

Tech Topics

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Michigan Tech's Faculty-Staff Newsletter

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Print Shop Offers Quality, Low-Cost Services

Worried about printing? Don't; while Data Solutions will no longer be printing most types of University documents as of April 15, the Print Shop continues to provide quality, low-cost service to departments.

If you haven't visited the Print Shop recently, you may not know that they provide networked black-and-white and color print at competitive prices.

All departments can send documents electronically to the Print Shop. If you have questions, contact your system administrator or call Design and Publications Services, 487-2360.

Staff Council: Vote for Award Committee Members

Ballots for the Employee Excellence Award Selection Committee are being sent out to staff. Please be sure and return yours by Tuesday, April 9, Staff Council asks.

Council President **Becky Christianson** also thanks everyone who provided feedback on changing the structure of the award. Based on input received, the award will stay the same, with one recipient in each category receiving \$1,500 each.

UWC Spring Meeting and Brunch 13

The University Women's Club Spring Meeting and Brunch will be held April 13 at 10 a.m. at the Bluffs.

Cynthia Cote of the Community Arts Center will present "A Garden Tour" to end the winter blues, and the 2002 scholarship recipient from MTU will be announced.

Brunch will feature vegetarian and non-vegetarian items at a cost of \$11. Reservations are required. Contact Maggie Vanek, 482-5543 or mavanek@chartermi.net for information and reservations.

*There are lots of people who confuse
"normal" with "conventional."*

—PAULA OYE

CS STUDENT TO COMPETE IN NAT'L CODE-WRITING CHALLENGE TOP PRIZE: \$100,000

Joe Nievelt, a sophomore in computer science and math, will compete for \$150,000 in prize money at the 2002 Sun Microsystems and TopCoder Collegiate Challenge at MIT April 19.

Nievelt became eligible for the national computer-code-writing competition based on his third-place performance in the Midwest Regional Championship March 13. Nationally, more than 500 college contestants from across the nation competed in one of four regional championships.

The winners of the four regional events earn an automatic berth in the national competition. Nievelt advanced to the championship rounds as a "wildcard," finishing among the next 12 highest point-getters nationwide, regardless of region. The Midwest's regional champion is another Michigander, Tomas Sirgedas of Novi, who is a student at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Nievelt has been participating in TopCoder events since June 2001, earning a rating that ranks him 25th among all 11,000 TopCoders in the nation and second in the eight-state Midwest region.

David Poplawski, an associate professor of computer science, has been following Nievelt's progress. "He solves hard problems faster than I can, and I've been writing code since 1967," he said. "Joe's the fastest programmer I've ever seen. He has a great knowledge of computer science, especially for a sophomore."

The top four finishers on April 19 will

advance to the finals on April 20 to compete for a grand prize of \$100,000. Second prize is \$25,000, with the third- and fourth-place finishers receiving \$8,000 and \$5,000. The finalists who don't advance each receive \$1,000.

"Given the pedigree of these outstanding students, it is clear that we have identified the future leaders of software development and the technology industry," TopCoder founder and chairman Jack Hughes said. "TopCoder has over 6,000 collegiate members. These 16 have put in a tremendous effort in order to elevate above a crowded field of the best and the brightest. The energy and excitement during the online elimination rounds was amazing. We look forward to seeing them all at MIT in April."

Scoring in TopCoder competitions is based on two factors: intensity, or the ability to use a particular coding language under the pressure of competition; and velocity, the ability to write good code quickly and accurately. Scores are calculated using TopCoder's objective rating system, designed to fairly and accurately gauge a contestant's performance. Winners are the fastest among their peers to solve the problems with code that withstands the scrutiny of other contestants, as well as TopCoder's system test.

Other schools represented in the TopCoder Collegiate Challenge are Cal Tech, Georgia Tech, Oberlin College, MIT, Purdue, Stanford, University of California at Berkeley, University of Central Florida, the University of Minnesota and Virginia Tech.

Alumni Awards Announced

Each year, the Alumni Association recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the success of the association and the University.

Receiving Outstanding Young Alumni Awards are **Toni S. Gissendanner** '90 (Chemical Engineering) of Convington, Ky.; **John L. Uhrie** '91 (Geological Engineering), principal engineer of Phelps Dodge Corporation in Safford, Ariz.; and **Nancy Vandermeij** '89 (Mechanical Engineering), spacecraft systems engineer for the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, Calif.

