Letter from the Chair

Instead of regaling you with more tales of our lab and infrastructure upgrades, let me focus on faculty in this summer issue of our Newsletter. I want to tell you about Steve Merrill, Gary Krenz and Glenn Brookshear. Since I’m sure that many, many of you will well remember each of them, I would like you to share your favorite recollections with me so that we can publish them in the next issue of this letter.

Dr. Stephen Merrill was presented with the 2004 Marquette University Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence at the Père Marquette Dinner in May. Steve began as an Assistant Professor in 1977, achieved promotion to Associate Professor in 1981 and promotion to Professor in 1990. Over the course of his years teaching in this department, I’m sure that many of you have come into contact with him: he may have been your classroom teacher, your online instructor, essay advisor, master’s thesis advisor or doctoral dissertation advisor. If you were a graduate student in the 1980’s, he may have been Graduate Committee chair at the time. For many of you he was simply a mentor. Letters I collected from alumni, while preparing a proposal for his award, testify amply to the role Steve has played in guiding students’ futures.

Dr. Merrill at the Teaching Excellent Award and Dean McKinney

Dr. Gary Krenz won two awards this semester! The scientific research society, Sigma Xi, awarded him their Distinguished Scientific Research Achievement Award for 2004, in recognition of a career devoted to the advancement of scientific research and education; and the College of Arts and Sciences presented him with its Excellence in Advising award at a ceremony this May. Gary began as an Assistant Professor in 1985, achieved promotion to Associate Professor in 1990 and promotion to Professor in 1999. He won a Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence in 1996. Once again many of you will, I’m sure, recall Gary as a teacher, departmental and/or college advisor, essay, thesis or dissertation advisor and mentor. Recent graduates will be well familiar with him as Graduate Committee chair.

For reasons that the rest of us can only guess at, Gary’s picture is a fixture on the Marquette University web site. Could it be the face of passionate teaching?

Steve and Gary are not only well known to alumni, they are collaborators with researchers at other institutions in Milwaukee (and beyond), such as the Medical College of Wisconsin, the Zablocki Veterans Administration Medical Center and St Luke’s Hospital. Together with Drs Anne Clough, Craig Struble and Ruta Bajorunaite, they comprise a “bio” group – biomathematics, bioinformatics and
biostatistics – that continues to enhance the reputation of our department and our university.

On a rather different note, it’s with a mixture of pleasure and regret that we see Dr Glenn Brookshear retire from our department: pleasure because Glenn can now devote himself to his phenomenally successful textbook Computer Science: An Overview (more about this below), to his passion for MG sports cars and to hitting golf balls into the river from his back yard in Mequon; regret because we will miss his contribution to our computer science program, both in regard to classroom teaching and to curriculum development, his self-deprecating good humor, his Texan accent and, most of all, the fridge in his office that he kept well stocked with Miller beer. Glenn began as an Assistant Professor in 1975 and achieved promotion to Associate Professor in 1982. His years of valuable service to the department were recognized this year by his promotion to Emeritus Associate Professor. Many of you will have taken one or more of his computing courses, others will remember him as chair of our Undergraduate Committee or as your advisor. Last year Glenn led a complete updating of our computer science major.

According to his publisher, Glenn’s book has been read by at least half a million students and has been translated into Chinese, Dutch, Romanian and Russian. The book has been adopted by institutions ranging from community colleges to prestigious institutions such as Yale, along with our sister universities such as Boston College. It serves “as the torchbearer for the breadth-first curriculum” in computer science.

As I remarked at the beginning of this column, I heartily welcome your recollections, reflections and anecdotes on Steve, Gary and Glenn.

Peter Jones, Chair
Research & Publications

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Activities & Awards

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Undergraduate News

Two of our undergraduate majors, Jacob Manske of Oak Creek, WI, and Amanda Wozniak of Mt. Prospect, IL, received special awards at the College of Arts and Sciences Honors Convocation on April 15, 2004.

Amanda Wozniak received the Miriam Connellan Mathematics Education Award. The award is presented to the teaching major in mathematics who shows the greatest potential for success in the field of mathematics education. Amanda is a member of Hunger Clean-Up Planning Committee, Marquette University Chorus, worked with Marquette University Educational Opportunity Program by tutoring Milwaukee high school students in Math, inducted into Pi Mu Epsilon (Math Honor Society), Pi Lambda Theta (Education Honor Society), Alpha Sigma Nu, and Phi Beta Kappa. She is currently interviewing for teaching positions in Illinois.

