

# Interface

## Megan Conklin Leads in Research



### Inside this issue:

Conklin Research	1
From the Chair	1
Student Happenings	2
Taylor Award	3
Hightower Retirement	3
AI Art Programs	4

Megan Conklin, along with colleagues James Howison and Kevin Crowston from Syracuse University, was awarded a three-year, \$100,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant, titled “A Data Analysis Archive for Research on Free and Open Source Software and its Development” will support Dr. Conklin, her co-investigators, and students in working to collect data on open source software projects.



Professor Megan Squire Conklin

In addition, her team has been given access to TeraGrid, a supercomputing network of 250 teraflops of computing power and 30 petabytes of data. It is, according to its website, “the world’s largest, most comprehensive distributed cyberinfrastructure for open scientific research.” This honor

not only gives resources to the project, but it also ranks Conklin’s research efforts among some of the most prestigious in the country.

## From the Chair, Dave Powell



Carpenter Lab—Initiatives led by Joel Hollingsworth

The intent of this newsletter is to proudly keep you abreast of the wonderful things happening in Computing Sciences at Elon and to welcome your input. The department had an exciting year of positive changes and many significant student, faculty and staff accomplishments. Our students continue to excel and to continually raise the bar. This year, forty percent of the Computing Sciences graduates were accepted into graduate programs and four students presented their research at SURF. The faculty continued to expand their scholarly activities and presented at national and international conferences. Professor Conklin won a NSF major research grant. The curriculum had significant modifications to both the CIS and CSC majors to keep the content at the leading edge of mainstream technology. Facilities were dramatically improved to support the students, faculty and curriculum with the creation of a new “networking” lab in Duke 304 and the reconfiguration of Carpenter lab with 12 dual monitor Apple desktops running both Leopard and Vista.

Calendar year 2008 will continue to be one of change. Professor Hightower has announced that she is retiring after 27 years at Elon. She has deeply touched all of us.

Her unmatched devotion and dedication to the student, the department, the athletic program and the university cannot be replaced. Please call or send her an email to wish her the best.

As we strive for constant improvement, I welcome your support of current students and the curriculum. Sophomores and Juniors are constantly looking for internships and seniors are looking for job opportunities. Please call or send me an email (dpowell2@elon.edu) if you have an internship or job opportunity. The department constantly reviews the curriculum to insure our graduates have the livelong skills to be successful. Your “real world” input is critical in helping us optimize our curriculum. Please call or email me with any suggestions. On behalf of the department, I wish you a healthy, successful and productive year.



Networking Lab - Design and Implementation led by Lynn Heinrichs

## Student Awards and Happenings

Elon news and information



### Awards

Congratulations to the best of the best in our department!

Thank you for your service, diligence, and academic excellence! Here are the 2006-2007 student award recipients:

Computer Science Academic Achievement	Sean Crilley Brad Stuart
Computing Sciences Department Service	Christian Funkhouser Paul Batten
Elon University Programming Contest	Dustin White
Carpenter Award	Vic McGlaughlin

### Programming Teams

It has also been a banner year for our Programming Teams. The team of Christian Funkhouser, Greg Galante, and Clarke Rainey finished second at the local contest held at North Carolina A&T University. Two teams competed at the regional contest at Duke University. The team of Greg Galante, Evan Morris, and Nick Harper finished in the top 20% and the team of Vic McGlaughlin, Brad Nock, and Kyle Schutt finished in the top 45%. Thanks to our programming teams and to their coach, Joel Hollingsworth, for representing Elon well.

### SURF Presentations

The following SURF presentations were given in April, 2007:

- Brendan T. Wolf, "Student Awareness and Understanding of Acceptable Use at Elon" mentored by Lynn Heinrichs
- Maggie L. Presley, "Making Data Input and Retrieval More Effective for the Elon University Office of Sponsored Programs" mentored by Lynn Heinrichs
- Christopher J. Weitzen, "A Framework for the Implementation of Human Cognitive Assessments on a Hand-held Device" mentored by Joel Hollingsworth
- Dustin E. White, "Clarifications and Extensions to Tactical Waypoint Graph Algorithms for Video Games" mentored by Shannon Duvall

### ACM's ZOMGamefest

Elon's ACM chapter held the biggest ever game tournament event this fall with 130 participants. The event was held on November 3, 2007, at 9:30 PM, taking over Belk Library after hours. Tournaments were held in Halo, Quake, and Wii Bowling, with free play on Tron, Guitar Hero 3, and various board games. Corporate sponsors provided door prizes and tournament prizes.



ACM students play a game at a social event.

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## Barbara Taylor Wins Service Award



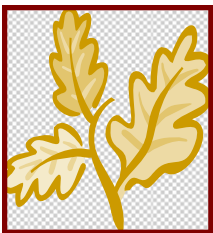
Elon's faculty strive for excellence in teaching, research, and service. This year the School of Education awarded a special service award to our own Barbara Taylor! Her award recognizes her service in preparation for the NCATE/SDPI continuing accreditation review. Congratulations, Barbara!



School of Education award winners are Steve Folger, Paul Miller, Barbara Taylor, and Resa Walch. They appear here with the Dean of the School of Education, Gerald Dillashaw.

## Vicki Hightower Ready for Retirement

[www.elon.edu/compsci](http://www.elon.edu/compsci)



After 27 years of service at Elon University, Professor Vicki Hightower is retiring this spring. In addition to teaching in the Computing Sciences department, she serves as Faculty Athletics Representative for Elon and is the secretary/treasurer of FARA, the Faculty Athletics Representative's Association. Always a student advocate, she has mentored the CS department's student groups, the student chapter of the ACM and the E-ChICS (Elon Chicks In Computing Sciences). We will greatly miss Professor Hightower in our department. Professor Hightower has the following remarks to her students:

"27 years is a long time and I have had the pleasure of teaching many of you in my classes. The school is going to let me keep my Elon email account – [hightowv@elon.edu](mailto:hightowv@elon.edu) – so if you care to keep in touch you may easily do so. Dr. Hightower will still be teaching at High Point University for a few more years and we both would love to hear from you now and then. If you are in the area and get a chance, stop by and say hello – or is that goodbye. My best to all of you – Mrs. H."

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Professor Vicki Hightower

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## AI Students Make Artistic Programs



Duvall's AI class: (Back row): Louis Fletcher, Lyden Nee, Brad Nock, Vic McGlaughlin, Nick Harper, Thomas Porter, (Front row): Edwin Thompson, Cliff Tomlinson, and Evan Morris.

This fall the Artificial Intelligence class, under the direction of Shannon Duvall, showed their artistic side by creating programs that generate abstract art. The programs begin by randomly computing color values for each pixel. The students then train the program by choosing art that matches their taste. The programs evolve algorithms for creating completely original pictures. The students had a "gallery day" in which they showed off their best creations to the class and voted on their favorite. Evan Morris won the vote with the picture he is holding in the photo.