Professor Keeps Score at Top Computer Contest

John Clevenger once used pencil and paper to keep score for what has become the International Collegiate Programming Contest. Students would rush into the computer room with their programs written on a stack of punched cards. Clevenger would mark their time. A testing group would feed the cards into the mainframe, make sure the program worked, then rush on to test the next stack of cards.

At the end of each event, Clevenger and his staff would gather the handwritten notes and figure the scores for each team. It was usually late on a Friday night by that time, since contests took place when the expensive mainframe could be reserved.

It didn’t take long for the CSUS computer science professor to decide he needed a better system. So he enlisted a group of senior computer science majors and began developing software for scoring the events.

And today Clevenger is the systems expert for the world’s premiere collegiate programming contest. This week he’s at the international finals in the Netherlands, along with student Troy Boudreau and former student Doug Lane and Sam Ashoo.

They’re running the latest version of their scoring software, which is based on a prototype written in Java by recent master’s degree recipient Tammy Tokor.

The finals feature 63 three-person teams, culled from 1,600 that compete in various regional contests. They represent some of the world’s best programming talent.

Speed is the key in the competition. Every minute is one more point and, like golf, the goal is to score low.

Accuracy also counts. Twenty points stack against a team if they submit a program that doesn’t work.

Competitions generally include writing four to eight programs. One example: Write a program that manages four runways for five different types of aircraft, based on information provided by the pilots.

“These finals are like the Olympics of computer programming,” Clevenger says, though he cautions that the speed the contest demands is just one indicator of talent. “There is just so much energy. The teams that make it have some of the best programming students in the world. I mean, even doing well at the regional level is a huge accomplishment.”

The top performers at the finals earn bragging rights among their peers. They win thousands of dollars worth of the latest high-tech software and hardware.

And they are often interviewed by the event’s main sponsor, IBM. In fact, access to the programming talent the contest attracts was one reason IBM began providing stipends to help cover the cost of team travel and lodging for the finals.

Clevenger is officially known as the “director of contest systems,” mainly

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Award-Winning Film Promotes College

A pair of CSUS students will soon be touting higher education nationwide, thanks to the award-winning work of professor Joyce Mitchell.

Mitchell, who teaches part-time in the CSUS communications studies department, profiled the two students in her latest documentary project, The Power of Education.

The half-hour film features four students who are all about to become the first in their families to complete a higher education. The two from CSUS are Pamela Saechow and Alex Garcia, both communication studies majors, and the other two students are from IIT Technical Institute in Los Angeles.

The film also highlights the experiences of state Sen. Hilda Solis and San Francisco Police Chief Fred Lau, who are both the first in their families to go to college.

“I was just a really fun project, and very inspiring,” says Mitchell, who was a television news producer at KCRA for 13 years and worked at KOVR for five years before becoming an independent documentary producer.

The film recently won a first place Silver Telly Award, which are national awards of excellence given to non-commercial programs. It has already aired on Sacramento’s KVIE Channel 6, and will begin airing on other public television stations across the country this month.

KVIE will host a reception in honor of the film’s national distribution at 5:30 p.m. April 13. It will be open to the public.

Attending the reception will be Alfonso Ribeiro, one of the stars of the television program Fresh Prince of Bel Air who hosts The Power of Education. Also on hand will be State Sen. Solis, whose educational story is featured in the film.

Mitchell worked with the public relations firm Ross-Campbell to produce the film. Funding was provided the California Student Aid Commission and EDFUND.

It wasn’t Mitchell’s first foray into higher education films.

She has produced four short videos on the importance of repaying student loans during the last year, and is completing work on another four. She once again used CSUS students for an upcoming student loan video aimed at re-entry and graduate students.

“The biggest challenge, of course, is making these videos on loans interesting,” Mitchell says. “I try to

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CSU and UC to Agree on Entrance Requirements

Students seeking public higher education in California will have the same preparatory course requirements for admission to both the CSU and the UC by 2003.

“One of the ways the CSU is seeking to assist college-bound students is to communicate better with them, their parents and counselors about our expectations. Alignment of freshman subject requirements will help establish a clear message about the preparation students need for university study,” said CSU Chancellor Charles B. Reed. “By working together with the superintendent of public instruction, the CSU and UC have made the admission process less complicated.”

