

Researchers Receive NSF Award to Probe the Atmosphere

At last count, 87.1 million people were gaming online in the U.S., most of student age. While the majority of the 2,000-plus online games are designed primarily for entertainment, there are many that supplement traditional learning. Some games include sophisticated visualizations that attempt to simulate real-world environments, but only a handful immerse users in real data for an authentic experience. And these visualizations are generally limited to the use of canned data targeted for specific learning scenarios.

However, 3-D visualizations of real-time atmospheric data, including gridded output from weather models, are commonplace in the meteorology community. With that in mind, three Millersville researchers set out to develop a virtual experience that will allow students to navigate within real and current data while being guided by a tiered instructional design strategy.

Drs. Gary Zoppetti, computer science, and Sepideh Yalda and Richard Clark, both from earth sciences, recently received \$350,000



Drs. Sepideh Yalda, Richard Clark, and Gary Zoppetti will be developing an inquiry-based 3-D immersion environment. A mock-up of their GEOpod is shown in the background.

from the National Science Foundation Division of Information and Intelligent Systems-Advanced Learning Technologies Program (NSF-IIS-ALT) to develop a “plug-in” that will provide students with the ability to explore real-time data interactively at the controls of their personal virtual platform. The project is called “Geosciences Probe of Discovery.”

“Working with a team of undergraduate students, we will collaborate on the development of a software module that implements an interactive, intuitive interface called the “GEOpod,” explained Clark. “The GEOpod allows students to probe a 3-D immersion world of authentic geophysical data and use virtual

devices to collect data and record observations, while guided by an instructional approach that can be customized for individual learners.”

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The Curious Case of Autism

While the movie “Rain Man” first brought attention to the world of autism for many people in the 1980s, there has been a lot of research in recent years on this neuropsychological disorder. Because it is such a timely topic and has many bridges from the University into the greater community, the Common Reading Committee has developed a series of events about autism spectrum disorder to complement this year’s common reading selection, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

“It’s a very relevant topic for our students,” explained Dr. Laurie B. Hanich, educational foundations. “One in 150 babies will be diagnosed with some form of autism. And many of our students have interacted with individuals on the autism spectrum since degrees of autism range from very high mathematical abilities to non-verbal abilities.”

During fall orientation, students participated in book discussions as part of the common reading program. That was followed by a writing contest for

first-year students and the Carter G. Woodson lecture by Holly Robinson Peete. Upcoming activities will include service learning projects, guest lecturers, including the Anna Funk Lockey lecture in March by Dr. Temple Grandin, and the humanities film series.

In addition, faculty will bring campus and community attention to the wider world of disabilities, not just autism. For example, on March 31, 2010, the Honors College will feature a community issues forum on disabilities. Dr. Dennis Downey, director of the Honors College, will moderate the forum. Speakers will include Steve Surovic, executive director of Arc of Pennsylvania, and Judith Gran and Thomas Gilhool, both of the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia.

Upcoming films/speakers in the series :

Oct. 6 – “Rain Man”

Oct. 27 – “Autism is a World” and “Outside/Inside”

Nov. 5 – Featured speaker Will Turnbull

Nov. 17 – “Ben X”

New Web Look

Millersville University’s website will take on a more mature look on October 17—greeting faculty, staff and students back from fall break.

Audience feedback was the driving force behind this redesign. “The current website design is about two to three years old,” according to Danilo Yabut, university communications & marketing.

“The ‘average’ life-span of a design is about three years—in that time, styles and trends change, technology advances, the focus of the University adjusts and the habits and needs of our target audience shifts, as well,” explains Yabut. www.millersville.edu/news/articles/2009/09/new-web-design.php

To users, the look and feel of the new site will be the most noticeable change. Such aesthetic enhancements stemmed from user feedback; improvements were also made based on evaluating the website’s traffic (page visits, amount of time on page, exit/bounce rates).

Another distinction will be the main navigation. Related content will be condensed into one area. For example, on the current site, admissions information is broken down by various related material; the new site will be more of a one-stop-shop—putting all related material into one, easy-to-find place.

Staff Activities

Dr. Hosein Atharifar, industry & technology, had his research paper titled “Optimum Parameters Design for Frictions Stir Spot Welding Using Genetically Optimized Neural Network System” accepted for publication in the *Journal of Engineering Manufacture*. He also co-authored a research paper on dental implant design and fabrication. The paper was presented at the Int. Solid Freeform Fabrication Symposium in Austin, Texas, in August.

