

Outstanding CSE Students for 2008-2009

Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Computer Science — Pete Curry

Pete Curry is a senior in Computer Science. His primary interests are compilers and programming languages, especially for multi-core architectures. He is also interested in other parallel architectures.

His current project is developing a new functional language, compiler, and virtual machine which is intended to efficiently and transparently utilize modern multi-core systems. He has also worked for the Computer Systems Research Lab at UNT where he contributed to the compiler and other tools for the Scheduled Dataflow (SDF) architecture. In Summer 2008, Pete worked at Texas Instruments as a Student Program Employee optimizing compilers. He has been invited back and will return to TI in Stafford, Texas in Summer 2009.



Pete would like to thank Dr. Phil Sweany for his support. Dr. Sweany has provided Pete with many opportunities, equipment, facilities, and valuable advice. Pete is also very grateful to his parents and sister for their support. When not working, Pete also enjoys cooking.

Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Computer Engineering — Elena Lassandro

Elena Lassandro is originally from Italy. She was born and raised in Rome but she moved to Texas to follow her dream of studying abroad. Elena is a senior at the University of North Texas and she will be receiving her B.S. in Computer Engineering with a minor in Mathematics. She is specializing in computer networks and her main interest is information security. In addition, she works in the Information Technology (IT) department of Baylor Health Care System and enjoys working in the health care field. Her experience working for Baylor Health Care System opened her eyes on how important and necessary technical support is to the health care providers in our hospitals. Elena hopes that after her graduation she can continue working for Baylor and start a career in health care that will allow her to use her technical skills to improve and increase the efficiency of medical care.

At the moment, Elena's life keeps her very busy. Working full time and being a senior in engineering does not leave much time for her interests, which vary from mathematics to philosophy. Elena also enjoys traveling and learning about other cultures. Even though her journey in the United States has not been easy, Elena has worked very hard to stay focused and to complete her course of study. Elena is currently working on her senior design project called Blind Spot Camera System (BSCS). The Blind Spot Camera System (BSCS) is a system that will use cameras to visually cover vehicular blind spots allowing the driver to safely turn at sharp intersections or change lanes.



Outstanding Graduate Student in Computer Science — Paul Sroufe

Paul Sroufe will be receiving his M.S. in Computer Science in December 2009. He specializes in computer networks where his passion is information security. Paul has been working with Dr. Ram Dantu for over a year on various research projects and papers. He has recently published a paper on his work involving behavioral feature extraction of emails. Another long paper is in submission currently. The work includes spam and ham classification, identifying spam botnets, and personal finger print analysis of emails. This work will hopefully be a good foundation for his thesis.

Dr. Dantu has been hugely influential and has helped Paul a great deal over the past year. For that, Paul would like to say, "Thanks Dr. Dantu!" Paul recently participated in the 2009 Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition. "This year's competition was brutally tough but all the same enjoyable and a great learning experience." said Paul. He recommends it to anyone that enjoys IT security.

In his free time, Paul enjoys the outdoors including paintball and camping/hiking, games, working out at the gym, and spending time with his friends.



Outstanding Graduate Student in Computer Engineering — Sahasan Naraharisetti

Sahasan Naraharisetti comes from a small town, Eluru in Southern India. He graduated with his Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) in Electronics and Communication Engineering in 2006, and then moved to UNT to pursue his Master's degree. During his stay at UNT, he was given the opportunity to work on a digital watermarking project with Dr. Saraju P Mohanty in the VLSI design and CAD Laboratory (VDCL). For that, he wants to say "Thanks Dr. Mohanty!"

In October 2008, Sahasan successfully defended his dissertation titled "Region Aware DCT Domain Invisible Robust Blind Watermarking for Color Images." In his free time, he loves to hang out with his buddies, dance, and play soccer.



Outstanding PhD Student in Computer Science and Engineering — Santi Phithakkitnukoon

Santi Phithakkitnukoon is originally from Chiang Mai, Thailand. He received both of his B.S. and M.S. in Electrical Engineering with specialization in Digital Signal Processing and Communications from Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. He is currently working with Dr. Ram Dantu as a research assistant. His interest has been about applying machine learning techniques to real world problems to design and develop algorithms that allow computing devices to assist people for a better quality of life. His current research studies include context-aware mobile computing, mobile/online social analysis, and email shaping. Santi has published his works and served as program committee member and reviewer for several international journals and conferences such as IEEE, ACM, and AAAI. He has been collaborating with researchers from MIT Media Lab, British Telecom, and UT-Dallas.



Santi has won the Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities Award in March 2009, the University Scholarship Committee Scholarship in 2008, the Robert B. Toulouse Dissertation Award in 2008, the Outstanding Doctoral Student Award from the Federation of North Texas Area Universities in 2007, and UNT Doctoral Academic Achievement Scholarship in 2007. Santi is a member of Phi Kappa Phi (National Honor Society), Eta Kappa Nu Association (National Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society), Tau Beta Pi (Electrical Engineering Student Honor Society), Golden Key International Honor Society, and a student member of IEEE, ACM, and AAAI. He has completed his dissertation proposal in June 2008 and is preparing to defend his dissertation in September 2009.