The recipient of the Outstanding Service Award is **Bob Olson**, known as the "the voice of the Michigan Tech Huskies," a long-time friend and supporter of Michigan Tech and former owner of WMPL Radio in Hancock.

An Honorary Alumni Award is being given to **Walter** and **Joyce Rembold** of Green Valley, Ariz., who have established an MTU scholarship in their name.

The awards presentation will take place on Friday, August 2, during the annual Alumni Reunion Awards Dinner. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Contact the Alumni Association at 487-2400 if you would like more information on the Awards Dinner or Alumni Reunion 2002.

Pride Week April 1-5

Keweenaw Pride is organizing Pride Week, April 1-5, to promote diversity and the understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons.

On Monday, April 1, "Bowling with Keweenaw Pride" will be held 7-10 p.m. in the Memorial Union bowling alley. Anyone interested in meeting members of Keweenaw Pride or finding out what they are all about is welcome to some free bowling.

"A Step Back in Time: A Look at MTU's GLBT History," will be held Tuesday, April 2, from 7 to 8 p.m. in Dow 641. "Join us to find out how and why there came to be a GLBT group on campus," organizers said. "Find out how far campus has come and how far there still is to go." The movie "But I'm a Cheerleader," a campy look at conversion therapy, follows at 8 p.m. and stars Natasha Lyonne (American Pie), Clea DuVall (Girl Interrupted), RuPaul and others.

A roundtable discussion, "How Diversity Affects Our Lives," is set for Wednesday, April 3, in the Memorial Union Peninsula Room, 8 to 10 p.m. The panel includes MTU notables and members of the community.

"Guess the Straight Person: An Exercise in Breaking Stereotypes" will be held Thursday, April 4, at 7 p.m. in McNair West Lounge. The 2001 rock comedy movie "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" follows at 9 p.m. in Walker 134. It stars John Cameron Mitchell, Miriam Shor and Michael Pitt.

A drag show begins at 9 p.m. on Friday, April 5, in the Memorial Union Ballroom. In addition to the professional show by five performers from Milwaukee, everyone is welcome to enter the amateur competition. The event is free.

On April 11 at 7 p.m., the Community Arts Center in Hancock will hold an opening of its month-long Peace, Tolerance, and Diversity Art Show.

Keweenaw Pride, at www.sos.mtu.edu/pride and pride@mtu.edu, is an MTU student group that provides support and education for members and others at MTU. Their weekly meetings are open to everyone.

MichiganTech

Bill Curnow, executive director, University Relations
Marcia Goodrich, *Tech Topics* editor
Tech Topics Web site: www.mtu.edu/news/ttopics/
To get *Tech Topics* via e-mail, send a message to

MAJORDOMO@MTU.EDU saying SUBSCRIBE TECH-TOPICS-L

Information to be included in *Tech Topics* should be submitted to the *Tech Topics* editor in one of the following ways:

- By e-mail to tttopics@mtu.edu
- By campus mail, send typed copies to *Tech Topics*, University Relations.

Each week, the deadline for submitting information is **Friday at 5:00 p.m.** for publication the following Friday.

Reinventing Undergraduate Education:

Three Years After the Boyer Report

By William Kennedy, director

Center for Teaching, Learning,
and Faculty Development



In 1998, a prestigious research panel under the leadership of the late

Ernest Boyer concluded that America's research institutions had for years placed undergraduate education on a back burner as they put more and more time, energy, and money into research.* The report concluded that universities should give undergrads more opportunities to participate in research and creative expression, encouraged the creation of inquiry-based first-year seminars and senior capstone and project courses, encouraged schools to put more emphasis on improving writing, and advocated rewarding faculty members who are good teachers as well as productive scholars.

A recent follow-up report, "Reinventing Undergraduate Education: Three Years After the Boyer Report," concludes that research universities have made remarkable progress in achieving some of those goals. Though much is changing for the better, the report notes, efforts to improve undergraduate education are not always well coordinated and many faculty members continue to feel that teaching is not as important as research in tenure and promotion deliberations.

In this most recent report, 45 percent of the nation's top research universities now report that half or more of their students take advantage of undergraduate research opportunities, especially in the laboratory sciences and engineering. Eighty percent of the schools offer an inquiry-based seminar for first-year students, with about 45 percent of the schools involving half or more of their students in such a course.

The report says that virtually all of the schools have increased their undergraduate

* "Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities," The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

writing requirements, with half now requiring two semesters of lower-division direct-writing instruction and half requiring at least one upper-division writing-intensive course.