Dr. Richard Clark, earth sciences, co-hosted a workshop on “Cloud Computing and Collaborative Technologies in the Geosciences” at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis campus in Indianapolis, Ind., on September 17-18. About 100 computer scientists and geoscientists from across the U.S. came to share information and their perspectives on the coordination of activities and future of cloud computing. Cloud computing is a model for enabling convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g., networks, servers, storage, applications and services) that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal management effort or service provider interaction.

Dr. Cheryl Desmond, educational foundations, had her article, “El Salvador: A Democratic Tree in a Globalized Forest?” published in the journal *International Education*, spring 2009.

Dr. Beverly Schneller, English, reviewed the article, “Bodies for Sale: Marketing a Modest Proposal by James Ward,” published in *Irish Studies Review* for the Routledge ABES

Online Bibliography of English Literature. She also reviewed the monograph “The Act of Union 1707” for “Eighteenth-Century Scottish Studies” spring 2010 issue.

Francis Schodowski, development, was part of a panel discussion at the Susquehanna Valley Planned Giving Council on August 21. The topic was on how to maximize planned giving efforts with limited resources. Schodowski, who was one of three panelists, shared examples of reaching out to donors and gave new ideas of how to reach more targeted constituents.

Retired Staff

Dr. Karl E. Moyer, professor of music emeritus, will play an organ recital on Sunday, November 1, at 3 p.m. at First United Church of Christ, Reading. The event celebrates the re-furbishing of the organ and a new console built for it, the largest organ in Berks County. The program will feature a work Moyer commissioned some years ago from his former organ student at Millersville University, Steven Katzenmoyer, “Fanfare and Variations on ‘Take Me Out to the Ballgame.’”

Obituary

Margaret N. Butler, 88, instructor emerita of English, died on September 8. Butler started at Millersville in 1969 and retired in May 1985. She was granted faculty emeritus status in December 1985.

Millersville 250: Request for Proposals

In 1761, John Miller laid out the town of Millersville. In 2011, Millersville will celebrate the 250th anniversary of that event. Request for proposals (RFP) are



now being accepted for the celebration.

The Millersville 250 executive committee is soliciting RFPs for activities from individuals and organizations including Millersville University academic departments, services, clubs and organizations. Ideas could include drama productions, musical productions, readings, tours and special art. The deadline is November 6. For more information contact Carol Reichler at ext. 5824 or Carol.Reichler@millersville.edu.

GEOpod

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The GEOpod team plans to build and release more sophisticated and visually enticing beta versions of the GEOpod, culminating with the global release of a plug-in that can be installed with an existing open-source application called the Integrated Data Viewer (IDV), developed by software engineers at the Unidata Program Center in Boulder, Colo. IDV is currently being used for 2-D and 3-D visualization of the atmosphere by thousands of students at the 100-plus U.S. universities that offer programs in atmospheric and related sciences.

The Exchange is published for employees of Millersville University of Pennsylvania on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Send news to the Office of University Communications & Marketing, Duncan Alumni House; email: janet.kacskos@millersville.edu or call ext. 3586. Editor: Janet Kacskos; Graphic Designer: Diane Black '82. Student Writers and Videographers: Alexandra Wachman, Lucas Neiderer, Melissa Leary and Peter Taraborelli.

Current and past issues of the Exchange are available online at www.millersville.edu/ucm.

Millersville University
SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

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Millersville University was represented by 25 students, faculty and staff on September 20 at the Puerto Rican parade in Lancaster City. The group won third place for their parade entry. The Millersville group was supported by the MUPD, SOLA, Latino Studies minor, and Social Equity and Diversity.

SPC Showcase Premiere 2009

Millersville's Software Productization Center (SPC) will host a Showcase Premiere 2009 on Thursday, Oct. 15, at 6 p.m. The event will be held at the Murata Business Center of Carlisle and will showcase two Central Pennsylvania entrepreneurial businesses who received assistance developing their software-based businesses during the fall 2008 and spring 2009 semesters: Cruzcourt, a virtual off-site cafeteria system with a web-based ordering system, and Dynamics, a software company focused on providing applications that allow non-programmers to develop customized programs for business-related purposes.

