

COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPT GOODNEWS 08-09

06.15.09

Chronicle online quotes **Fred Schneider's** testimony to congress last week:

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/June09/Cybersecurity.html>

NSF press release notes Fred Schneider's role in coordinating a response from the academic computing research community in helping to shape the president's national cybersecurity policy.

NSF-When the Country Called: How a Team of Academic Experts Contributed to the President's Cyberspace Review

http://nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=114867&org=NSF&from=news

Thorsten Joachims won Best 10-Year paper at ICML 2009, which is given to "a paper published in ICML 1999 the committee feels has had the most significant and lasting impact."

<http://www.cs.mcgill.ca/~icml2009/awards.html>

An Honorary Day for **Bob Constable** is being held under the auspices of the Lynne and William Frankel Center for Computer Science on June 16, 2009 celebrating 10 years as dean of the Faculty of Computing and Information Science at Cornell. The day includes a special seminar on Verification, Distributed Computing, and Computing Sciences

<http://www.cs.bgu.ac.il/~frankel/HonoraryDay09>

Chronicle online covers work by **Doug James** and graduate student **Changxi Zheng** who will be reported at the 2009 ACM SIGGRAPH conference Aug. 3-7 in New Orleans.

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/June09/SynthSounds.ws.html>

Cornell Chronicle of May 15th reports on the recent Johnson School's student-run "Big Red Ventures" investment in Jodange, the start-up for which **Claire Cardie** is co-founder and chief scientist.

(p. 4; http://www.news.cornell.edu/Chronicle/09/05_15_09.pdf)

Tanya Gupta was chosen as a Merrill scholar in the College of Engineering, naming **Andrew Myers** as the Cornell faculty member who most significantly contributed to their college experience. Also, Adam Elmachtoub named **Charlie Van Loan** as his most influential Cornell faculty member.

Cornell's Merrill Presidential Scholars Program honors 32 seniors this month and the high school teachers and university faculty members who made important contributions to the students' lives. Each spring semester, approximately 1 percent of the graduating class is named to receive this honor by the deans of each of Cornell's seven undergraduate colleges.

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/May09/MerrillScholars.sl.html>

The College of Engineering has two CS students in its "Spotlight on students" section, which is geared towards attracting prospective students to Cornell by demonstrating the breadth and depth of interests among current Cornell undergrads.

Sonica Li

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/prospective/student-profiles/li.cfm>

Mark Yatskar

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/prospective/student-profiles/mark-yatskar.cfm>

05.18.09

Fred Schneider is quoted in a security article in Computerworld starting on page 2 and then again on page 4.

<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=Security+Hardware+and+Software&articleId=9130978&taxonomyId=145&pageNumber=1>

Ken Birman was selected to receive 2009 IEEE TCDP Outstanding Achievement Award (<http://tab.computer.org/tcdp/awards.html>). This award is to recognize an individual who has made a major contribution to the distributed computing field.

Cornell Chronicle <http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/May09/Kleinberg.ACMaward.ws.html> has a nice article about **Jon Kleinberg's** Infosys Award: an award of \$150,000 provided by an endowment from the Infosys Foundation.

An interview conducted by Stephen Ibaraki with Jon is available to listen to online at: http://www.stephenibaraki.com/audio/Jon_Kleinberg_Final.mp3. The 45-minute segment includes Jon's thoughts on many points including what attracted him to the field of computing, his work in the area of social network analysis, and his predictions for the future. Selected excerpts from the interview, as well as additional background, are available at: <http://www.acm.org/membership/kleinberg-interview/>

Ryan Peterson was awarded the 2009 Google Fellowship in Distributed Systems. The Google Fellowship will provide each student with funding to cover their tuition and expenses, plus an Android-powered phone and a Google mentor.

Ymir Vigfusson, Hussam Abu-Libdeh, Mahesh Balakrishnan, Ken Birman, Gregory Chockler and **Yoav Tock** won the Best Poster Award at the NSDI '09 systems conference for their poster "Dr. Multicast: Harnessing IP Multicast in Data Centers".

