

Report on the 2009 University of Sydney IT Alumni Association Annual General Meeting

The 2009 annual general meeting for the University of Sydney IT Alumni Association was held on Thursday 16th July 2009 at 6pm in the SIT Lecture Theatre.

The meeting began with a report on the activities of the past year from USITAA President Mark Webb.

Alumni activities

Engineering Sydney Young Alumni of the Year Award

In October USITAA members Simon Ratner and Ryan Junee were named Engineering Sydney Young Alumni of the Year award. USITAA executive member Judy Kay nominated Simon and Ryan for the award which recognises engineering alumni who have shown outstanding creativity, dedication or leadership in their professional endeavours

End Of year Function

Around 100 staff students and alumni attended the School of IT / USITAA / SUITS End of Year Function (EOyF) in November 2008. The event was kindly sponsored by Optiver.

Spring Back to Sydney

USITAA took part in the Spring Back to Sydney Alumni Reunion. Executive committee members met with alumni who graduated in a year ending in '8'.

2009 Graduation Dinner

On the evening before graduations, alumni, staff and students joined guest speaker and alumnus Anna Cicognani in congratulating graduands. The formal dinner was held in the Winter Garden and was kindly sponsored by Optiver.

Outreach for the School

2008 Engineering Sydney Research Conversazione

Executive committee members joined over 300 industry representatives at the

Faculty of Engineering and IT's annual Research Conversazione in October 2008.

SUITS Dinner

USITAA President Mark Webb was invited to address the Sydney University IT Society (SUITS) Celebratory Dinner.

High School Career Counsellors and Principals' Breakfast

USITAA executive committee members attended the High School Career Counsellors and Principals' Breakfast in 2008 and 2009. The event offers the chance to talk directly to high school principals and careers counsellors about careers in IT.

Sydney Uni Live

In 2008 and 2009, USITAA members worked with the School promoting IT to potential students at the biggest recruitment event run by the University.

Other initiatives

Surveys

Over a hundred people took part in two surveys conducted by USITAA. The surveys, one aimed at alumni and the other for current students, have helped to raise awareness of USITAA and given the Executive Committee firm ideas on what alumni want from their association.

The survey results have been published on the website, please visit: www.it.usyd.edu.au/alumni.

Social Networking sites

There are Facebook and LinkedIn social networking group sites for USITAA. Currently, the Facebook site has 131 members, and LinkedIn, 239 members.

In conclusion, Mark thanked all the members who supported USITAA with these functions and initiatives, and particularly the executive committee who had worked with him over the past year establishing the association,

Rebekah Griffin, Philip Chung, Franc Carter, Judy Kay, Matthew Pittman and Greg Ryan.

Election of the Executive Committee

Head of School Associate Professor Sanjay Chawla took over the meeting at this point to conduct the election of the executive committee. Nominations were taken before the meeting, and the following members were unanimously elected:

Office bearers

President

Mark Webb, BSc (94), BEng (96)
Director, Workforce Systems, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet

Vice-President

Franc Carter, BSc Hons (95)
Systems Architect, SIRCA Ltd

Secretary and Treasurer

Josephine Spongberg, Staff member
Administrative Officer, School of IT

Committee members

Judy Kay, BSc Hons (74), MSc (78), PhD (99)

Professor, School of IT

Phillip Wu, BSc (79)
NSW Department of Lands

Other business

Prize draw

Sanjay drew the prize for taking part in the alumni survey. The prize, \$AU150 Amazon.com voucher was won by Lachlan Patrick, BSc (92), PhD (02). Congratulations, and happy spending!

The meeting closed at 6.30pm, and was followed by canapes and a talk on "Information Surveillance Management Systems: Architecture and Implementation". by Associate Professor Chawla.



The University of Sydney
Alumni

SoIT's News School of IT Alumni Newsletter

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Message from the President

Hello all and welcome to the next edition of SoIT's News. It was great to meet up with some of you at the recent AGM and talk by Head of School Sanjay Chawla. Sanjay's talk was excellent and even helped provide some insight into a business intelligence issue one of my teams had been struggling with at work, so attending was extremely worthwhile for me personally. I'm looking forward to future sessions.

I was honoured to be reelected to the USITAA executive and to continue working with Franc, Josephine and Judy. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Phillip Wu to the executive and to thank outgoing executive members Rebekah Griffin, Philip Chung, Matthew Pittman and Greg Ryan, who provided invaluable support to the association through it's first year.

