Envisioning the future

ATLAS Board brainstorms ideas at retreat

Members of the ATLAS Advisory Board and ATLAS staff generated ideas about future directions for ATLAS during a retreat Aug. 17-19 at Devil’s Thumb Ranch in Tabernash, Colo.

The participants broke into groups according to their interests and prepared reports about their discussions.

Clockwise from top left, ATLAS Associate Director Jill Van Matre facilitates the discussion of graduate education and research; Advisory Board member Clayton Lewis, who is a Computer Science professor, illustrates some possible directions for undergraduate education; ATLAS Outreach Director Lucy Sanders directs discussion about outreach; and Center for Arts, Media and Performance Director Rebekah West (standing in background) facilitates discussion about the center while, in the foreground, members of the undergraduate group talk about new courses.
Hutchinson explores teaching, technology in Ph.D. seminar

John Hutchinson, a Rice University professor of Chemistry who is ATLAS Visiting Professor of Technology, Learning and Society, has been exploring research about teaching, learning, pedagogy and the role of information technologies as he directs the ATLAS Ph.D. seminar this fall.

Hutchinson, who has taught general chemistry for the past 20 years and has developed a variety of different approaches to teaching introductory science, has been selecting research articles and book chapters for the students then discussing the readings with the students during the weekly seminars.

“The students are very lively, very knowledgeable and very motivated,” Hutchinson said. “I learn a lot from listening to the graduate students talk, and from their perspectives and perceptions.” He added that the students often challenge what the authors have written, which leads to lively discussions that are sometimes difficult to cut off at the end of the class.

Appointment started in May

All 10 of the ATLAS Ph.D. students are taking the class this semester. Other participants include ATLAS Director John Bennett; Associate Director Jill Van Matre and Associate Professor Diane Sieber, who is Director of the Herbst Program of Humanities in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences at CU.

Hutchinson was appointed an ATLAS professor in May and will continue in that role until August 2009. His research interests center around the development of active and interactive teaching and learning methods.

He is a 1977 graduate with highest honors of the University of Texas. Hutchinson also did his doctoral work at UT, and his doctoral dissertation was recognized as the outstanding dissertation in the university in 1981.

Taught previously in Boulder

After graduation, Hutchinson taught at the University of Denver and the University of Colorado, Boulder, before joining the Rice faculty in 1983. During his time at Rice, he has served as Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Academic Advising.

He was also the Resident Faculty Master of Brown College (2003-2008) and Wiess College (1994-2001), two of the nine residential colleges at Rice.

Rice University recognized Hutchinson in 2007 with the George R. Brown Certificate of Highest Merit in recognition of outstanding contributions to undergraduate education.


Dillard University buildings modeled by DigitalCUrrents students now on Google Earth

The 3-D models of Dillard University created by ATLAS DigitalCUrrents students this summer are now viewable on Google Earth, which is an accurate digital representation of the Earth that combines satellite images and models to allow people to explore the globe virtually.

Google reviewed, approved and uploaded the student models just as the third anniversary of Hurricane Katrina approached. Dillard University, a historically black liberal arts college located in New Orleans that has had academic partnerships with CU and ATLAS since 2002, was heavily damaged when the hurricane struck on Aug. 29, 2005. The university has spent the past three years rebuilding and remodeling.

This summer, as part of the Digital CUrrents educational program, eight students from North High School and Thomas Jefferson High School in Denver used Google’s SketchUp 3D modeling program to digitally model the campus buildings.

Prior to the high school students arriving on the Boulder campus, a team of CU-Boulder students and faculty traveled to New Orleans to gather digital source material for the project.

“It was an eye-opener about how events from the past three years have changed their lives,” said Adam Bach, one of the ATLAS students who traveled to New Orleans. “For me it was a great opportunity to bring awareness to a big topic.”

The program was funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Via West, the Musk Foundation, Apple, the Denver Public School System, Dillard University and Google.

Updates October 2008

http://atlas.colorado.edu

Page 2
ATLAS seminar on technology trends open to the public

Next program on Oct. 13 focuses on social networks

ATLAS is offering a series of programs, open to the public, for people who are interested in learning about and discussing new technological trends and their impact on society.