Jacob Manske received the Outstanding Mathematics Student Award, given to the Department’s outstanding mathematics major. Jacob is President of Pi Mu Epsilon (Math Honor’s Society), and primary mathematics tutor at Marquette’s Office of Student Educational Services. He plans to do graduate study and eventually obtain a Ph.D.

The names of both winners will join the names of previous winners that appear on plaques that are displayed in the Department Office.

Pi Mu Epsilon

2004 Pi Mu Epsilon Graduates
Sarah Alme Jill Blummer Ryan Cerniglia
Elvis D'Souza Jason Foil Kyle Garland
Jennifer Gillespie Steven Gorecki Laura Johnson
Ann LaFave Robert Leung Jacob Manske
Michael Meyer Alexandra Minzlaff Cheuk Nam Yam
Chad Quandt Mary Reiter Matthew Schaning
Sarah Schmit Adam Slatky Kirt Stephens
Michael Strain James Strasen Jennifer Witry
Amanda Wozniak Carisa Wozniak

Colloquia

by Bankston
January 16: Derek Harter, Computer Science Department, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, Nonlinear Dynamics for Cognitive Mechanisms in Autonomous Agents.

January 22: Dorin Dutkay, Mathematics Department, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, Wavelet Representations.

January 27: David Benko, Mathematics Department, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, Approximation by Weighted Polynomials.

February 03: Rebecca Sanders, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, Hypercyclicity and Supercyclicity in the Weak Topology.

February 06: Gary Krenz, MSCS, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, A Pulmonary Circulation Viscosity Perturbation Model.

February 13: Saverio Perugini, Department of Computer Science, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, Taking the Initiative with <em>Extempore</em>: How to Engage a Website in a Dialog.
March 19: Sadia Afroz, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, *Improving Performance of TCP/IP Networks with Balance-ECN*.

March 26: Tamal Dey, Dept. of Computer and Information Science, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, *Computing Shapes and their Features from Point Samples*.

April 16: James Factor, MSCS, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, *Geometric Modeling*.

April 23: Jim Kavanaugh, Microsoft Research, *Conferencing XP*.

**Graduate News**

Effective Fall 2004, the Master of Science in Computing will become a program administered by the Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science. Since its inception, over 70% of all credit hours taken by students in the Computing Program have been in MSCS classes; so when the University asked the MSCS and EECE departments to decide on a “home” for the program in one Department, rather than as a entity in the Graduate School, it seemed natural that it should end up in MSCS.

From point of view a current student, there is little day-to-day change. Students will follow the same programs of study under the same graduate requirements. Students retain their current advisor, even if that advisor is in another department. Students in the Computing Program planning to take approved, or elective, courses offered by other departments will still be able to do so, and it is expected that the same faculty will be available to teach them.

At graduation time, Computing Program students will now graduate with the rest of the MSCS graduate students. In particular, they will share the graduation ceremony and festivities with the students in the Master of Science in Computer Science program, with whom they will have shared many courses.

The new program director will be Dr Douglas Harris, known for his cutting-edge enterprise architecture or networks courses. Dr George Corliss will continue to advise students and to participate in the management of the program. His wealth of experience and wealth of contacts in the Milwaukee area will continue to help make this program unique.

From the point of view of the Department, this change of status will bring synergies with the MS in Computer Science, increase the cohesion in our graduate student body, allow better planning for the future, and strengthen the department as a whole.

**Graduates, May 2004**

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**Interview of Alumni**

**Tao Huang** (M.S. in MSCS ’91) One of our early graduates in Computer Science has been making a wonderful career for himself and the company that he joined soon after graduation, and early in its history, and more recently has been collecting a variety of honors for his career. Huang Tao graduated in 1989 and began working as a software developer in 1990 for a company called MorningStar, which had been started by Joe Mansueto in 1984 to collect and distribute investment research information. One of Tao's first tasks was to begin figuring out how to produce CDs and access software for them, and later he began to learn how to present that information on the emerging World Wide Web.

MorningStar has become the leading company in the field of investment research, and the web site morningstar.com has become the world's leading source of information about many kinds of financial information. Tao was appointed to the executive committee in 1995, and became chief technical officer in 1996. He then became interested in the expansion of the company into other countries and was named president of international operations in 1998. The company now operates in more than 16 countries, including Australia, Canada, Europe, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea.

