Neuman  
Rainer & Terry Neumann  
Kimngan Nguyen  
Christian &  
Saovanit Nielsen  
Peter Niemann  
Victoria Nier  
Robert Noguchi  
Dennis Norgord  
Benjamin &  
Carolyn Norman  
William &  
Carla O'Shaughnessy  
Michael Okamoto  
Neal & Diane Openshaw  
Clinton-Eugene Oram  
Robin Palmtag  
Robert Paplin  
Heung-Sung Park  
Alan & Maureen Parry  
Luis Pascual Jr.  
Richard Peifer  
Karen Pernu  
Christopher Pinheiro  
Raymond Potter  
PG&E Matching Gifts  
Program

## ALUMS, CONT.

currently working on a Web-enabled data warehouse/salesforce automation system.

buildings on campus, and the computer science building has been renamed. Also, "the Rat's

from Cal Poly with a B.S. in computer science in 1982. During her Cal Poly visit, her impression was that the environment was very similar to the time when she was a student: "same positive learning environment,

**"... students show an increased awareness of Web technology."**

Mr. Albright earned a bachelors degree from Cal Poly's Computer Science Department in 1994. He has conducted several interviews at Cal Poly and has a high regard for the students' abilities. He believes that the interview process for graduating students has remained fairly consistent since he graduated, but says that the students show an increased awareness and experience of Web technology. Cambridge Technology has quite a few Cal Poly alums on staff in the Bay Area and Southern California.

**Steve DeJarnett** is a Lead Software Engineer with Philips Multimedia Center. He has recently been experimenting with new ideas for consumer services on the Web. His first project is called PlanetSearch and can be found at [www.planetsearch.com](http://www.planetsearch.com). Mr. DeJarnett graduated

from Cal Poly in 1989. Since then, he says, there are at least a half dozen new

Nest has better equipment." Mr. DeJarnett was especially pleased to notice that "people now understand the value of networked computers."

During his campus visit, Mr. DeJarnett inter-

viewed students primarily from the EE department. However, he has had great success recruiting students from the Computer Science Department in the past and is confident of the same in the future.

**Janet Morris** is a Knowledge Consultant for the Software Services Division of Hewlett-Packard. She is currently investigating knowledge system usage by HP's Support Engineers to propose content

accessibility of professors, quality of classes and other resources, excellent student participation and drive, variety of extracurricular activities, competent and

helpful office staff, commitment to

**"... the Rat's Nest has better equipment."**

students, etc." However, Ms. Morris did notice some significant changes to the campus, including new buildings and centers, a lower percentage of female students in the senior seminar class, and that the students she spoke to seemed interested in a broader range of topics.

**Linda Burt** is a Product Marketing Manager for Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI). She manages the Supportfolio product, which is SGI's

electronic support tools suite. It allows customers to electronically log their support calls, search and

**"Same positive learning environment, accessibility of professors, quality of classes . . ."**

projects to achieve significant reductions in HP support costs. Ms. Morris graduated

download patches, and search for support information, all without having to make a



phone call to the support center. Ms. Burt graduated from Cal Poly in 1990 with a

***“... students are bright, have good technical depth.”***

B.S. in Electronic Engineering. “The Computer Engineering program was just getting started as I graduated, so it is great to see it really going strong.” Ms. Burt notes that “Cal Poly is still a beautiful campus, with lots of opportunities for the students to learn and grow through both classroom work and

extracurricular activities.” She enjoys recruiting at Cal Poly because “the students are very

bright, have good technical depth (I am usually looking for computer

science and engineering students), and are very personable.” There are quite a few Cal Poly graduates at SGI, with more sure to come due to recent job offers.

**David Intersimone** is

currently Director of Developer Relations for Inprise Corporation. Mr. Intersimone graduated from Cal Poly with a BS in Computer Science in 1973. He says that the main difference he notices today is that Cal Poly has so much more computing equipment! “In 1969 and 1970, we used punch cards. With personal computers, graphics workstations, computer labs, and multimedia, students today have a wealth of hardware and software to

***“The spirit on the Cal Poly campus is still great.”***

*The gardens near the faculty courtyards remain a popular gathering place.*



help in the learning of computer science.” However, Mr. Intersimone stresses the important similarities which are a continuing part of the Cal Poly tradition. “The spirit on the Cal Poly campus is still great. The surroundings (trees, hills, air, beach, town) are very conducive to learning, and the professors are top notch.”

## GRAPHICS, CONTINUED

done in Open Inventor. This competition encompassed all 20 California State Universities, and it included all engineering departments, not just computer science departments.

***Congratulations, Scott!***

***@csc.calpoly.edu is published by the Computer Science Department at California Polytechnic State University. Inquiries, suggestions and comments are welcome and should be addressed to:***

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Every effort has been made to ensure the completeness and accuracy of this listing of contributions made through May 1998. Regrettably, mistakes do sometimes occur. If you find an error, please do not hesitate to contact the Computer Science Department, 805.756.2824.

Please help us keep Cal Poly Computer Science Department a leader in the field by giving us your valuable insight so that we can prepare our graduating students for careers in computer science.

Please feel free to use additional pages.

You can FAX to:  
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**WE NEED  
YOUR  
INPUT!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_ BS or MS (circle)

Where are you and what are you doing now? Please include current job title and employer.

From Your perspective, what should the Cal Poly Computer Science Department be doing today to prepare its graduates for their futures?

As an alumnus, what would you like from the Computer Science Department now and in the future?

Are you interested in opportunities for interaction with fellow alumni and Computer Science Department faculty/staff?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am interested - here are some suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to bring away from such an opportunity:

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to contribute to such an opportunity:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not interested at this time.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please list me on the CSC web site alumni page (see page 7).

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

***Please send or Fax us your business card. Thank you.***

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