The seminar, “Understanding Information & Communication Technology: ICT for the Rest of Us,” features a lecture/discussion from 6:30-8 p.m. the second Monday of each month through Dec. 8.

“Social Networking: Using Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn,” the second program in the series, will be presented from 6:30-8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 13, in the ATLAS building.

Social Thing co-founder

Matt Galligan, entrepreneur and co-founder of SocialThing (recently acquired by AOL), will discuss key features and benefits of modern social networking Web sites. This program, co-sponsored with Silicon Flatirons Center for Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship at CU, also features refreshments sponsored by the Van Heyst Group at 6 p.m.

The series continues Nov. 10 with “The Dark Side of ICT,” a discussion about computer privacy and security and how to create and protect an online identity. The fourth and final program, “Information Communication Technology Law and Policy,” will be presented on Dec. 8 and will feature Paul Ohm, professor of Law and an expert in ICT law and politics. Ohm will discuss Internet digital copyright law, privacy regulations and policy issues.

Program began Sept. 8

The program was kicked off with “Information and Communication Technology and Society” on Sept. 8. It featured ATLAS Director John Bennett, Associate Director Jill Van Matre, and Chris Scoggin, venture partner, Sequel Venture Partners and Vice President of Online Services, Next Action. They discussed ways modern information and communication technology is shaping society.

The events are part of the ATLAS Institute Speaker Series, which features speakers ranging from technical experts to digital artists. To register for a session, send an e-mail to cuatlas@colorado.edu, or fill out a registration form at http://www.colorado.edu/atlas/seminar.html.

Ph.D. Spotlight

Sarah Vieweg researches how people use social networks to communicate in crises

Sarah Vieweg is finding that people are using social networking Web sites in ways that had never been foreseen – especially in crisis situations.

The second-year doctoral student in the ATLAS interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Technology, Media and Society is studying how people use social networking sites such as Facebook during times of crisis or disaster.

“I am most interested in how people use communication technology,” Vieweg said. But during a crisis, “information movement is at a premium. Everything moves quickly,” especially on social networking sites.

Aftermath of shootings

Vieweg has done field work and online data collection analyzing communications on social networks during crises, including the Virginia Tech shootings in April 2007 and the Illinois University shootings in February of this year. Her latest paper, co-authored with her Ph.D. advisor Leysia Palen of Computer Science, compares the social networking communications that occurred following the two shootings.

She said her paper, entitled “The Emergence of Online Widescale Interaction in Unexpected Events: Assistance, Alliance and Retreat,” is a “total reinterpretation” of how people use social network sites, which were originally created to allow people to develop friendships, display information about themselves and communicate with people they know and meet.

Vieweg said that after a crisis, there aren’t any places that are set up on the Web where people could go to find information about the specific local situation. Instead, “people turn to what they already have. Social network sites are becoming such an integral part of their lives. It’s a very quick and reliable tool that they can turn to.”

Vieweg will present the paper at the Computer Support for Cooperative Work (CSCW) conference on Nov. 10 in San Diego. The prestigious conference has only a 20 percent acceptance rate for paper submissions.

Co-author of 4 other papers

Vieweg is a co-author of four other papers during her time as a Ph.D. student.


Vieweg received a master’s degree in linguistics from CU-Boulder in 2007, and a certificate in Human Language Technology in May 2007. She has worked as a tax consultant, was in the Americorps from 2001-2002, and worked as an English and French teacher in Prague, Czech Republic, from 2002-2003.
CableLabs creates ATLAS P.hD. fellowship

CableLabs, a local cable industry leader located in Louisville, Colo., has provided corporate support to create the CableLabs Fellowship in the ATLAS Technology, Media and Society Ph.D. program.

Beginning in the fall semester of 2009, this five-year fellowship will focus on recruiting and supporting the education and research of an interdisciplinary ATLAS Ph.D. student. In addition to supporting the University of Colorado, Richard Green, CableLabs CEO, envisions the fellowship as a way to assist the ATLAS Institute in building a pipeline of professionals for the growing and changing field of telecommunications and digital content delivery.

Through this education and industry partnership, ATLAS Ph.D. fellows will benefit from world-class advanced interdisciplinary education, research and internship opportunities, as well as leading industry involvement and application.