05.01.09

John E. Hopcroft, Eva Tardos, and Charles Van Loan, among 183 named SIAM Fellows for key contributions to applied mathematics and computational science. The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) is pleased to announce the SIAM Fellows Class of 2009 and the inauguration of the SIAM Fellows Program. Fellowship is an honorific designation conferred on members distinguished for their outstanding contributions to the fields of applied mathematics and computational science. During this inaugural year of the program, SIAM will confer Fellows status on 183 noteworthy professionals who will be recognized during the 2009 SIAM Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado.

For additional information about the SIAM Fellows Program and for nomination information, please visit <http://www.siam.org/prizes/fellows/index.php>.

Other 2009 SIAM Fellows and their affiliations at the time of designation can be found at <http://fellows.siam.org>.

04.30.09

John Hopcroft was elected to the National Academy of Sciences:

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=04282009>

Jon Kleinberg won the ACM - Infosys Foundation Award :

<http://awards.acm.org/homepage.cfm?awd=165>

Lillian Lee was awarded the Kendall S. Carpenter Memorial Advising Prize. Only 4 out of 1600 Cornell faculty received the award. The awards recognize "sustained and distinguished contributions of professorial faculty and senior lecturers to undergraduate advising."

Doug James, Kavita Bala and Steve Marschner received a \$1.2 million NSF grant from the Human Centered Computing program to research "Sound Rendering for Physically Based Simulation."

The April 2009 issue of the Communications of the ACM contains an article on sentiment analysis that makes reference to several members and alumni of the Cornell computer science department. It mentions **Claire Cardie** and her startup, Jodange. The article also quotes **Bo Pang (PhD '06)** and **David Pierce (PhD '03)**. The book *Opinion Mining and Sentiment Analysis*, written by **Bo Pang** and **Lillian Lee**, makes a cameo appearance.

"Our Sentiments Exactly"

<http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1498765.1498772&coll=portal&dl=ACM&idx=J79&part=magazine&WantType=Magazines&title=Communications%20of%20the%20ACM&CFID=30969955&CFTOKEN=75721239>

Katherine Lai received the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship: <http://www.nsgrfp.org/>

Jason Rohrer '01, CS major, was named one of Esquire Magazine's "Best and brightest 2008" for

his work on emotional and artistic video games, and his game "Gravitation" won the Jury Prize at IndieCade 2008.

<http://www.esquire.com/features/best-and-brightest-2008/future-of-video-game-design-1208>

04.10.09

Thorsten Joachims received the Fraunhofer-Bessel Award of the Humboldt Foundation. The award recognizes young researchers and aims to attract them for an extended research visit to Germany. As a winner Thorsten got to shake hands with the president of Germany.

<http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/5174.html>

CS students **Vincent Chan '09**, **Eric First '09** and **Haden Lee '10**, coached by PhD student **Dustin Tseng**, will represent Cornell at the 33rd annual Association for Computing Machinery International Collegiate Programming Contest Finals. Cornell students have participated in the "Battle of the Brains" world finals six times in the last decade.

<http://cornellsun.com/section/news/content/2009/03/04/cs-students-show-skills>

03.20.09

Joe Halpern co-wins the ACM/AAAI Allen Newell Award for fundamental advances in reasoning about knowledge, belief, and uncertainty. (His co-winner, Barbara Grosz, is a Cornell alum). The ACM/AAAI Allen Newell Award is presented to an individual selected for career contributions that have breadth within computer science, or that bridge computer science and other disciplines. This endowed award is accompanied by a prize of \$10,000, and is supported by the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, and by individual contributions.

John Hopcroft wins the Karl V. Karlstrom Outstanding Educator Award, for his vision and impact on computer science as a prolific author of field-defining texts on theory and algorithms. (David Gries also received this award in a prior year.) The award is presented annually to an outstanding educator who is: appointed to a recognized educational baccalaureate institution; recognized for advancing new teaching methodologies, or effecting new curriculum development or expansion in Computer Science and Engineering; or making a significant contribution to the educational mission of the ACM. Those who have been teaching for ten years or less will be given special consideration. A prize of \$5,000 is supplied by the Prentice-Hall Publishing Company.

