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CWIT update

Cyber Scholars Update

THE CENTER FOR WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY AT **UMBC**
AN HONORS UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND

Note from the Director

By Dr. Penny Rheingans, CWIT Director

Fall in CWIT always seems like a time of new beginnings. We're struck anew by the energy and initiative of our latest CWIT cohort. We're enjoying getting to know the nine Scholars of our inaugural Cyber Scholars cohort and watching them bring their varied experiences together to help define what it means to be a Cyber Scholar. We're establishing a Cyber Affiliates program to allow us to support a broader swath of UMBC students interested in increasing the diversity of the cyber field. We've kicked off our new Cyber Practicum, which brings cyber industry professionals to campus to tell our Scholars and Affiliates about their field. We also welcomed five new T-SITE Scholars, who make up our second T-SITE cohort. All five are building on the foun-

dations laid during successful community college careers.

We're learning how to balance the separate identities of our three Scholar programs with our overall CWIT identity. Finally, we've welcomed Beth Taylor to CWIT as our Administrative Assistant. She's already begun to make great strides in moving us to a higher level of efficiency and organization.

Stay tuned for our next set of new beginnings. I'm confident there are more exiting opportunities just around the corner. As always, we could not do what we do without the generous support of our supporters and partners across UMBC and beyond. We are grateful for their strong and unwavering support. Have a happy holiday season and come look us up in the New Year.

By Cindy Greenwood, CWIT Assistant Director

Fall 2013 has been an exciting semester, as we welcomed the first cohort of Cyber Scholars to the CWIT community.

Freshmen Cyber Scholars live on the CWIT Living-Learning Community (LLC) along with CWIT Scholars and some Affiliates. All freshmen who live on the floor also take our First Year Experience (FYE) course to help them with things like study skills, career planning, etc.

Upper-class Cyber Scholars participated in our Industry Mentoring Practicum (IMP) along with junior CWIT Scholars and second-year T-SITE Scholars. This course allowed them to interact with industry professionals and create a personalized career plan and help build community within CWIT.

Through the Cyber Practicum, required of all Cyber Scholars and open to interested Affiliates, students heard weekly from prominent guest speakers who work in cybersecurity. Speakers represented organizations such

as Northrop Grumman, NSA, T. Rowe Price, and more. The class also made a visit to the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab. This course will continue to meet weekly through the Spring 2014 semester as well.

In 2014 and beyond, we look forward to continuing existing initiatives, selecting our second cohort of Cyber Scholars, developing a Cyber Affiliates Program, and helping our scholars to remain successful academically, professionally, and in their co-curricular activities.



T-SITE Update

By Dr. Susan Martin
CWIT Associate Director

Our second cohort of T-SITE Scholars has settled comfortably into our CWIT community. This fall, Kianté Brantley (computer science; CCBS), Chiebuka Ekzewenna (computer science; SCM), Travis Ward (computer engineering, CCBC), April Wasserleben (chemical engineering; MC), and Gurpreet Singh (mechanical engineering; CCBC) all participated in a weekly seminar to ease their transition to UMBC. When asked about their CWIT experience, they all agreed that the connections they have formed with each other and with many of the CWIT and Cyber Scholars made their adjustment to

UMBC go more smoothly than they expected. They also unanimously expressed gratitude for their help that their faculty mentors have provided. Applications for the third cohort of transfer students are being accepted through February 14, 2014. Details are on the CWIT website: www.cwit.umbc.edu/tsite.



Scholars Abroad

Two CWIT Scholars traveled abroad. Here is what they had to say...

Haley Sweeton (C11)- This summer I participated in the 65th Japan-America Student conference. It is a month-long conference with approximately 70 college students from Japan and America dedicated to building a solid foundation for future friendship and cooperation between the two countries. This year we traveled to three sites in Japan: Kyoto, Nagasaki, Iwate, and Tokyo. Throughout the duration of the conference, I researched and presented findings on "Globalization and Agriculture in the 21st Century" with my team of three other American delegates and four Japanese delegates. My focus of research was effects of Nanotechnology in agriculture today. It was a fantastic and life changing experience where I gained much knowledge and insight while forming life-long friendships and bonds.