Joel Swanson’s ‘Binarisms’ inaugurates exhibition space

Joel Swanson, Director of the ATLAS Technology, Arts & Media Program, premiered his new artwork, “Binarisms,” Oct. 1 in the ATLAS lobby. The artwork, on display through Oct. 31, also inaugurates the exhibition of faculty digital work in the lobby’s newly named Digi’liminal Space, which is the area near the lobby stairwell entrance.

The dual projections within the installation create a space to contemplate the typographic intersections that emerge from these dualistic pairs.

In addition to directing the TAM program, Swanson teaches courses on digital art, media theory and the history of design. He received his MFA in Digital Art at the University of California, San Diego.

His work is motivated by literary theory and exists as a series of installations, both real and virtual, that explore the nature of language and its methods of embodiments. Swanson’s work has been shown in various national and international venues.

His work can be seen online at Joelswanzon.net.

Grammy winner Grusin teaching music video class

Students in a unique ATLAS course, entitled “World Music Video Projects as Catalyst for Social Change” and taught by Grammy Award winning pianist/keyboards Don Grusin, are creating original contemporary world music videos documenting international social change projects that include Australia, Peru, Japan, Brazil, Africa and Lebanon.

The students are learning how to create a professional production that will bring attention to the social causes they have chosen to highlight.

Grusin, who is well-known in Boulder and has appeared as a musician and speaker at several World Affairs conferences at CU, was introduced to the music business in the ’70s when he was invited to play and record with Quincy Jones in the US and Japan.

Grusin was raised in Colorado and graduated from the University of Colorado with a master’s degree in Economics. He taught as a Fulbright economics professor in Mexico and at Foothill College in California. In 2006 he received the Norlin Distinguished Achievement Award from CU.

The College of Music, Economics, School of Journalism and Mass Communication and ATLAS each contributed to the creation of the course.

More information and video samples related to the course can be accessed at http://cam-patlas.wetpaint.com/.
Rebekah West, Director of the Center for Arts, Media and Performance, has begun to develop her artistic contribution to the center. She is working with world-renowned flamenco artist Pablo Rodarte, dancer Lisa Trujillo, guitarists and CU Music Ph.D. candidates Kevin Romero and Steve Mullins and with students from Film, Fine Arts, and Broadcasting to produce a free works-in-progress that will be performed in the Black Box in November.

In September, West’s flamenco-multi-media company Polka Dot was awarded a Boulder Arts Commission grant to produce the work, which will be shown at 7 p.m. Nov. 15 to introduce the process and to garner audience feedback as the idea is developed.

West also is learning Isadora, a video manipulation software, in order to apply it to the production. She plans to learn and teach several performance-based technologies.

BLACK BOX REHEARSAL: Lisa Trujillo and guitarist Kevin Romero, a CU Ph.D. Music candidate, are silhouetted by the lighting in the Black Box Studios.

Aerial dance artist Predki named ATLAS Innovator

Nicole Predki, a CU MFA Dance candidate who also is a member of the Frequent Flyers Productions aerial dance company in Boulder, has become the newest ATLAS Innovator for the Center for Arts, Media and Performance.

Predki and her design team and performers have been working since June to create a new performance. As a part of the Innovator program, which is designed to give artists significant amounts of time for innovation, the center is requiring Predki to have three works-in-progress showings and demonstrate a new level of technology capability.

Predki is pressing the Center’s master rigger, Gary McCrumb, to establish rigging for aerial dance and her team is working with the Center’s video expert, Bret Mann, and Center Director Rebekah West on using Isadora, which is a new video manipulation software. Predki’s performances will be in February.

Predki’s Innovator appointment follows two pilot residencies last spring with Ensemble FusionChamber, and with 23 Seconds About John Cage/Siti Company/Naropa MFA Program.

TAM graduate’s award-winning interactive work displayed in lobby

An interactive artwork on the ATLAS lobby video wall greeted students as the first day of classes began Aug. 25.

“MC Grammar – U Can Touch This” allowed people to control movie clips with a keyboard and watch four different people whimsically go through the alphabet saying whatever word first popped into their minds (see a Quicktime video at http://www.colorado.edu/atlas/video/mcgrammar.mov).