ACM will present these and other awards at the ACM Awards Banquet on June 27, in San Diego, CA.

http://awards.acm.org/current_recipients.cfm?yr=2008

The following students from Engineering have won the 2009 Merrill Scholars Award: Julie Leviter from BEE, Michael Myers from CBE, **Tanya Gupta** from CS, Joshua Ng from MAE, Luis Tosi from MAE, Adam Elmachoub from ORIE, and Adam Schneider from ORIE.

03.06.09

Noah Snaveley's Phototourism system was featured on the main page of cnn.com for several days after the Obama inauguration, and I'd guess that tens of millions of people from all over the world tried it out (there are about 160000 pages *about* this on the Web). Here's one: <http://news.cs.washington.edu/2009/01/19/cnn-teams-with-photosynth-to-crowdsource-inauguration-coverage/>

On Friday, February 20th, in Baltimore, **Hakim Weatherspoon** received an award for Black Engineer of the Year (BEYA), Modern Day Technology Leader. It recognizes people for their achievements in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and their leadership in the workplace and community.

<http://www.blackengineeroftheyear.org>

02.06.09

Andrew Myers won the ACM SIGPLAN Most Influential POPL Paper Award. This award is presented annually to the author(s) of a paper presented at the POPL held 10 years prior to the award year. The papers are judged by their influence over the past decade. The award was for his POPL 1999 paper, "JFlow: Practical Mostly-Static Information Flow Control."

<<http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/292540.292561>>See <http://www.sigplan.org/award-popl.htm> for more details.

Carl Lagoze: NSF OCI that our Datanet

(http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503141&org=NSF&sel_org=NSF&from=fund) proposal, joint with Johns Hopkins and many other partners has been approved by funding. A total of - \$20M extending over 10 years. Cornell is the second largest partner in the project and the involved parties here include Jim Cordes (Astronomy), Dean Krafft (CUL), Steve Kelling (Lab of O), and Mirek Riedewald (CS). In addition, Fedora Commons led by Sandy Payette here, is a partner in the project (Fedora will be a primary foundation for the planned curation infrastructure).

Bobby Kleinberg received 5-year AFOSR grant with about \$750K

Students **Tal Rusak & Vincent Kam** have been selected to receive a Spring 2009 research award from Engineering Learning Initiatives for their program for performing audits of Majors under faculty advisor: David Gries Faculty

Dexter Kozen has been elected as a new Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Individuals elected are recognized for their contributions to science and technology. See <http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2008/1218fellows.shtml> for the list of new fellows, which includes among other Les Valiant and Tom Mitchell in addition to Dexter.

Three new chairs in computer science have been awarded to faculty in Computer Science at the trustee meeting this weekend:

- **Fred B. Schneider** elected as Samuel B. Eckert Professor of Computer Science.
- **Jon Kleinberg** elected as a Tisch University Professor.
- **Kenneth Birman** elected as a N. Rama Rao Professor of Computer Science.

12.19.08

Johannes Gehrke was an invited speaker at the Computer Science Distinguished Lectureship Series at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in October.

Lillian Lee was quoted in an article about the incoming Obama administration's solicitation of public feedback via the Internet.

The article was entitled "Is Obama's Web-based political revolution real or smoke?"

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/politics/story/57539.html>

and also ran as "Is Obama's Web-based political revolution real or an illusion?" in The Fort Worth Star Telegram, the Sacramento Bee, the Charlotte Observer, and others.

Gun Sirer was quoted in an article in Infosecurity Magazine about Operating System and Security entitled "White hats fight back" <http://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/features/April08/innovation.html>.

12.08.08

Fred Schneider has been elevated to IEEE Fellow, effective 1 January 2009, with the following citation: "for contributions to trustworthy computing, fault-tolerance and formal methods." Each year, following a rigorous evaluation procedure, the IEEE Fellow Committee recommends a select group of recipients for one of the Institute's most prestigious honors, elevation to IEEE Fellow.

http://www.ieee.org/web/membership/fellows/Fellows_Class_of_2009.html

Jon Kleinberg is part of Discover Magazine's list of "The 50 Most Important, Influential, and Promising People in Science", which is featured in its December 2008 issue.