After trying a variety of different ways to engage with alumni over the last 12 months, I'm looking forward to focusing in on those options that have proven most valuable. We seem to have gained most success by focusing on virtual methods of communication and interaction, and it is my intention

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Dr Trevor Bird (CSIRO ICT Centre) and Vinita Deshpande

Faculty of Engineering and IT Prizes & Scholarships Presentation Ceremony

For the first time, School of IT prizes and scholarships were awarded as part of the Faculty of Engineering and IT Prizes and Scholarships Presentation Ceremony at the Seymour Centre.

I was very pleased to take part in this ceremony, which included the presentation of two new IT awards; the CSIRO ICT Centre IT Undergraduate Entrance Scholarship and the Google Prize for Excellence in Computer Science. The CSIRO ICT Centre IT Undergraduate Entrance Scholarship aims to encourage high-performing students entering the first year of an undergraduate course in the School of Information Technologies. Up to two scholarships valued at \$2,000 each will be awarded annually to the top two students enrolling in IT degrees at the School of IT.

The Google Prize for Excellence in Computer Science was established to

encourage high achieving computer science students to undertake Honours. The prize, valued at \$1,000 will be awarded annually to the third year student with the most outstanding performance in the computer science stream of the BIT degree.

On behalf of the School I would like to congratulate to the following students, for their high achievement in 2008:

Susan Howlett - awarded the Allan Bromley Prize for receiving the highest mark for an IT Honours thesis, presented by Ms Anne Bromley.

James Constable - awarded the Ian Jackson Memorial Prize for senior computer science.

Bin Zhou - awarded the Foundation for Information Technology Prize for junior computer science.

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Join the Alumni web community or
update your details:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni>

and sign up for your lifelong email
forwarding service.

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The University of Sydney
Alumni



Dominick Ng and SIT alumnus Sam Karatasas (CISCO)



Raymes Khoury and John Warren (MRA)



Mathew Rodley and Mohamed Odah (Soprano Design)



Graduation Day - Dr Peng Gong, Dr Chung (Jan) Chan, Professor David Feng, Dr Trent Apted, Professor Judy Kay, Associate Professor Bob Kummerfeld, Dr David Carmichael and Dr William Niu

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to continue exploring the potential of those channels.

Well done to all the prize winner's listed in this month's edition. It is inspiring to see the talent of those coming through the School of IT. I'd also like to welcome those that have recently graduated to the ranks of full alumni membership. I hope you will all stay in contact with the university and the School and will take your place as a vibrant part of the alumni community.

That's all for this month. I look forward to meeting many of you as the year progresses.

Mark Webb
President, The University of Sydney IT Alumni Association (USITAA)

SIT goes green with Sun Microsystems

Sun Microsystems and the University of Sydney are collaborating to improve computing education in multi-core technology.

School of IT Senior Lecturer Dr Bernhard Scholz says that multi-core technology is the future of computing; "The clock-speed of single-core CPUs has reached its physical limits. With the omnipresence of multi-core processors, multi-core technology education is essential and will form a base requirement in our curriculum to educate the next generation of computer engineers."

With this in mind, Sun Microsystems recently donated a SPARC Enterprise T5120 computer server to the School. The server has two UltraSPARC T2 processors with 8 cores and 64 threads. "Building on fruitful research collaborations between the two institutions, Sun Microsystems was encouraged to extend our university involvement to student education – the researchers of the future" said Dr Cristina Cifuentes of Sun Microsystems.

Multi-core technology is consistent with reducing greenhouse gas emissions in IT. By implementing efficient parallel software for multi-core computers the energy consumption of computers can be reduced. Academic staff at the School of Information Technologies are exciting to be able to utilise this new technology in teaching.

Presentation Ceremony from Page 1

Dominic Else - awarded the Foundation for Information Technology Second Prize for junior computer science.

Alexander Sharp - awarded Microsoft Research Asia Scholarship.

Raymes Khoury - awarded the Professor John Rosenberg Prize for Excellence in Computer Science and the Microsoft Research Asia Prize for Multimedia Technology.

Dominic Balasuriya, Egor Karpenkov, Sophie Liang and Stephen Merity - awarded the Microsoft Research Asia Prize for Junior Software Development Projects.

Benjamin Chin, Felix Gordon, Benjamin Itzstein, Duncan Matheson and Jason Wang - awarded Microsoft Research Asia Prize for Senior Software Development Projects.

