

DALHOUSIE WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY SOCIETY (WITS)

The Dalhousie Women in Technology Society would like to send out a 'happy end of semester' to all. Congratulations! We have all made it through another semester at Dalhousie. For some, this is the last semester and on behalf of WiTS I wish you luck. Your contributions towards Dalhousie, big or small, are appreciated and will be remembered when you are gone. To those of you who are staying at Dalhousie, you are now another step closer to your goal of a degree in whatever program you are in. Just remember to keep up the good work and you will get there. And finally, for those who are coming in, the Dalhousie Women in Technology Society welcomes you to our school and invites you to come out to some of our events and meetings to see what we are all about.

WiTS will still be here at Dalhousie for the summer and if you are around we encourage you to become involved or just come out to support

us. This summer, we plan to have an event each month. In the fall we will be participating in the orientation for first year CS students. Our goal, as always, is to have more events and grow as a society. We're hoping to become a bigger part of your day.

In September we will be holding elections, so if you want to get involved and or run for a position feel free to contact our Communications Rep, Gillian Russell (russell.gillian@gmail.com) to become a member and be added to our mailing list.

Summer events:

- May 11 – Make Magazine Project Day
- June 11 – Clay Café
- July 11 – Ice Cream Social, Bake Sale
- August 11 – Potluck

Liz Legere, *WiTS President*

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

It has been a pleasure being your Editor this year. I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the CS Society and the contributors who made this newsletter possible. Thank you all for your hard work and unmatched dedication.

I also bid our readers 'goodbye and good luck' as this concludes my final year at CS. I would like to congratulate my fellow graduates and look forward to being an 'alum' of this prestigious faculty.

I have been wearing many hats this year, and I cannot forget to thank my fellow students who entrusted me with the VP Internal position for two terms. It has been a pleasure working with students, staff and faculty and I have many great memories of this place.

Thank you to the Dean who tirelessly contributed to the newsletter. We look forward to future issues continuing with a "News from Our Faculty Desk" column. All of us at CSS hope that this newsletter will grow as the voice of students, faculty and staff.

To those who, like me, will soon be 2008 graduates, I leave these words of wisdom borrowed from Confucius, "wherever you go, go with all your heart." And as an alternative, a "Plan B" so to speak, I offer this quote: "if at first you don't succeed, do it like your mother told you."

Timothy Mankowski, *Vice President Internal & Editor*

CS Grad Rings



We've created this ring design specifically for the Dalhousie Faculty of Computer Science. The ring company is ready to get started with prototyping and manufacturing, but they need to know how many people will be buying one. We've been quoted at around \$200. If you're interested, please send an email to dice@cs.dal.ca

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NEWS FROM OUR FACULTY DESK

The “Offshoring” Issue

Mike Shepherd, *Dean*

Last month, I wrote about the “Good News / Bad News” story regarding the IT job situation in Canada, and specifically in Halifax. Today, I’m writing as I sit in Bangalore, heart of India’s Silicon Valley. Bangalore accounts for 35 percent of India’s software exports. Most of this comes from Electronics City, an electronics industrial park spread over 1.3 km² in Bangalore. It is the major revenue source for the country. It houses more than a hundred industries, including many leaders in the IT industry.

Jobs go offshore for many reasons including production costs, transportations costs and the availability of a highly skilled work-force. In countries like India, production costs are lower than in Canada and, thanks to the Internet, the cost of transportation of “goods” is minimal. However, India is struggling with a huge shortage of highly-skilled people in the IT sector. This has led to a major retention issue where companies are facing attrition rates of 30%-40% per year, i.e., jumping from one employer to another. Such turnover plays havoc with both software quality and delivery schedules. It has reached the point where clients are starting to insist on “retention clauses” in the contracts, guaranteeing a minimum retention rate for the teams working on their projects.