See: <http://discovermagazine.com/2008/dec/19-the-50-most-important-influential-and-promising-people-in-science>

And http://discovermagazine.com/2008/dec/20-best-brains-under-40/article_view?b_start:int=2&-C=

Tal Rusak (CS) has been selected the winner of the Computing Research Association's Outstanding Undergraduate Award (male) 2009. The award includes a cash prize of \$1,000 and a plaque. A copy of the announcement as it will appear in the January 2009 issue of *Computing Research News* will be posted on CRA's website (www.cra.org).

Ken Birman was an invited speaker at the Harvard Computer Science Colloquium Series on November 13th, and for the Triangle Distinguished Lecture Series at UNC Chapel Hill on November 24th.

Fred Schneider gave the keynote address at NSF/IARPA/NSA Workshop on the Science of Security in Oakland, California in November 2008.

John Hopcroft attended meetings in Bangalore and Beijing as a member of Microsoft's Technical Advisory Board for Research in Asia. He was a guest of the Chinese government at the Beijing Nobel Laureates Forum 2008 held in Beijing this November lecturing in the People's Great Hall and at the Beijing Institute of Technology where he was recognized with an honorary professorship.

Below are some great articles with pictures of Hopcroft's recent government visit to China.

University students have a panel discussion with Nobel laureates

<http://english.cri.cn/2946/2008/11/14/53s423955.htm>

http://www.china.org.cn/china/national/2008-11/14/content_16769806.htm

<http://eng.wcetv.com/1/2008/11/14/83s7358.htm>

CCTV broadcasts the event

CCTV is the English-language 24-hour news channel of China Central Television

<http://www.cctv.com/program/cultureexpress/20081114/107272.shtml>

Nobel Laureates meet in Beijing

(Meeting held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing)

http://www.china.org.cn/china/sci_tech/2008-11/13/content_16759003.htm

Lucian Leahu (CS PhD student) and **Gilly Leshed** (IS PhD student) were selected for the ACM Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW) Doctoral Colloquium, which took place in San Diego, November 8-12. The Doctoral Colloquium is a forum in which Ph.D. students meet and discuss their work with each other and a panel of experienced CSCW researchers and practitioners. Students are selected to participate in the colloquium through a competitive review process.

More details at: http://www.cscw2008.org/doctoral_program.html

11.07.08

Carla Gomes was quoted in Nature about the new Institute for Computational Sustainability.

See <http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/2008/081030/full/nj7217-1276b.html>

or pdf: <http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/2008/081030/pdf/nj7217-1276b.pdf>

11.03.08

Kavita Bala and **Doug James** are featured in an article, "Rendering Reality: Cornell Computer Scientists Build a Better World, Virtually" in the Fall Engineering Magazine. **Steve Marschner** also appears in a section of the article; although he is not pictured, the section "Lord of the pixels" talks about his work's effect on the entertainment industry and potentially beyond.
<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/news/engineering-magazine/archives/cem-fall-2008/Rendering-Reality.cfm>

The work of Computer Science undergraduate **Tal Rusak** with Phillip Levis from Stanford was recognized with the Best Paper Award for the paper:
"Investigating a Physically-Based Signal Power Model for Robust Low Power Wireless Link Simulation" at the ACM MSWiM'08 Conference in Vancouver, Canada.

Ken Birman and **Jon Kleinberg** are quoted in Computerworld in an article entitled "The Computer, Once a Tool for Scientists, Is Becoming a Collaborator".
<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=Hardware&articleId=328025&taxonomyId=12&pageNumber=1>

Cornell University computer scientist Ken Birman argues that computers have made the jump from tools serving science to components of the science. Fellow Cornell professor Jon Kleinberg agrees, and says that it "is becoming increasingly clear ... that computer science is not just a discipline that provides computational tools to scientists. It actually becomes part of the way in which scientists build theories and think about their own problems."