Tiffany Ernst (C10)- A semester in Spain has been one of the best choices of my college career. Living with a family and teaching English in a local school presented a more complete understanding of the Spanish culture to me. While experiencing this new life style, I learned more about myself than I knew there was left to learn! I had the opportunity to travel to France, England, Portugal, and the most peculiar country being Morocco. I will never forget the lessons I've learned and the friends I've made here. If you have the chance to study abroad I would highly recommend it and would love to do it again in another country.



Scholars Serving...

Scholars within CWIT serve across a spectrum of activities. They are constantly striving to make their world around them a better place. Read more about their experiences!

Kourtney Rutkowski (C12)- I did the Assateague Service trip in the beginning of the semester for a coastal clean up day. The bus trip and the cleanup itself was an opportunity for me to bond with some of my cohort. *This trip was both an opportunity for me to do service in environmental cleanup which is something I am passionate as well as develop friendships that will hopefully last a lifetime.*



Sam McDonald (C11)- SEB hosted a Welcome Week Volunteering Opportunity at The Samaritan Women in Baltimore. The project houses women recovering from trauma or human trafficking and also provides an Urban Farm for the Baltimore area. We spent the day weeding the farm, cleaning the chicken's water bowls, cutting wood, and providing assistance for the overall upkeep of the landscape. *It was an amazing experience. It felt good to work hard in the hot sun knowing that we were making a huge difference.*



The women who stay on the farm deserve to have a better life and a few other CWITers and I were glad to have helped them on their way.

Megan Lynch (C12)- This semester, I participated the Choice Education program, one of the Service Learning Programs offered through the Shriver Center. Every Tuesday, I went to Lakeland Elementary/Middle School in Baltimore City to work with boys in grades 4-6. We lead activities that would benefit them outside of the classroom. *This experience made me realize how blessed I am* to have grown up the way I



did. I will be returning to Choice Education program next semester and for many more to come.

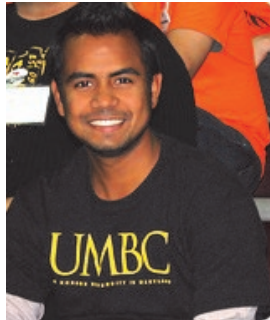
Holly Johnson (C11)- Earlier in the semester Sam (C11) and I participated in a Habitat for Humanity day where we went to a building site near downtown Baltimore. We got to help install insulation for a good part of the day with other UMBC students as well as a few other students from nearby colleges. *It was the first time I have ever helped with the construction of a house and it was actually pretty fun to do.*



Jessica Izumi (C10)- This fall I had the wonderful opportunity to visit Hope Lodge and make dinner for the patients. We all sat around the tables and talked. *It was very eye opening and made me appreciate what I have.* I was

happy that I could give back to the community by something that seemed so small to me.

Kabish Shah (T1)- This semester I had an opportunity to serve as a Team Envoy for Team 888 at Battle O' Baltimore, a robotics competition for middle and high school kids to make them think about their design and be able to explain to someone who does not know anything about robots. *In spring I will be mentoring one of the team.*



Men in CWIT: Learning to be Advocates...



By Alec Pulianas (C9)

Men in CWIT grew immensely this semester with the addition of the Cyber Scholars and the new incoming scholars from T-SITE and CWIT. The focus thus far this semester has been defining our mission statement and brainstorming action items for next semester. Some of these include a Quadmaniaa booth, fundraising, and new student outreach. It's our hope that next semester we can continue to grow and make a difference on campus and in the surrounding area.

Kabish Shah (T1)- Moving forward we plan to do outreach in our high school or community college over winter break.

Nathan Cline (Y1)- I think one of the big things that the men in CWIT, and hopefully CWIT at large, will address next semester is really promoting the CWIT name so a larger portion of the student body is at least aware of their existence.



Fall Highlights

Summer Retreat: Bridging Communities

With the addition of the Cyber Scholars this Fall, we had the challenge to create a New Scholar Retreat that helped build not only individual cohort communities, but connections across three different Scholar programs. Here is what some of our Scholars had to say about this year's retreat...