The Microsoft Research Asia prizes and scholarship were presented by Mr John Warren, the University Relations Manager for Microsoft Research Asia.

Albert Cansino, Nirmala Fernandes, Caroline Lim, Julines Liong, Raymond Murtihardjana and Michael Ong - awarded the Accenture Prize for the most professional project in ISYS3400.

Dominick Ng - awarded the CISCO Prize for Computer Science, presented by Mr Sam Karatasas, Account Manager at CISCO and SIT alumnus, and the GS Caird Scholarship in Computer Science.

Mathew Rodley - awarded the Soprano



Katherine Anderson (HEDLOC), Nirmala Fernandes and SIT alumnus Bruno Pisano (HEDLOC)

Software Engineering Prize for the best Honours project in Software Engineering, presented by Mr Mohamed Odah, General Manager of Soprano Design.

Nirmala Fernandes - awarded the HEDLOC Prize in undergraduate Information Systems.

Man Tung - awarded the HEDLOC Postgraduate Prize in Information Systems.

The HEDLOC prizes were presented by Mr Bruno Pisano, the Managing Director of HEDLOC and SIT alumnus.

Glen Pink - awarded the Google Prize for Excellence in Computer Science, presented by Ms Katie Bell, Software Engineer at Google Australia and SIT alumnus.

Vinita Deshpande and Vanessa Komlos - awarded the CSIRO ICT Centre IT Undergraduate Entrance Scholarship, presented by Dr Trevor Bird, Chief Scientist at CSIRO ICT Centre.

The School is very grateful for the generous support from our sponsors Accenture, CISCO, CSIRO ICT Centre, Google, HEDLOC, Microsoft Research Asia and Soprano Design. Prizes encourage excellence in our students and entrance scholarships assist us in attracting high achieving students to IT.

Thank you for your continuing support and thank you for taking the time to attend this event.

Associate Professor Sanjay Chawla
Head of School

Graduations

Over 150 IT students graduated from undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in ceremonies held in May. The School congratulates all our recent graduates, including the record number of IT PhD students, who have made novel contributions to research in a variety of different areas:

Mohammed Aal Salem, "A Real-Time Communication Framework for Wireless Sensor Networks", supervised by Professor Albert Zomaya (in absentia).

Mohammad Alomari, "Ensuring Serializable Executions with Snapshot Isolation DBMS", supervised by Associate Professor Alan Fekete.

Trent Apted, "Cruiser and PhoTable: Exploring Tabletop User Interface Software for Digital Photograph Sharing and Story Capture", supervised by Professor Judy Kay.

David Carmichael, "MyPlace: Supporting Scrutability and User Control in Location Modelling", supervised by Associate Professor Bob Kummerfeld.

Chung (Jan) Chan, "Statistical Image Reconstruction with Anatomical Priors in Positron Emission Topography", supervised by Professor David Feng

Xiaoming Chen, "Adaptive Error Concealment Algorithms for H.264/AVC Applications", supervised by Dr Vera Chung (in absentia).

Peng Gong, "Adaptive Middleware for Dynamic Integration of Heterogeneous Data Sources", supervised by Professor David Feng.

Michael Harre, "Sub-Rational Equilibria in Game Theory", co-supervised by Professor Allan Synder from the Centre for the Mind and Professor Peter Eades.

Tuo Liu, "Analytical Modeling of HSUPA-Enabled UMTS Networks for Capacity Planning", supervised by Associate Professor Bjorn Landfeldt

William Niu, "Ontological Reasoning About Location for Indoor Pervasive Computing Environments", supervised by Professor Judy Kay.

Penghao Wang, "An Integrative Approach for Phylogenetic Inference", supervised by Associate Professor Bing Bing Zhou.

Neda Zamani, "Investigating the Role of Trading in the Dynamics of Price Formation of Financial Markets", supervised by Associate Professor Joseph Davis

Special mention should also be made of three IT honours graduates who were awarded First Class Honours and the University Medal:

Katie Bell, "Answer Attenuation in Question Answering Systems"

Susan Howlett, "Training Parsers using Redundancy of Information"

Joel Nothman, "Learning Named Entity Recognition from Wikipedia"

Katie, Susan and Joel were supervised by Dr James Curran, and represent the broad appeal of IT, graduating from Engineering, Arts and Science degrees.