The report still concludes that faculty members remain very wary of public pronouncements that tenure and promotion decisions are increasingly emphasizing excellence in undergraduate instruction. The report's author, Dr. Shirley Strum Kenny, president of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, observes, "I'm not sure faculty believe [it]. If you've been going one route for many years, it's very hard to shift the thinking very rapidly."

The updated report concludes with a series of suggestions on how to encourage these trends. It suggests that research universities need to, "expand, integrate, and sustain current good practices so that they are central to the undergraduate experience."

In addition to the issues cited above, the original 1998 Boyer Commission report called for research universities to rethink budgeting priorities to decrease departmental hegemony and encourage interdisciplinary work, to provide a faculty mentor for every undergraduate, to encourage student internships, to develop block scheduling and living/learning communities in residence halls, to encourage summer remediation before admission to prepare students to succeed in their programs, to integrate transfer students into the university culture, to encourage interdisciplinary, foundational course work, to link communication instruction with disciplinary course work, to creatively exploit information technology to enrich instruction, to educate graduate students as apprentice teachers, to improve teaching evaluation systems, and to cultivate a sense of the research university as a community of learners.

Workshops on Sending Your Children to College

Do you have a high school student who is thinking about college? Do you wonder about the application and admissions process? Are you worried about financial aid? Scholarships?

The Admissions Office, along with Financial Aid, Accounting Services and CPDQI, is presenting a series of Thursday lunch and learns, "Planning for College." The information is for students applying to any institution, not just Tech.

Sessions will be held noon-1 p.m. To sign up, contact Sharon Tyrell at sktyrell@mtu.edu by the Monday prior to each session. Specify which session(s) you're interested in. You will receive confirmation via e-mail.

Bring your lunch; cookies and water are

provided. For information on the workshops' content, contact Nancy Rehling at nrehling@mtu.edu.

- April 4: "Preparing for College," on the best high school curriculum for college testing and test preparation, admissions requirements and the admissions process
- April 11: "The College Selection Process," on choosing the right college
- April 18: "Develop a Plan to Finance College," determining college cost, financial aid, scholarships
- April 25: "College and Tax Issues," the Hope Scholarship, Lifelong Learning Credit, taxability of scholarships and more

"We Are Michigan Tech Dance" April 4

Submitted by the Department of Fine Arts

Michigan Tech's dance company will showcase its many talents on Thursday, April 4, at 8 p.m. in the Rozsa Center in "We Are Michigan Tech Dance!" The Dance Company, now in its second year, presents high-energy performances directed and choreographed by **Laura Aneshansel**, with sound, lighting and pyrotechnic effects by Technical Director **Paul Aneshansel**.

The show will feature several new pieces, including "Log Jam," choreographed to original music by Michigan Tech's award-winning combo Jaztec, which will perform the piece. Other pieces include the world premiere of "My Day," plus a performance of "Canned Heat," with "an explosive ending that's awesome," the directors promise. "Casablanca," an a cappella tap number, plus "Titanic" and a new swing piece choreographed by student dancers (with special effects by MTU's Lighting Design class) round out the program.

Laura Aneshansel, director of the Superior School of Dance in Hancock, founded the Michigan Tech Dance Company in fall 2000 primarily to perform in the fine arts department's theater productions, including "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Guys and Dolls" in 2001 and this year's "A Chorus Line." With a membership of Michigan Tech students and community dancers who are selected by audition, the Dance Company quickly matured into a polished ensemble performing in a variety of styles. Its first solo

MTU POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Job descriptions will be available at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, or by e-mail at <JOBS@MTU.EDU>.

The following positions will be posted Friday, March 29, 2002, at 1 p.m. through noon, Friday, April 5, 2002, in the Human Resources Office.

Assistant Research Engineer—Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

University employees are reminded to apply in writing prior to noon, Friday, April 5, 2002, to be considered as internal candidates for bargaining unit positions only. Applicants from the recall pool will be given first consideration for non-bargaining-unit positions only. Vacancy announcements are normally posted every Friday at 1:00 p.m. in the Human Resources Office. Complete job descriptions are available in the Human Resources Office or by calling 487-2280. More information regarding employment opportunities is available by calling the Job Line at 487-2895. Michigan Technological University is an equal opportunity educational institution/equal opportunity employer.

show last spring impressed everyone who saw it.