Jon Kleinberg and **Lillian Lee** are invited speakers at the Third International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM 2009), to be held May 17-20, 2009 in San Jose, California.
<http://www.icwsm.org/2009/index.shtml>

The Cornell teams placed 2nd, 8th, and 15th this past weekend at the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest! Stony Brook overtook Cornell's team in the last 12 minutes of the contest, but the three Cornell teams all performed very well, and most of them are new to the competition this year. We now have to wait until December to know whether the Cornell 2nd place team can participate at the World Finals in Stockholm. Congratulations to first time coach Dustin Tseng, who took over this year for Lars Backstrom.
The students are:

Team 2 (black)

Viktor Russev Ivanov
Yu Cheng
Ramu Nachiappan

Team 1 (red)

Eric First
Vincent Chan
Hooyeon Haden Lee

Team 3 (gold)

Seulgi Kim

Jae Yong Sung

Jonghwi Lee

10.28.08

Robbert VanRenesse is program co-chair of the Operating Systems Design and Implementation conference (OSDI 2008), which is held Dec 8-10 in San Diego, CA.

<http://www.usenix.org/events/osdi08/>

Lars Backstrom, CUCS PhD student, and CUCS undergraduate **Hooyeon Haden Lee** competed in the Local Onsite round of Google Code Jam, and Lee, having placed 23rd out of approximately 100 in the Americas region of the Local Onsites, is advancing to the finals in Mountain View on November 14th. Qualifying for the onsite round meant surviving the initial qualification round, then being among the top 2520 participants of online round 1, and then being among the top 1000 participants of online round 2, then being one of the top 500 participants in online round 3. The top 100 in the onsite rounds who can attend proceed to the onsite final round. Google Code Jam is a coding competition in which professional and student programmers are asked to solve complex algorithmic challenges in a limited amount of time.

<http://code.google.com/codejam/index.html>

Nov. 3rd **Robbert VanRenesse** will be one of four VIP guests invited to attend the celebration of the 10th anniversary of MSR Beijing. He will be giving the keynote at the Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Internet Services and Cloud Computing, also in Beijing on Nov 6.

<http://www.racemind.net/event/internet/>

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09.26.08

Dan Huttenlocher highlighted on Cornell Campaign website:

<http://www.campaign.cornell.edu/multimedia.cfm?display=10&player=transcript#main>

Ramin Zabih has been named Editor-in-Chief for the Journal IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence: <http://www.computer.org/tpami>).

Nitin Gupta, with co-author Neha Singh of IIT Bombay, wins first place in the ACM Student Research Competition Grand Finals for their work on XML processing. <http://www.acm.org/src/>

Database group members, including students **Lyublena Antova**, **Nitin Gupta**, and **Ben Sowell** win 1st and 3rd prizes (tie) in poster competition, Spring'08 DB/IR Day at Columbia University.
<http://dbirday.cs.columbia.edu/spring08/posters.php>

"Fast and Simple Relational Processing of Uncertain Data" by **Lyublena Antova**, **Christoph Koch**, **et al.** is the runner-up to the best paper award at ICDE 2008! The Cornell DB group had four papers at ICDE'08.

09.12.08

CS undergrad Andrew Hurrell was recognized as a "Student with distinguished honor" for his performance as a co-op student with Riskmetrics.

Co-op students were nominated by supervisors based on initiative, innovation, leadership, and professionalism.

The full list of nominated students can be found at www.engineering.cornell.edu/coopawards.

09.05.08

The Expedition grant Computational Sustainability: Computational Methods for a Sustainable Environment, Economy and Society (**PI: Carla Gomes**) is first item of News on Cornell's front page <http://www.cornell.edu/>

David Gries is the invited speaker at OOPSLA's 17th Educators' Symposium in Nashville on 20 October.

<http://www.oopsla.org/oopsla2008/cfp/cfp-edusym.html>

Lukas Kroc, **Ashish Sabharwal** and **Bart Selman** gave a tutorial in AAAI 2008: SP3: Satisfied by Message Passing: Probabilistic Techniques for Combinatorial Problems

The Tutorial Forum of the Twenty-Third AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-08) will be held July 13-14, 2008 in Chicago. The Tutorial Forum provides an opportunity for junior and senior researchers to spend two days each year freely exploring exciting advances in disciplines outside their normal focus. We believe this type of forum is essential for the cross fertilization, cohesiveness, and vitality of the AI field.