To make required preparatory courses coincide, the CSU will add an additional year of both laboratory science and history or social science to its requirements. The UC will begin requiring a college preparatory course in visual and performing arts.

The revisions will be in effect for students seeking admission to either system in the fall 2003 and beyond.

“I want to thank the CSU faculty who have worked for several years in concert with the Admission Advisory Council to accomplish this important objective,” said CSUS President Donald Gerth, chair of the CSU Admission Advisory Council. “Their diligent work in close cooperation with their colleagues at the University of California resulted in a common pattern of college preparatory courses that will prepare students well.”

As of 2003, preparatory course admission requirements for both systems will be the completion of the following courses with a C or better: four years of English, three years of math (algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra), two years of U.S. history or social science, two years of laboratory science, two years of foreign language, one year of visual or performing arts, and one year of electives chosen from one of the areas above.

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This semester 63 percent of courses at CSUS have 25 or fewer students, and less than 5 percent have more than 50 students.
Part-Time Faculty Jobs Open

CSUS departments are now recruiting for part-time faculty applicants for the fall 1999 and spring 2000 semesters. The application deadline is April 15.

A master’s degree in the subject area is the normal minimum requirement, although a doctorate level degree is preferred and may be required. Teaching experience in the subject area is desirable and may be required. Supplemental degree requirements are listed with each opening information, which is available from department offices. Additional qualifications may be required by individual departments.

The salary rate is variable depending upon qualifications and relevant experience. The full list of openings is available from the Office of Faculty and Staff Affairs.

Applicants are asked not to telephone departments, but to send a personal letter stating their interests and qualifications along with a current resume to the appropriate department or college at California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95819.

The following departments have openings:

College of Business Administration: accounting, management, finance, marketing, economics, industrial management, management information systems.

College of Education: bilingual/multicultural education, counselor education, education administration and policy studies, special education, rehabilitation and school psychology and teacher education.

College of Engineering and Computer Science: civil engineering, computer science, electrical and electronic and mechanical engineering.

College of Health and Human Services: criminal justice, health and physical education, nursing, physical therapy, recreation and leisure studies, social work, speech pathology and audiology.

College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics: biological sciences, chemistry, geography, geology, mathematics and statistics, physics and astronomy and psychology.

College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies: anthropology, economics, environmental studies, ethnic studies, family and consumer sciences, gerontology, government, sociology and women’s studies.

Library and Athletics.

Job News

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TO SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION:
The CSUS Bulletin is published on Mondays of the academic year. Campus news may be submitted by electronic mail to account newstax@sdsu.edu, may be faxed to 278-5290 or may be delivered in Word/Perfect on disk or paper to Communications and Public Affairs, Sacramento Hall Room 203, campus code 6026. Deadline for all materials is 10 a.m. on the Monday before publication. Items will be published on a space available basis and are subject to editing. Writing should be in news style, short and direct. For inquiries call Rene Hayes 278-6416.

Goldstone, government, discussed his book "The Bitter Century: Speculation on Modern Science and American Democracy as part of the program, "The Politics of Technologi-
Nursing Students Help State Test Wellness Program

Nearly 2,500 state workers from agencies such as CalPERS, CalTrans, the DMV and the Highway Patrol lined up to see nine CSUS nursing students during February and March. The students were testing for both body fat percentage and blood pressure. Their charges lined up dutifully for the short check-ups, though many of weren’t sure they actually wanted to know the numbers.

“Many people are surprised at the numbers we come up with,” says Lisa Ly, one of the students. “And many of them are curious about where they should be.”

More curious: Many people have body fat percentages of 25 percent or greater, and the level should be 13 to 17 percent for men and 20 to 27 percent for women. Blood pressure should be 120 over 80 or lower.

Combined with cholesterol testing by health plan volunteers, the health screenings will help determine how a pilot wellness program mandated by the Governor’s Office and coordinated by CalPERS is working.

The program has been in place for two years. During that time, agencies have put together their own plans for improving their employees’ health — including seminars during the lunch hour and walking groups.

Fat percentage, blood pressure and cholesterol tests were also given to employees at the beginning of the program. Results from the first and second year will be compared to determine if the wellness efforts have paid off.