The artwork was created by Jessica Floeh, a CU graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in photography. She has exhibited works at FlaSH gallery in Lakewood, the Dairy Center for the Arts and at the TOAST show in Sibell Wolfe Fine Arts at CU.

Floeh now is pursuing a Masters of Fine Arts in Design and Technology at Parsons’s New School for Design.

Floeh also is a graduate of the ATLAS Technology, Arts and Media (TAM) program, which is a 21-credit certificate program that allows students in any major to study, explore and experiment with a variety of technologies. “MC Grammar – U Can Touch This” was the 2008 TAM Best in Show award-winning project.
NCWIT program gets $308,168 from NSF to help recruit women

The NCWIT Extension Services for Undergraduate Programs, which works exclusively with members of the NCWIT Academic Alliance to support systemic change in undergraduate computing departments in ways that increase the recruitment and retention of women, has received $308,168 from the National Science Foundation to continue the program next year.

NCWIT also kicked off the new Extension Services Consultant training program in May. The program works in conjunction with the Extension Services for Undergraduate Programs and uses consultants to help alliance members examine their current methods of recruiting and retaining women and underrepresented groups into their undergraduate programs.

The consultants are conducting a needs analysis by interviewing faculty members, administering student focus groups and reviewing enrollment-tracking data. The consultants will share this baseline report with the client institution in an effort to assist the institution’s diversity efforts.

High demand for TAM may delay enrollments

Students who have formally committed to the Technology, Arts and Media (TAM) certificate program after May 2008 may not be able to start the TAM course sequence until at least next summer because of high demand for core courses.

For example, the Meaning of Information Technology introductory course can accept up to 40 students a semester. However, that course filled for the fall and 41 more students could not get in because the course was full. These students are now waitlisted and will have priority for the course in the spring, bumping other interested students to the summer or fall.

Six of seven TAM core courses had wait lists this fall. Total student enrollment is 286, with 155 females and 131 males.

The ATLAS interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Technology, Media and Society enrollment has 10 students. Applications for admission to the Ph.D. program are due Jan. 5, 2009, for fullest funding consideration, and Jan. 20, 2009, for admission consideration for the fall 2009 semester.

TAM program hires lab assistant

The Technology, Arts and Media program has hired a lab assistant for the fall. Paul Gerhardt, a TAM graduate, will be helping students with their projects and can offer the students assistance across a wide range of applications and technologies.

He also will check out TAM equipment such as video cameras, digital cameras and laptops for student use.

Sarah Hug presents research on middle school girls, technology

Sarah Hug, a Research Associate with the ATLAS Assessment and Research Center, presented her work on middle school girls’ identity development and its intersection with technology this summer at the International Society for Cultural Activity Research meeting in San Diego.

The paper was entitled “Telling Stories Digitally, Girls (Re)create with Technology,” and was written with Andrew Zucker.

Her paper explores the use of laptops in the Denver School of Science and Technology. It also was accepted for publication in the Journal of Science Education and Technology.

Hug will continue her evaluation of the Computing Alliance for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (CAHSI) program, which received another three years of National Science Foundation funding over the summer, and with the CAHSI Demonstration Project, FemProf, which supports Latinas aspiring to the computer engineering professorate.

West writes blog at Ars Electronica

Center for Arts, Media and Performance Director Rebekah West blogged about her experiences at the Ars Electronica Conference and Festival in Linz, Austria, for two weeks in September.

The conference gave a global perspective to issues ranging from interactivity to cyber arts theories to how intellectual property needs to be re-thought as a cultural currency.

The conference also showcased technologically advanced artworks from throughout the world.

West said she made several important contacts with artists and groups who are interested in ATLAS. They are:

- Reactable, a table that plays musical building blocks manipulated by participants. Each block has the potential to change or add to the sound. Turning a block could adjust pitch, volume or wavelength/sound type, or alter rhythms. Participants also could draw a waveform on the table with a finger to alter the waveforms between blocks and both see and hear the results instantly. The artwork received an Ars Golden Nica award.
- Chris Lavis, one of the creators of the Academy Award nominated animated film Madame Tutli-Putli, whose team has created a technology using a real actress’ eyes to animate a puppet.
- Lichtfaktor, a group that paints with light (featured in recent Sprint commercials) and has developed its own software to support its artwork creation.