<http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/AAAI/2008/aaai08tutorials.php>

08.08.08

Lillian Lee was an invited speaker at AAAI 2008. Her talk title was "A tempest: Or, on the flood of interest in sentiment analysis, opinion mining, and the computational treatment of subjective language".

Carla Gomes was Program Co-chair. The conference drew over 1000 attendees.

<http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/AAAI/aaai08.php>

Michael Clarkson and **Fred Schneider** received a best paper award for their paper

"Hyperproperties" at the 21st Computer Security Foundations Symposium. The three best papers each year are invited to a special issue of the Journal of Computer Security.
<http://www.cylab.cmu.edu/CSF2008/>

Ken Birman was a keynote speaker at the Fifth International Conference on Autonomic Computing (ICAC 2008). He spoke on "Scalable Management for Global Services".
<http://www.acis.ufl.edu/~icac2008/keynotes.shtm#keynotel>

Robbert van Renesse is the program co-chair of OSDI '08, the 8th USENIX Symposium on Operating Systems Design and Implementation <http://www.usenix.org/event/osdi08/>

Joe Halpern will be giving an invited talk on "Beyond Nash Equilibrium: Solution Concepts for the 21st Century" at the 27th Symposium on Principles of Distributed Computing (PODC).
<http://www.podc.org/podc2008/program.shtml>

Doug James was the program co-chair of the ACM SIGGRAPH / Eurographics Symposium on Computer Animation (SCA) in July.
<http://gv2.cs.tcd.ie/sca08/>

Andrew Myers will be program co-chair of the 2009 IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (the "Oakland" meeting).
<http://oakland09.cs.virginia.edu/>

Andrew Myers was the invited speaker at the 10th IFIP International Conference on Formal Methods for Open Object-based Distributed Systems (FMOODS'08) in June, speaking on "Guiding distributed systems synthesis with language-based security policies"
<http://discotec08.ifi.uio.no/FMOODS08/InvitedSpeaker>

Gun Sirer is program co-chair of NSDI 2009, the 6th USENIX Symposium on Networked Systems Design and Implementation, to be held in Boston in April.
<http://www.usenix.org/events/nsdi09/cfp/cfp.html>

There are six papers with Cornell authors at SIGGRAPH 2008. In alphabetical order by title, they are:

Backward Steps in Rigid Body Simulation Christopher D. Twigg and **Doug L. James**

Efficient Multiple Scattering in Hair Using Spherical Harmonics Jonathan T. Moon, Bruce Walter, and **Steve Marschner**

Fast Modal Sounds with Scalable Frequency-Doman Synthesis Nicolas Bonneel, George Drettakis, Nicolas Tsingos, Isabelle Viaud-Delmon and **Doug L. James**

Perception of Complex Aggregates
Ganesh Ramanarayanan, **Kavita Bala**, and James Ferwerda

Simulating Knitted Cloth at the Yarn Level Jonathan Kaldor, Doug L. James and Steve Marschner

Wavelet Turbulence for Fluid Simulation Theodore Kim, Nils Thuerey, **Doug L. James** and Markus Gross

07.21.08

Doug James has been awarded the Douglas Whitney '61 College of Engineering Teaching Award

Dexter Kozen has been awarded the Michael Tien '72 College of Engineering Teaching Award

Ramin Zabih has been awarded the Sonny Yau '72 College of Engineering Teaching Award

Claire Cardie was elected a Councilor of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) by the general membership for a term lasting through 2011. The Executive Council is responsible for managing the activities of the AAAI, an organization with more than 6000 members.

<http://www.aaai.org/Organization/officers.php>

Jon Kleinberg was a keynote speaker at the ACM Conference on Hypertext and Hypermedia (Hypertext 2008) in Pittsburgh. He spoke on "Link Structures, Information Flow, and Social Processes".