From 1998 to 2000 Tao was senior vice president of business development and head of Internet operations, and the web site he developed is now known to everyone as the
place to look and interact with for every kind of investment research and management.

Tao began his education with a bachelor’s degree in Computer Science from Hunan University in China, and came to Marquette after a year learning English at St. Norbert College in DePere, Wisconsin. Marquette has long had a strong relationship with that sister institution. We had developed an agreement through which we accepted outstanding students recommended by Rick Poss, and Tao came to us through that pipeline. In a recent interview Tao describes the help we extended, and, referring to my role as chair at the time said “It’s amazing how much he helped a stranger. It was so unselfish.” Of course we all know it is our job to help folks who want to learn, and Tao has clearly carried through his end of that bargain.

More recently Tao returned to school and received a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Chicago. The most recent of his many honors is that he will receive in November, 2004 the "Distinguished Young Alumni Award for 2004" from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, chosen by a selection committee of 65 alumni meeting via videoconference in New York, London, San Francisco, Singapore, and Chicago. Another award winner at that time will be the retired Chairman and CEO of Harley-Davidson, so the ceremony will be a great day for Milwaukee connections.

Huang Tao is now the Chief Operating Officer of morningstar.com, and was recently chosen (at age 38) by Crain's Chicago Business as one of the "Top 40 under 40" for his work. As the founder and CEO of his company said "He's at the epicenter of the business". Some of us who have known Tao well over the years might initially be surprised at another quote from his boss. In a 2002 interview in Business Week Online on "The Art of Brainstorming" Mansueto says that fearless debate is the most important ingredient in getting things done. “Challenging me is something that people do all the time. In front of 50 or 60 people, our COO, Tao Huang, will openly disagree with me after I have lectured on some point. He doesn't get reprimanded, and it sends a signal that the best ideas win”.

Another appropriate award for Huang Tao is that in 2003 he was chosen by Chicago United to appear in the inaugural issue of “Business Leaders of Color”. That organization believes that "the strength of a multi-racial leadership continuum represents the strength of our City's future". As Tao said for his interview in that publication, “People want to hire those who look like them. That can be very dangerous. I think bringing different people together helps them be successful.”

One of the greatest honors for Tao was his marriage soon after graduation to another of our graduates (who I would like to claim he met in my classes at the time). Xiao Mei graduated in 1990, also in computing, and had a very successful career working in the database field in Chicago. More recently her career has been raising, along with her husband Tao, two really remarkable daughters Jeanette and Jessica, and more recently a very good-natured son Sean. Both Tao and Xia-Mei remember the faculty at Marquette as always helpful and always available and regard their time with us as an important part of their lives and careers.

In a recent interview with Tao he described how he knew from the beginning that although he had problems on occasion with the language, it was important to him to communicate with everyone in the company, and how he spent his lunch time with his colleagues of all sorts in the company in order to get to know them and have them get to know him. He also said that he believes one of the most important things in his work has been to treat those who work for him with the greatest respect, and agreed with a lesson that Grace Hopper told to me years ago that “the way you get respect up is to show respect down, and it doesn't work in the other direction.”

We are looking forward to hearing much more about Huang Tao in the future, and perhaps so seeing his own success eclipsed by that of his family!

Alumni Update

John M. McNamara (B.S. in MATH ’71) writes: I guess I find it really amazing how much diversity there is among our group. I always felt math and philosophy were similar in mat often the grads took their skills to different settings, challenges, etc. than a career teaching or using math in the pure sense. I think I am stating the obvious since this theme seems to run through so much of the newsletter. Was it Dr. Bronikouski that I used to play handball (like racket ball) with? Did he teach abstract algebra one summer?

John Puodziunas, O.F.M. (B.S. in COMP MATH ’82) Thanks for a great newsletter! Note address change: 11172 Vista Sorrento Pkwy. F-302, San Diego, CA 92130.
Each MSCS newsletter includes an “Alumni Update” section. We would like to know where you are and what you are doing. Who is your employer? Have you received further degrees or honors since you left MU? Please take a few minutes to complete this form and return it to the editor. If you would like your e-mail address published in Newsletter, please include it under your PERSONAL NEWS section.

NAME: ____________________________________________

ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________________________

YEAR OF GRADUATION: ___________ DEGREE (e.g., B.S. in CS): ______________________________________________

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