So, should you be concerned about Canadian IT jobs being “offshored”? I think not. In addition to the retention issues, the majority of the projects offshored require only lower-level programming skills while those requiring higher skill levels are kept onshore. But a word to the wise - when you interview for a job, be sure to ask about the company’s policy on continued training and education. In other words, keep your skill set ahead of the curve.

FROM OUR COUNCIL

Hello Fellow Students and Society Members,

As the end of this academic year draws to a close, I thought I’d take the time to recap the year from the perspective of the CS Society. This year has been a good one for us, beginning with an almost entirely new group of council members in the Fall we’ve managed to forge an effective team and started several new major initiatives while continuing to preserve traditional events. In addition to hosting more than 20 Geekbeer events, including such memorable evenings as Polish Geekbeer, Octoberfest, and Bollywood Night, we tried out a variety of alternative events, including Boardgames Night, Movie Night, and even a charity auction. We also managed to hold a highly successful Snowball, with 125 attendees, in spite of our limited budget.

Although we held so many events, this year’s council was one of the most fiscally responsible to date. We ended both terms with significantly more money in our coffers, thanks to careful pricing and Treasurer Andrew Akins’ exceptional acumen. We’ve also been working on revising society policy and although it’s not done yet, we’ve made significant progress.

Additional accomplishments include the newsletter you’re presently reading, courtesy of VP Internal Timothy Mankowski; a new mentorship program for first and second year students; and our campaign for increased student study and lounge space. We achieved an important improvement by convincing the faculty to keep the Learning Centre open until 11:30 p.m. on weeknights.

All things considered, it’s been a great year, good luck with your exams, and we’ll see you in the Fall.

John A. Doucette, *President*

NEWS FROM SOCIETY – SOCIETY WIRE

Hey FCS,

Wow...can you believe the term is over already? Before you start preparing for exams (and become too busy to notice what is happening outside your bubble), I would like to remind you of a few things:

Computer Science Society Elections

Elections are on! Don’t forget to vote.

Campaigning:

April 7 5:00pm to April 8 5:00pm

Voting:

April 9 5:00pm to April 13 5:00pm

Learning Center

Extended hours until 11:30 p.m.

Sun-Thurs until the end of finals.

Thanks to everyone who made this happen.

Meeting Minutes

As always, meeting minutes are posted to the society website. They are there for you, so please have a look for a reminder of all the wonderful things that CSS has accomplished this term: www.society.ca

As a last remark, I would like to take a minute to thank all the other council members for making this an enjoyable and productive term. ;)

Happy Finals Everyone!

Melanie Tupper, *Secretary*

SOCIETY EVENTS

Hello Everyone,

This year the Computer Science Society was a host to many events including movie nights, themed GeekBeers, a Superbowl party, ITANS/CIPS Techlounge and a charity auction. Over \$100 was given away in prizes and there was lots of free pizza.

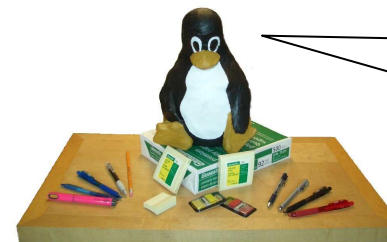
Our last event was held on Friday, March 28th and was a raving success. Bollywood night was a host to delicious food (thanks to the generous volunteers), a Bollywood movie and of course, the music. It was our second largest attendance, next to Techlounge which had about 130 people, with over 50 people attending. Thank you to everyone who came to celebrate the end of term.

I just wanted to thank everyone who attended the events and helped make them possible. It was a lot of hard work but it was great to see all the Computer Science Society students come out and have a good time. I hope that everyone continues to attend the events in the upcoming terms.

Good luck on exams and have a fantastic summer!

Natasha Bodorik, *CSS Social Representative*

LAST MONTH’S CONTEST WINNER



You! Higher mammal!
How do you think I built this house?
Igloo it together
...What? I don't hear you doing any better!

Congratulations to **Mrs. Amy Kasik**, this month’s winner.