<http://www.sigweb.org/ht08/keynote.html>

Jon was also an invited plenary speaker at the 2008 annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) in San Diego. His talk was entitled, "The Geography of Social and Information Networks".

<http://www.siam.org/meetings/an08/invited.php>

Ashish Sabharwal, postdoctoral associate in the Intelligent Information Systems Institute directed by **Carla Gomes**, was honored as runner-up for the IJCAI-JAIR 2008 Best Paper Prize for his paper, co-authored with Paul Beame and Henry Kautz, entitled "Towards Understanding and Harnessing the Potential of Clause Learning". The Annual IJCAI-JAIR Best Paper Prize is awarded to an outstanding paper published in JAIR in the preceding five calendar years.

06.23.08

Bernard Wong, **Gun Sirer**, and **Alex Slivkins'** work on the peer-to-peer overlay Cubit was recently discussed:

<http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20080617-cubit-p2p-search-protocol-could-one-day-sink-the-pirate-bay.html>

From the arstechnica post:

Now, a new project out of Cornell hopes to provide good quality, approximate keyword searching directly through BitTorrent networks—a truly decentralized system that doesn't rely on aggregators. Cornell's "[Cubit](#)" project is the brainchild of graduate student Bernard Wong, his advisor Emin Gun Sirer, and Microsoft Research's Aleksandrs Slivkins. The goal of the project, in the words of its authors, is to provide "an efficient, accurate and robust method to handle imprecise string search in filesharing applications."

06.02.08

Bernard Wong, Ymir Vigfusson, Alex Slivkins, and Gun Sirer's work on the peer-to-peer overlay Cubit was slashdotted this week:

<http://tech.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=08/05/22/1513252>

From the slashdot post:

Cubit, a new open-source p2p overlay, enables the Azureus BitTorrent client to look up torrents via approximate keyword

search... Cubit completely decentralizes the lookup process through an efficient, light-weight peer-to-peer overlay that can perform approximate matches. It performs searches without relying on any centralized components, and therefore is immune to legal and technical attacks targeting torrent aggregators.

Prof. Ramin Zabih's work on CS100R, an honors introduction to computer science incorporating programming of robots and machine vision, is described in a Cornell Chronicle article, "To learn programming, students teach robots to do something cool".

URL: www.news.cornell.edu/stories/April08/robotProgramming.ws.html

David Liben-Nowell and **Jon Kleinberg's** work on the spread of information via Internet chain letters was slashdotted:

<http://tech.slashdot.org/tech/08/05/16/2227213.shtml>

The chain-letter work is also currently featured on the NSF's main home page and by U.S. News & World Report.

"How Did That Chain Letter Get to My Inbox?" National Science Foundation (05/16/08); Cruikshank, Dana W.

Cornell University's **Jon Kleinberg** and Carleton College's David Liben-Nowell, backed by the National Science Foundation, Google, Yahoo, and the MacArthur Foundation, studied how chain emails are spread over the Internet. The researchers examined two email petitions that circulated within the past 10 years—one that supports public radio, which started in 1995, and the other in opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which started in 2002. The researchers were able to find 316 copies of the public radio petition containing more than 13,000 signatures, and 637 copies of the Iraq petition with almost 20,000 signatures. The researchers mapped how the messages traveled from recipient to recipient using a tree diagram. An analysis of the diagram found that instead of traveling like a virus, with each message producing multiple direct

"descendents," 90 percent of the time only a single descendent was selected. The study also found that the messages rarely took the most direct route between two inboxes, even when two people were connected by a few degrees of separation, and it was not uncommon for a recipient to receive the same message multiple times. "The chain letters themselves often got to people by highly circuitous routes," Kleinberg says. "You could be six steps away from someone, and yet the chain letter could pass through up to 100 intermediaries before showing up in your inbox."

http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=111580&org=NSF&from=news

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/science/2008/05/21/how-did-that-chain-letter-get-to-my-inbox.html>

Gilly Leshed from Information Science won an Intel Ph.D. Fellowship. Congratulations, Gilly.