

The Computer Science Society is currently in the elections process. The voting for the new council will take place on January 19th and 20th. So please be sure to vote you winter computer science society council. Once the voting period ends the new council will be announced and the date, time and location of the first meeting will be sent out via email. The computer science society is open to everyone so if you are curious about the society but are not wanting to commit to a position yet feel free to come out to the meetings. For more information about the council and to see meeting minutes feel free to visit to the Computer Science Society website: society.cs.dal.ca

Society Highlight for January:

On Tuesday January 27th Richard Stallman is coming to Dalhousie. He will be giving a lecture in the McInnes Room on the second floor of the Dalhousie Student Union Building from 7-10:30pm. Richard Stallman will be speaking at Dalhousie University on "The Free Software Movement and GNU/Linux". Stallman is the founder of the Free Software Movement, a strong proponent of copyleft, and the father of the GNU/Linux operating system. He is a prolific author, and a collection of selected essays will be available for purchase at the door.

This Lecture is open to the public.

Liz Legere, Former CSS Secretary

CS Society Desk

2nd floor Computer Science Building

Sales

- Mechanical pencils - \$1.32-\$2.25
- Clipboards - \$2.50-\$4.25
- Paper(25 sheets) - \$0.50
- Notebooks - \$2.50
- Whiteboard Markers - \$2.00

Services

- Lockers for CS students
- Photo copy cards – (\$2, \$5)
- Print Credits

Color printing @ Society Desk for \$0.25/page

Is there something that we should be selling but aren't, email infodesk@cs.dal.ca to let us know.

Liz Legere, Society Desk Manager

www.cssociety.ca | cssociety@cs.dal.ca



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News from Away

Hello from Kobe, Japan 🇯🇵

Greetings Students, Faculty and Staff!

I am writing to you from Kobe, Japan where I am spending my gap year in the JET Programme. Leaving university lecture halls and becoming responsible for over 460 students in a foreign country has been a bit of a change! The experience has forced me, among other things, to look back and consider what makes learning fun. Being on the flip side of the teacher-student coin has also made me reflect on what I know.

My first dazzling attempt (as a computer science graduate) to lesson plan in PowerPoint prompted my co-worker to say, “that’s too serious, add more pictures and colour.” Killer graphics and “fancy worksheets” don’t guarantee out-of-this world lessons - it’s the connection made between teacher and student that is key. One of my older co-workers explained that students appreciate knowledge that they can call “theirs.” Breaking free from the curriculum for a moment and providing each student a unique opportunity to explore English gives them incentive to learn a language, or for that matter, any body of knowledge. In essence, it’s making the learning experience fun and memorable.



Kinkaku-ji, Kyoto



Teaching in Kobe

I hope our CS Society can do the same. By attending events, committee meetings or even just volunteering at GeekBeer, you’re giving yourself an enriched student experience beyond your daily schedule - thereby making each year different. You may feel that I am preaching a tired message, but with my undergrad behind me I reflect fondly on Society events. Thanks to all of you who were and continue to be a part of the CS Society and to the professors and staff who contribute their time and to all students at CS.

With no further ado, Happy New Year and make CSS yours in 2009!

Timothy Mankowski, *Founder of Dal CSS Newsletter*

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News from Our Faculty Desk

USRAs: an undergraduate research opportunity that pays off

Many undergraduate students believe that research starts at graduate school. This is not quite right. An Honors thesis is research done as part of their Bachelor’s degree. There is an even better opportunity to get involved in research as an undergraduate, and this is getting an NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award, or USRA, in short. First, the essentials: a USRA is a paid job. You get a salary to work full-time on a research project with a faculty member, and, most likely, one or more graduate students. A USRA lasts for one term, and is similar to a co-op assignment (a USRA qualifies as a co-op assignment, but it is not limited to co-op students). A USRA can be the starting point of a research career. Long time ago before coming to Dal, I met an undergraduate student while he was taking the equivalent of CSCI 1100. Two years later, he got a USRA and started an interesting research project with me. He got a second USRA the following summer to continue the project, and at that point, a graduate student from Psychology got involved to assist with human subject experiments. With her help, interesting results came out, and eventually, a publication in a prestigious journal. The student went on to do a Master’s and a PhD, both funded by NSERC Postgraduate scholarships. However, you do not need to have this career path in your sights to apply for a USRA. If you are in co-op, a USRA would likely be among the most interesting and rewarding co-op jobs you might get. If you are not in co-op, it will give you a taste of what research is all about, and help you decide if you want to do more of it in graduate school. It is always a good idea to aim for a publishable result (your advisor will help). Apart from a sense of satisfaction, it will be a great thing to have on your resume when you apply to graduate school. If you want to know more about USRAs, visit <http://www.cs.dal.ca/~research/Orientation-NSERC-USRA.htm>. The application deadline for the coming summer term is on Jan. 19.

Evangelos Milios, Associate Dean Research

News from Society – Society Wire

Welcome to another semester of CS Society Wire, our monthly Computer Science Society Newsletter.

www.cssociety.ca | cssociety@cs.dal.ca