Alec Pulianas (C9)- This year's retreat was one of the best yet. I always love helping with the CWIT retreat because it is the new scholar's first taste of what it is like being a part of the CWIT family. Having the new Cyber Scholars there as well made it even more special.



Matthew Odunjo (T1)- Summer Retreat was a great experience. I had the opportunity to share some advice and also meet the new scholars.

Samantha Smith (C12)- I thought the Summer Retreat was the highlight of my summer. I was able to make great friends already and who all had relative interests as me. By going to retreat I learned that it is okay to voice your own opinion on the team, the designated leader doesn't make all the decisions and the rest of the team implements them.

Sophia Haire (C12)-Over the duration of the summer, the retreat became to me a symbol of my role with regard to CWIT. I had no need to doubt my abilities or my place in the CWIT community; I only needed to strive to represent this community to the best of my ability.



Katrice St. Rose (Y1)-It was a great introduction to the CWIT community. I had a great time getting to know the other scholars and learning about my (cyber) program. I left with a sense of "belongingness" and felt like a true member of the CWIT community.



Being a Cyber Scholar: Year One

Robert Thompson (Y1)- I can't understate how good of an experience it has been for me. As an extension of an existing scholars program, the program brings the tremendous established benefits of CWIT. Being pushed to do things like attend the job fair, network with persons from our industries, and start looking for meaningful summer work immediately has had a tangible effect. I intend to live up to the program's high standards, and look forward what the future will bring me through the Cyber Scholars.



Alejandra Diaz (Y1)-The Cyber Scholar program helped me be able to network better and showed me how to immerse myself with big corporate figures within my field. With the Cyber Scholars, I've had a lot of guidance in seeing what subsection of Cyber Security I want to become more involved with, and my mentor Dr. Joshi also set me with connections and valuable information as well.

I have grown as an individual thanks to the Cyber (and CWIT) Scholars Program.



Lauren Mazzoli (Y1)-The Cyber Scholars Program has been a great opportunity. I really enjoyed listening to different speakers from NSA, Northrup Grumman, Lockheed Martin, etc. who attended the Cyber Practicum.

attended the Cyber Practicum.

Katrice St. Rose (Y1)- Cyber Security has been an interest that I've had for a few years now so it has been awesome to be a part of a program that I feel so passionately about. I yearn to learn more about this field and have been able to thus far.

Scholar Reception & WIT Networking Event

Emily Scheerer (C9)- This year's Scholars Reception was very emotional. Realizing that my cohort is in our senior year and seeing how CWIT has grown and changed in the time that I've been a Scholar made me proud to be a part of this community.

April Wasserleben (T2)- I have never met Dr. Hrabowski, nor have I ever heard him speak before. His speech for the CWIT Scholar Reception was inspiring and effortless. It became clear throughout his speech that he had a deep respect for women in technology and engineering and for these fields alone...I was able to connect with some other CWIT scholars and get to know them better. Our community has been so welcoming to me and my family and I am very proud to be a part of the CWIT family.

Kabish Shah (T1)- I attended Fall 2012 WIT event and Fall 2013 WIT event. I had an opportunity to talk to same industry professional whom I met in Fall 2012 WIT event. He told me, "Look at you. You are a complete different person than who I met last year." I have experience in my belt and I am confident in networking. Thank you CWIT for providing networking opportunities and helping me achieve my goals.



Nicole Racine (C11)- The fall WIT event helped me more this year as a sophomore than it did last year when I was a freshman. This is because I had more experience networking and I knew what advice to ask. It also enabled me to fine-tune my networking skills.



Connecting with Industry Mentors

By Dr. Susan Martin, CWIT Associate Director

A Big Thank You to This Fall's CWIT Industry Mentors- This fall, 19 Scholars (6 CWIT, 6 Cyber, and 7 T-SITE) were matched with industry mentors from Northrop Grumman Corporation, Harris Corporation, T. Rowe Price, UPS Information Systems, Prince Georges Public Schools, Naval Surface Warfare Center, NSA, NIST, UMBC, Praxis Engineering, and BAE Systems. About half of the mentors attended at least one session of the practicum, where they engaged in small group discussions about career paths, work values, and corporate cultures with the scholars. Mentors were surveyed about their experiences. 100% of respondents rated their overall experience as excellent or good.