The SPC at Millersville University provides emerging technology for focused entrepreneurs within the Central Pennsylvania region assisting in advancing software products from concept to marketable product.

"So far, we are extremely satisfied. All the participating students have been dedicated to the project, easy to work with, and eager to learn. Also, we were impressed how all the students incorporated a lot of thought and organization before starting the project," said Adrian Fang, president and cofounder of Cruzcourt.

For more information, see the SPC website at www.millersville.edu/spc/ or contact Dr. Stephanie Elzer at Stephanie.Elzer@millersville.edu.

Ride The Red Rose

Incoming freshmen soon learn that free transportation is available through the Red Rose Transit Authority.

However, students, faculty and staff do not realize the places that their Millersville University ID card can take them or how to use that card to its fullest. 

There are three different bus services that serve the University and surrounding community while school is in session. All three are free to anyone with a University ID. All you need to do is board the bus and show the driver your ID card.

"We have a few faculty members that already take advantage of our services," said Mike Haggerty, chief operations officer, Red Rose Transit Authority, "Taking that first step and boarding an unfamiliar bus is always the scariest part."

Red Rose Transit calculated that faculty, students and staff used the buses 101,966 times during the 2008-09 school year.

The first of the three bus services is the MU Xpress, an on-campus shuttle that loops around the campus every 15 minutes. This service is provided from 7:45 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. every weekday with the exception of Friday, when it oper-



ates from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can board this bus at the Student Memorial Center (SMC) or at the residence halls, Ganser Library, Brookwood apartments, Jefferson Hall and all points in between.

The second bus is the MU-Park City Xpress. This

bus will take you from the SMC to the Regency Square shopping center, Lancaster General Health Campus, and finally to the Park City Mall. This service runs six days a week from 1:10 p.m. through 10:15 p.m. and Sundays from 1:10 p.m. to 6:35 p.m.

The third service is the Route 16 bus that arrives and departs from the intersection of Hillview Dr. and Lee Ave., located behind the SMC near the Brookwood Apartments. This bus will take its riders straight into the heart of Lancaster at Penn Square then on to the Queen Street Station. This bus also runs to and from the campus seven days a week. Monday through Saturday the bus runs from 5:40 a.m. until 11:10 p.m. On Sundays, this service runs from 11:00 a.m. to 6:45 p.m.

To view a complete list of the free services, stops and a schedule, you can visit www.millersville.edu/~shuttle. You can also contact the Red Rose Transit Authority at www.redrosetransit.com or call (717) 397-4246.

Get Your Swagger On and Strut in Stilettos

On Wednesday, October 7, men and women will gather to walk one mile in women's high-heeled shoes throughout Millersville University to protest rape, sexual assault and gender violence. The walk is being organized by the Elsie S. Shenk Wellness and Women's Program and the Millersville University Police Department. A portion of the proceeds from sponsored walkers will benefit Domestic Violence



Services of Lancaster County.

WHO: Men (students, faculty, staff, and community members) will proclaim their solidarity with the rape prevention movement by marching in high heels, with women marching at their side.

WHEN: The opening ceremonies and on-site registration are scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. with the walk beginning at 6 p.m. Men, women, and children are invited to participate, and walk-on registrants are welcome. Men are encouraged (but not required) to walk in women's shoes and participants are being asked to obtain a minimum of \$10 in sponsorships.

WHERE: Registration and the start of the walk will take place outside of the Student Memorial Center, bookstore entrance.

For additional information on the event, please visit www.millersville.edu/wandw or contact ext. 3841 or womenscenter@millersville.edu.

Biology Colloquium

Millersville University's Department of Biology has announced its fall 2009 Colloquium Series.

All lectures will be held Wednesdays from 4 – 4:50 p.m. in Caputo 210; they are free and open to the public. The purpose of the Biology Colloquium is to bring outstanding scientists to campus to talk and interact with students, faculty and staff.

"The scientists we bring to campus are working on cutting-edge research in different fields of biology," said Dr. James Moné, biology. "Faculty and staff should attend if they have any interest in what is happening now in the field of science."

For more information, contact Dr. James Moné at ext. 3409. The fall 2009 Colloquium Series schedule can be viewed at: www.millersville.edu/~biology/activities-scholarships/colloquium.php.