Aneshansel studied with the Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and Hubbard Street Dance Company in Chicago before moving to the Keweenaw six years ago. Her credits include choreographing eight full-length stage productions, including "West Side Story," "Oklahoma," "Romeo and Juliet" and a previous production of "Guys and Dolls." At Michigan Tech, her credits also include "Macbeth" and "Man of La Mancha."

Tickets for "We Are Michigan Tech Dance!" are available from Rozsa Center Ticketing Services (487-3200 and <http://www.tickets.mtu.edu>) and at the door for \$8 general, \$4 students.

Seminar April 5 on RNA Enzymes

Nils G. Walter, an assistant professor of chemistry at the University of Michigan, will give a seminar, "Back to the Future: Realizing the Scientist's Dream to Directly Watch Single Molecules of Life," on Friday, April 5, from 3 to 4 p.m. in Chemical Sciences and Engineering 102.

Walter seeks to understand the nature of catalysis by a novel class of RNA enzymes. The enzymes range from small RNA catalysts, such as the hammerhead and hepatitis delta virus ribozymes with potential use in gene therapy and relevance to human disease; to large, RNA-protein complexes such as the ribosome, the cellular protein synthesis machinery. They use fluorescence techniques to study the enzymology of these ribozymes in bulk solution, in live cells, and on the single-molecule level. Applications include identifying and optimizing ribozymes for gene therapy and as biosensors.

Walter's talk is sponsored by the chemistry department. For more information, call 487-2048.

MTU Notables

The Michigan Tech Lode has won several awards in the Michigan Press Association's 2001 College Newspaper Contest for Division II (four-year schools with papers published once a week or less). It received first-place awards in the Back-to-School Issue, Online Newspaper and Classified Section categories; second place in Non-Deadline Story-News for **Britta Vande Hei's** "Planned Parenthood Provokes Debate," in the Special Section category for Guide to Career Day 2001, in the Best Column category for **Tim Laurila's** "Tech Lacks School Spirit," and in Feature Photo for **Chris Scruggs's** photo "Planned Parenthood"; and third place in Non-Deadline Story-News for **Emily Fossum's** "Tennis, Nordic Skiing Program Cuts?"; in Best Overall Design, in House Ad for the "Online Lode," in Black &

March

National Women's Month

- 29 Friday**
11 a.m.—Women's Week Luncheon, Rose Bammert, "Children's Rights and Parenting Time"—Memorial Union Ballroom B2
6/7:15 p.m.—Club Indigo: Buffet/"American in Paris"—Calumet Theatre

April

Fair Housing Month

- 1 Monday**
noon—Weight Watchers—Memorial Union Ballroom B1
7-10 p.m.—Bowling with Keweenaw Pride—Memorial Union Bowling Alley
- 2 Tuesday**
7-8 p.m.—"A Step Back in Time: A Look at MTU's GLBT History"—Dow 641
8 p.m.—Movie: "But I'm a Cheerleader"—Dow 641
- 3 Wednesday**
8 p.m.—Roundtable discussion, "How Diversity Affects Our Lives"—Memorial Union Peninsula Room
- 4 Thursday**
7 p.m.—"Guess the Straight Person: An Exercise in Breaking Stereotypes"—West McNair Lounge
8 p.m.—"We Are Michigan Tech Dance!"—Rozsa Center
9 p.m.—Movie: "Hedwig and the Angry Inch"—Walker 134
- 5 Friday**
3 p.m.—Nils Walter, "Back to the Future: Realizing the Scientist's Dream to Watch Molecules of Life"—Chem Sci 102
9 p.m.—Keweenaw Pride drag show—Memorial Union Ballroom
- 11 Thursday**
1 p.m.—Todd Wagenmaker seminar on immigration issues—Memorial Union 105
7 p.m.—Opening of Peace, Tolerance and Diversity Art Show—Community Arts Center, Hancock

White Ad for "Shipping Shop" and for their rate card.

Professor **James Gale** (SBE) received the Jerome F. Schwier Meritorious Service Award for his leadership and service to the economics profession through the Missouri Valley Economic Association. He received the award at the association's Feb. 28-March 2 meeting in Memphis, where he completed a term as its president and served as chair. As president this past year, his responsibilities included program development, officer election and committee monitoring.

Weight Watchers Meet Monday

Weight Watchers will meet on Monday, April 1, at noon in Memorial Union Ballroom B1. For more information, call 487-2517.