Mentors said...

The CWIT students are eager to listen and learn from their mentors. I was very impressed with the students' participation... I felt useful during [our] interactions.

I really enjoyed this experience over the past couple of years. Each student is unique and has different levels of experience and needs.

I was able to see how my company was perceived by the next generation of the talent pool, as well as get a feel for what this generation values and looks for in a career.

[I gained] insight into the current college student's psyche about what they truly want from their life, including their professional goals.

Scholars Said...

Katrice St. Rose (Y1)-My mentor and I had fantastic communication with one another and stayed in touch quite often. I was surprised by how well we connected to be honest. She invited me to shadow her at her job, took me to dinner (twice) and even to a Raven's game!

Nathan Cline (Y1)- A major assistance in planning for my future now has been through my industry mentor. She has really put me at ease on a personal level since she was in a similar situation to myself and she was able to relate both on the professional job front and also on the personal life side of things.

Angie Norton (C10)- Talking with my industry mentor gave me the courage not to be afraid to apply for jobs. My mentor gave me a valuable piece of advice that I would like to share with you: Do not be afraid to interview for a position at a company. I enjoyed taking the Industry Mentor Practicum course this fall, and I am grateful for the opportunity.

Kevin Johnson (C10)- I had a great mentor who took the time to meet with me and talk with me about important career related topics, such as interviewing, different types of resumes, and workplace culture. This invaluable information will help me as I move forward in my college years and eventually join the workforce.



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Reflections on Mentoring Within CWIT

Courtney Melissari (C9)- Looking back on my four years in CWIT, *I realize how important mentoring has been to my journey.* I may not be who I am today without the continual support I received from my mentors. As the senior, I am now this person for the younger scholars. *I find myself constantly talking through scenarios and giving advice to younger scholars.* I hope to always encourage others to pursue their dreams, as others have encouraged me. As someone who has been the mentee, I hope that every reader will do the same because there is no telling how far some honest advice and a little mentor-ship will go.

Jenette Phillips (C12)- I have an outstanding Big Wit! Nicole Racine takes the time to always talk to me. *She has given me great advice as well as support,* and what's even nicer is that since we are in the same major we get the opportunity to see each other out of the CWIT setting all of the time. I can honestly say that she has been one of the best people I have made connections with on campus.

Sydney Menikheim (C12)- Angie has *encouraged me to not give-up and to keep going even when classes are extremely difficult and seem impossible* to pass. I like knowing someone who has gone through the same classes through which I must go.

Samantha Smith (C12)- My BigWIT is wonderful! Hearing her stories gives me something to look forward to years to come and *hearing some of her struggles is actually comforting to know that there is someone who had felt the same way I did and has become successful.*



My fiance Hannah and I are getting married on December 20th. -Thomas Davies, SITE Alum '11

Alumni Updates

This year I left the Applied Physics Lab to take a position with a small (~30 people) startup called Ringtail Design, and I moved to Arlington, Virginia to take the position. -Timothy Burke, SITE Alum '12

CWIT FALL 2013 CALENDAR

June:

Jun 14-16 CWIT New Scholar Retreat

August:

28th CWIT Ice Cream Social

September:

4th CWIT Table at Involvement Fest
5th CWIT Affiliates Peer Mentoring Networking Event
9th CWIT Family Meeting
16th Men in CWIT Meeting
19th Meet Your Majors COIET Breakfast
30th Faculty Mentor Luncheon Annual Scholars Reception
25th Big/LilWIT Kick-Off!

October:

7th Senior Cohort Meeting
16th Men in CWIT Meeting
21st Sophomore Cohort Meeting
24-26 Annual SWE Conference
24th Women in Technology Networking Event
28th Pick your Classes Extravaganza!

November:

13th Men in CWIT Meeting

December:

2nd CWIT Family Meeting
20th Undergraduate Commencement

SAVE THE DATE!!

Mar1st Scholars Selection Day
Apr 25th WIT: Spring into Leadership