Who Makes Millersville Special

This edition of the exchange features Jennifer Hart, administrative assistant in the Office of the President. Hart has been a full-time staff member for five years.

Q- How did you receive the job to work with the President? Did you have to work your way up to the position you are in now?

A- I was initially hired as the President's Office receptionist and held that position for about nine months. Then I applied for, and was offered, my current position as the administrative assistant.

Q- What kind of tasks and responsibilities do you have?

A- I serve as liaison to the Council of Trustees and coordinate the trustee agendas and meetings. I also serve on the commencement committee and am instrumental in planning the President's Annual Garden Supper, among other events.

Q- What is something about your job that no one really knows about?

A- It is very gratifying and empowering to be entrusted with such a great deal of responsibility. I am thankful to work in an environment where we encourage one another to be second to none.

Q- If the president is absent for some reason, is it ever the case that it is your job to fill in for her?

A- Lucky for the President, no! I have



Jennifer Hart

never been one for public speaking. Thankfully her cabinet members fill in for her when necessary.

Q- What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

A- Like most jobs, I think the most challenging part is trying to successfully juggle a multitude of assignments and meet required deadlines.

Q- Of all your duties, which is the most exciting?

A- I have to say that working in the Office of the President in general is exciting. I am exposed to interesting people with colorful opinions on a daily basis. Working here has been a wonderful learning experience.

Q- Did you work in another position as a part-time staff member at Millersville University?

A- I worked on campus as a temp for the Upward Bound Program.

Q- What is your favorite pastime?

A- Reading vampire novels and helping my husband renovate our home. I've also recently developed an interest in foreign languages and would love to learn to speak fluent

Spanish and French.

Q- If you had the opportunity to have dinner with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be?

A- Philadelphia Eagles quarterback, Donovan McNabb. I don't have anything against Andy Reid, but I think Donovan and I could devise a solid plan for winning Super Bowl XLIV.

Q- Have you ever travelled outside the United States?

A- My husband and I traveled to the Dominican Republic a few years ago for our honeymoon. The beaches there were beautiful, but apparently we went during monsoon season (October) and it rained nearly the entire week. Next time we will visit in the spring!

Q- If you could live in any country in the world, where would it be?

A- Any secluded tropical island would suit me just fine as long as I could take my family, dog, iPod and the Olive Garden.

Q- What is your favorite season and why?

A- Either fall or spring; I can't choose between the changing leaves and the daffodils.

Q- Where did you go to school and what was your major?

A- I graduated from Consolidated School of Business and majored in computer software. Someday I hope to have the time to pursue a degree in psychology.

Q- If you had a paid month off of work, what would you do?

A- Travel with my family. We could each take a turn choosing a destination. My choice would be Brazil.

Travel Programs

Destinations

Call ext. 2308

—Broadway Shows—

- Oct. 17 "West Side Story,"
- Nov. 14 "South Pacific"

Destinations Suspended

Millersville University has made the difficult decision to suspend the Destinations Travel Program after 2009, due to rising costs associated with the program. We thank you for your patronage and support over these past years and we hope to serve our travelling public again soon.

Alumni & Friends

State System

Reservations/info available at ext. 3352. Or visit: www.alumnivacations.com, click on Millersville.

- Western Caribbean Cruise Jan. 10-17
- Punta Cana (Dominican Republic) Jan. 18-25
- South American Cruise Mar. 13-24
- Mediterranean Cruise Jun. 17-27

SECA Campaign

Millersville University has again joined the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education in participating in the Commonwealth's State Employees' Combined Appeal (SECA) Campaign.

The goal this year is \$26,000. The University's campaign runs through October 23. A complete list of organizations is available at: www.seca.state.pa.us/PDFs/2009/SECA%20resource%20guide.pdf.

H1N1/Flu Update

H1N1 (also referred to as swine flu) is a virus spreading from person-to-person worldwide. To date, Millersville has eight cases of influenza Type A. The Lancaster County Health

Department and the Pennsylvania State Health Department are no longer testing for H1N1, so while Health Services is assuming these eight cases are H1N1, there isn't a confirmation.

One of the most important ways to keep from getting the flu is social distancing. That means staying away from people who appear to have symptoms of the flu and making sure to wash your hands often, even if you're around people who appear healthy. It also means that if you are sick, that you should stay home and away from others so that the illness does not spread.

