

<p>Upsilon Pi Epsilon: International Honor Society for the Computing and Information Disciplines</p>
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*Society in Transition*

Greetings!

This year has marked some transitions for Upsilon Pi Epsilon – both in operations and constitutionally. It also marked another year of outstanding student achievement and awards.

For the first time in many years, UPE will hold its national meeting in conjunction with the SIGCSE Technical Symposium in 2008. I hope you will be able to attend – whether you represent an active chapter, a chapter in need of revitalization, a new chapter waiting to be formed, or are “just curious”. Of course, if you *are* curious, there’s no need to wait until then – we’re always glad to hear from you.

**UPE Constitution Changes:**

We have experienced some other transitions this year, in the form of constitutional revisions, regarding governance and membership eligibility.

Four proposals were brought to our member institutions in early 2007, with three receiving the 75% approval necessary for ratification. The first proposal made official the reduction in Council members that has been in effect for the last 10 years, from six elected members to five. This was originally enacted for cost containment and as time has shown the move to be effective, it was brought for a formal vote and approved. The second proposal limits Council members from serving consecutive terms without sitting out for at least one year. This was also approved.

The third proposal was to change the requirement that chapters can only be established at colleges or universities that grant the baccalaureate degree or higher degrees and that are accredited by the appropriate national or regional accrediting agency. The proposed change was to remove the stipulation about granting baccalaureate or higher degrees, but it was not approved.

The fourth proposal should have a profound effect on chapters: by reducing the membership requirement from 64 semester hours of coursework (with 18 hours in the computing and information disciplines) to 45 and 15 hours, respectively. This was proposed in response to longstanding laments from chapters that students join UPE too close to graduation, which limits meaningful chapter activities. While chapters are always free to specify higher standards or requirements than these, this revision grants greater flexibility and was approved.

**Student Awards:**

Enrollments in the computing and information disciplines may have declined in this decade (okay, they definitely have declined), but the quality of scholarship applications is at least as strong as I can remember. The drop in *quantity* means the odds are improving in your favor, however – so don't be shy about applying.

As this item goes to press, we have just finished selecting this year's awardees for UPE Scholarships, including the Dan Drew and Jim Nolen Scholarships. Hearty congratulations to the recipients (shown below):

***UPE Dan Drew Scholarship*** (\$1250)

Yiu Yu Ho (University of Central Florida, graduate student)

Yiu Yu has been a UPE chapter officer for two years and is the 2008-9 president. He is a longtime veteran of programming contests, competing twice in the ICPC World Finals, and now helps coach the UCF team. Most impressively, he has solved more than 1000 problems on the University of Valladolid's Online Judge site, and was a valued reviewer of the "Programming Challenges" manuscript. He is pursuing a Ph.D. at Central Florida.

***UPE Jim Nolen Scholarship*** (\$1250)

Robert Stark (Michigan Tech University, undergraduate student)

Robert completed a B.S. in Computer Science at Michigan Tech in 2007 with a minor in Mathematical Sciences. As president of his UPE chapter, he was successful at reorganizing the chapter with a committee structure and energized its members with many activities, including research seminars. Robert began graduate study at Penn State this fall, where his interests are in machine learning and data mining.

***Upsilon Pi Epsilon Scholarships*** (\$1000 each)

***Undergraduate***

John Garrett Flowers (University of South Carolina)

Steven Loscalzo (Binghamton University)

Dimitar Todorov Zlatkov (Texas Christian University)

***Graduate***

Lesley Blake Hays (University of North Florida)

Mahmuda Naznin (North Dakota State University)

Robert William Paulin (DePaul University)

Ruchaneewan Susomboon (DePaul University)

Sabrina Antoinette Thompson (University of Bridgeport)

***Upsilon Pi Epsilon Scholarships*** (\$500 each)

***Undergraduate***

Timothy Karl Zirkel (Lafayette College)

In addition to these awards, UPE also supported two \$500 IEEE-CS scholarships, and provided \$1,200 in funding to the Consortium for Computer Science in Colleges (CCSC), which is distributed among its member regions. Furthermore, \$27,750 was distributed to the 88 student teams that traveled to the International Computer Programming Contest (ICPC).

### **IEEE-CS:**

The 2006 UPE/CS Award for academic excellence consists of a \$500 UPE/CS Scholarship, Certificate of Commendation, and a IEEE Computer Society one-year periodical subscription. This award is offered to encourage academic excellence by IEEE Computer Society student members and to promote the development of our future professionals.

The winners were

Md. Raihan Masud – Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, Bangladesh  
Juan Guillermo Gómez Torres – Santiago de Cali University, Columbia

Raihan has been a major participant in Programming Contests and was in ICPC 2005. His software project, “Mobile Game” was selected as one of the best 10 Student Projects of the Country in 2004. He has been very active in his local IEEE Student Chapter, having served as chairman of the KUET IEEE Student Chapter for 2 years during which he arranged several seminars, workshops and technical tours for the branch.

Juan serves in the Laboratory of Mobile Computing and Broadband Investigations of Santiago de Cali University. In 2004, he participated in the first Microsoft Marathon and first marathon of programming for cell phones Cintel – Nokia, achieving fifth place. He has also served as the student president of the Computing department.

### **Celebrating Outstanding Women:**

Remember that in addition to the two scholarship applications each UPE chapter may submit (one each for an undergraduate and graduate student), UPE has entered an agreement with ACM’s Committee on Women in Computing [1] so that schools with an ACM-W chapter may submit a third application, for a deserving member of both ACM-W and UPE. You may wonder, as I have, how likely this is in the face of declining percentages of female students in the computing and information disciplines. A count of the distribution of awards UPE has given over the last five years shows that roughly 30% of them have been to females – double the current graduation rates in computing sciences [2]. This brings to mind something Margaret Reek told me years ago: “It takes an outstanding woman to think she’s half as good as the average male student thinks he is”. Or something like that! (I take full responsibility for any grammatical mishmash. As an exercise for the reader, you may wish to translate this into the predicate calculus.)

### **New UPE Chapters Chartered in 2005-6 and 2006-7 Academic Years:**

Since Fall, 2005 we have also chartered a dozen new chapters, including our first chapter in the state of Washington (University of Puget Sound, Nov. 2005).

Georgia Southern University  
Jacksonville State University  
Lewis University  
Michigan Technological University  
Millersville University  
Norfolk State University  
North Dakota State University  
Sacred Heart University  
Siena College  
University of Puget Sound  
University of West Alabama  
University of West Florida

This brings us to 240 chapters, and counting! We'll be looking for *all* of you at our National Meeting – see you in Portland!

Cheers,  
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## References

- [1] ACM-W: ACM's Committee on Women in Computing, <http://women.acm.org/> .
- [2] Computing Research Association, 2005-2006 Taulbee Survey  
<http://www.cra.org/CRN/articles/may07/taulbee.html> .