“The fact is if you have a healthy workforce, you have a more productive workforce,” says Robin Nelson, chair of the division of nursing, who coordinated the work of the CSUS students.

The students carried out the body fat testing with a relatively new and painless procedure in which a laser is shot into the arm. The work was part of the students’ senior community project.

Students Host Cultural Festival

The second “Taste the World” cultural festival will be April 15. The event will feature a variety of activities celebrating the University’s diverse community, including a food bazaar, a cultural fashion show and a cultural showcase.

The cultural food festival will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The CSUS University Quad will be transformed into a global buffet offering ethnic dishes available for purchase.

At 3 p.m. the University Ballroom will host a global fashion show. Students and faculty will present various attire from around the world.

The late afternoon and evening programs will showcase ethnic dances, demonstrations, musical arrangements, poetry readings, skits and exhibitions.

“Taste of the World” is a free event presented by University Union UNIQUE Programs, the Cultural Council Clubs and Student Activities Office. More information is available by contacting Jerry Blake at 278-6595.

New Products at High-Tech Fair

Local companies will share their latest technological products at the CSUS High-Tech Fair, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 19 in the University Union Redwood Room.

The event is designed to encourage kindergarten through 12th-grade students to learn about using technology and consider high-tech careers. It will also provide teachers with information about technology in the classroom.

Attendees will be able to try new products in a number of interactive displays. They will also be able to get information about various high-tech professions, and ask CSUS students from business, computer science and engineering about their fields of study.

The fair is hosted by the CSUS Multi-Cultural Center, as part of this year’s theme of “Culture and Technology.” It is free and open to the public. More information is available by contacting the Center at 278-6101.

Agreements Provide Software, Hardware and Training

As the result of three CSU statewide contracts, low-cost software and computers, and free online training are available to CSUS students, faculty and staff.

A Campus Enterprise Agreement with Microsoft provides Office 97 Professional (Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint), Office 98 for Macintosh, Visual Studio 6.0, FrontPage (Windows and Macintosh), and Windows and Windows NT upgrades to students, faculty and staff. Check the Web at http://www.csus.edu/uccs/new/microsoft.htm for CSUS specific information.

Departments, faculty, staff, and students may purchase IBM, Compaq, Dell, or HP workstations, laptops, or servers. More information is available at http://www.csus.edu/uccs/new/ equipment.htm.

Through CBT 650 online courses are available to CSUS students, faculty and staff. For a list of available courses and information on how to get started see http://www.cbt.csus.edu/ More information is available at the University Help Desk at 278-7337.
**CSUS Events**

**Programming Contest**

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because of his and his students' efforts. He innocently became involved with the programming contest in 1976, his first year as a full-time faculty member at CSUS. He started as the coordinator of the campus event held to select teams for the regional competition and was hooked.

“Engineering and computer science students tend to be very competitive, and this is a great way for them to compete in their arena,” Cleveenger says. “Students have a great time, and it helps them professionally. For me, it’s fun because it’s so fun for the students.”

Today he travels all over the country and world helping set up and run the scoring system, which is known as PC-Squared. Starting with just changes in understanding computer technology has been a programming feat in itself for Cleveenger and the 20 or so students who have worked with him over the years.

Their first scoring software ran on an operating system known as NOS on a mainframe computer. Later students developed a system for Unix machines between 1983 and 1987, and then moved to personal computers in 1988 with the first version of PC-Squared. They began working on a network version in the early 1990s when computer networks became common. PC-Squared was used to run the contest finals in Washington DC in 1990 and has been used in every finals since 1993. And the latest version is written in Java so it will run on any platform, as used for the finals in 2015.

Today there are more than 100 students, alumni, faculty and staff participating. The competition to represent CSUS in the regional contests is held in the fall.

The University’s regional teams are coached by computer science professor Bob Buckley and are usually quite competitive. They often score among the top 20 in a techno-savvy region that Cleveenger says students work very hard to compete in.

**Labor Leader — CSUS will commemorate the 72nd birthday of Cesar Chavez with an art exhibit featuring the work of student artist Andrea “Yoli” Porras which continues to April 9. La Lucha Sigui! (The Struggle Continues)! is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., in the Multi-Cultural Center Library room 1010. The exhibit is free. More information is available by contacting the Multi-Cultural Center at 278-6101.