There also were various other stimulating exhibits, including working where images jumped off screens onto arms, a laptop orchestra that included a soloist playing his Macintosh as if it were an accordion, huge interactive installations and life-size robots.

West’s blog, which was highlighted on the ATLAS Web site during her trip, is located at http://arselectronica-atlas.blogspot.com/
Ira Liss named Assistant Communications Director

Ira Liss has been named ATLAS Assistant Director of Communications. Liss brings several decades of experience in graphic design, advertising and marketing across a wide range of media.

Previously, he served several years on staff at CU’s Leeds School of Business where he art directed and co-edited alumni magazines (circulation 35,000), brochures, newsletters, and conference, fundraising and electronic materials.

For several years as an adjunct instructor, Liss taught courses in graphic design, storyboards and business presentations at Art Institute of Colorado, a college in Denver. He privately has taught music and theater improv to children and adults. Born and raised in New York City, Liss graduated from Pratt Institute with a BFA.

In his freelance business, he completed writing and design projects for HBO, IBM, AT&T, Roche, Pfizer, Children’s Hospital Foundation, The Weitz Company and the Associated Press.

As a performing artist, he has acted in plays at the Nomad Theatre, co-written a musical comedy produced in Denver, Boulder and Brooklyn, and performed concerts of his songs at the Dairy Center for the Arts and the Village Gate. He performs at private parties and is a company member of the Boulder Playback Theatre.

Rebecca Rowley wins award in Colorado Gold Writing Contest

Rebecca Rowley received a finalist award in the 25th Annual Colorado Gold Writing Contest sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers organization.

Rowley, who is an ATLAS Administration Assistant, received the award for “My Way Home,” a young adult novel about a runaway pregnant teen. As a result of the award, Rowley is meeting with three literary agents.

Rowley has been writing fiction since she was 7 years old, following the encouragement of an elementary school teacher.

Judges in the contest reviewed more than 300 entries from writers across the country. Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers is dedicated to helping its members master the art of writing and the business of selling commercial novel-length fiction. The award was presented during the organization’s Colorado Gold Conference, held Sept. 12-14 in Denver.

Rowley, a native Coloradoan, joined ATLAS in June 2007. She also is the Assistant Building Proctor and the Ph.D. Program Coordinator.

Randi Viola is ATLAS Titan

Randi Viola, an Accounting Technician and an invaluable member of ATLAS, is the winner of the ATLAS Titan of the Quarter Award.

Viola has an uncanny ability to make people feel happier and more confident, even during stressful times. She has an incredible work ethic.

Viola manages all of the ATLAS accounts with an eagle eye for detail and ensures that ATLAS complies with university regulations. She also has shown a willingness and ability to step up and take on more responsibility as roles within ATLAS change over time.

Viola has been an ATLAS employee since April 2006. She previously worked as an accountant and bookkeeper for Dean Witter Reynolds and Charles Schwab & Co. She enjoys working with numbers, cribbage, darts, music and motorcycles.

Henderson wins award in national car show

Bruce Henderson, Communications Director of ATLAS, recently received a first-place show car award at a national gathering of owners of Acura NSX vehicles.

The event, held Sept. 25-28th in Portland, Ore., attracted about 80 of these unique Japanese sports cars from throughout the United States and Canada. The award was in the category of mildly modified NSXs.

“Only about 8,000 of these cars were made for the U.S. from 1991 to 2005,” Henderson said, “They were the first all-aluminum bodied production sports cars and the first exotic sports car to come out of Japan. It’s high technology, and it’s art.”

Henderson has owned his NSX for about five years, and the car has about 75,000 miles on it.

“I have to chuckle a little about how fun this car is. I drove 1,400 miles to Portland, showed it in a car show, drove it back, then two weeks later I drove it in a high-performance track event at Pikes Peak International Raceway in Colorado Springs. The car does everything.”

NEW ARRIVAL: Jenny Slade, Communications Coordinator for NCWIT, stopped by the ATLAS offices about a week after her son, Javier, was born on Sept. 22.