



Campus preparing for influx of resident students

What happens when you open the doors of your new residence building to almost 700 additional students, more than doubling the total number living on campus?

It's a question that a U of R student recruitment manager Joy Turner, residences coordinator Judy Amundson and residence life co-ordinator Pat Bellamy think about, when they're not busy preparing for the opening of the new building.

First, and most obviously, the new 692-bed, 12-storey building is changing the look of the University skyline. The new residence is easily the tallest building on campus. Amundson expects heavy demand for apartments and rooms on upper floors, which will have great views of the campus and Wascana Park. She's already receiving applications in advance of the fall 2004 opening, thanks to Turner and her staff, who are already busy spreading the word to high school students and their parents that there will soon be a new housing option on campus.

"It will increase the demand for services," Amundson says. "Food services, groceries, fitness, intramural sports and programming of all kinds."

Programming, Bellamy explains, includes activities of all kinds, from a summer golf tournament to a scuba diving event. Many

international students have income to report from co-op work terms or work assignments on campus, so Bellamy has organized a tax night in March to help guide them through the complexities of Canada's income tax reporting. One of the most anticipated events is "the grocery bus" which transports students every third Sunday to a supermarket stocked with foods favoured by international students. The new building includes 166 one- to four-bedroom apartment units equipped with kitchens, so Bellamy anticipates the grocery bus will be in demand. (The new residence also offers 132 dormitory-style rooms, which includes a meal plan.)

Says Bellamy, "Good programming includes events and activities specific to each residence, and some in common, to encourage students to mix with one another. Each residence has its own students' social committee, but I'd now like to see one overall social committee to develop ideas for events, activities and competitions that would involve students living in all residences."

The new residence also allows the flexibility to move toward what Amundson calls a theme-based approach to housing. "You're going to start to see grouping, such as a quiet lifestyle floor, an international floor and a health and wellness floor, which would be of particular

interest to students in kinesiology and health studies."

Amundson adds that, based on findings from focus groups with students, the new residence will include co-ed suites, along with male-only and female-only suites. One of the biggest issues for students in residence is comparability, she explains.

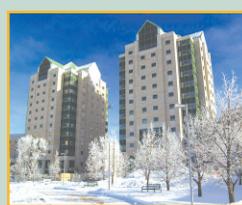
"We asked students why they moved off campus after their first year," Amundson says. "They told us they want their university experience to include being around people they are compatible with. We think a theme-based approach and accommodating siblings and other family members who want to share a suite will help us keep students for more than that first year."

While that remains a work in progress, the rains are relieved that the show suite – a furnished three-bedroom apartment on the ground floor – opened on schedule in spite of the recent blizzard that shut down the campus for a day. The demand for tours through the suite has been brisk.

"It was a great relief hearing positive comments on the first tours," Amundson observes, "because you think you made the right decisions on furniture, curtains and the rest, but you really don't know until you see and hear how people react."

A bit like what happens when you add the population of a small town overnight to the U of R campus, perhaps?

For more information, or to register for a place in residence online, go to: www.uregina.ca/residences. To book a tour and see the show suite, call 1-866-354-3394.



The new 692-bed residence is expected to change more than just the skyline at the University of Regina. By more than doubling the number of on-campus residents it will change the demand for services as well as the culture of the campus.

U of R Photo by A/V Services

Bits will tutor computer science students

If you've ever used a computer, you've likely used the "help" option to assist you in figuring out how to complete a task. Some applications even provide "wizards" that give you directions when you complete a sentence beginning with "How do I...?" Thereupon the wizard gives you a few different options, usually including the one you're looking for. Now, thanks to a graduate student project developed by a U of R student, first year computer science students will have access to "help", "wizards", and a new, powerful and sophisticated electronic tutor as well.

Shan Hua developed what's known as "Bits" (for Bayesian intelligent systems) as her masters degree project. Here's a layman's version of how it works.

When you ask for help or summon a wizard, the possible answers are produced by something called Bayesian networks. Without getting into incomprehensible detail, Bayesian networks can be described as a framework for uncertainty management. Bayesian networks use probability theory to figure out what you're likely looking for when you call for help. Large corporations and governments use probability theory every day for functions such as planning and financial forecasting.

Bits, however, goes well beyond the "help" menu found in computer applications. For instance, when you ask for help you'll get the same options every time. Bits will go further, figuring out what you know and what you don't know, and guiding you along what it calls the learning trail.

Shan Hua has forged an impressive learning trail of her own. She began her undergraduate studies in China in 1995, majoring in system engineering. After graduating, she worked as a programmer for three years, developing management information system software for corporations, government departments and schools. She began her masters work at the U of R in September 2002.

"Developing a tutoring tool is related to many fields, such as psychology, educational theory, computer theory and multimedia technology," Hua explains. "To implement a better product, I took Dr. Brien Maguire's



Shan Hua - masters project takes online "help" to the next level.

class on instructional design. I learned how to use multimedia technology to express knowledge in a vivid, interactive way, instead of abstract and rigid concepts." Hua also credits Cory Butz, an expert in Bayesian networks, with giving her many helpful suggestions. Maguire and Butz were co-advisors on Hua's thesis project.

Drawing on all the knowledge she'd gathered from examining other tutoring tools, Bayesian networks, interactive learning and questions from previous Computer Science 110 exams, Hua began building Bits. She worked on it 12 to 14 hours every day for almost two months.

"The final Bayesian network was done in October 2003," Hua says. "Since November I've been mainly working on programming and testing."

Students taking the first-year programming course CS 110 this summer will be the first to use Bits in their studies. The main screen uses yellow, green and red traffic signs labeled with each knowledge topic, indicating what the

student has learned, what he or she is ready to learn and what they are not ready to learn, respectively. There's even an on-screen genie who pulls a scroll out of his vest and tells them how they're doing. For the moment, Bits operates on stand-alone computers, but the goal is to move it to the Internet, so that students can access it anywhere.

Butz is obviously proud of what Hua has accomplished. "Shan is very hard working and independent. I'm thrilled that she's elected to stay here to work on her PhD," he says. Hua, Butz and Maguire have already authored one scholarly paper about Bits, and a longer paper is in the works. Future plans call for extending Bits beyond the introductory CS 110 course, and into other programming languages.

"Bits will also have many applications to things like distance learning, and Saskatchewan is a good place to test that out," Hua says.

More information about the Department of Computer Science is available at <http://www.cs.uregina.ca/>

CAMPUS LIFE CALENDAR

- Feb. 6-14
4th Annual Infringement Festival
A festival night and evening performances of student one-act plays
Shumisther Open Stage, Riddell Centre
Info/Tickets: 585-5583
- Thurs., Feb. 12 - 7:30 p.m.
Book launch
"The Secret of Euclid's Proof"
Speaker: Daniel Coleman
Main floor cafeteria, Campion College
Info: 359-1244
- Feb. 12-April 30, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (except Saturdays and Sundays)
Art Exhibit
"Waterlilies" oil paintings
Artist: Lynn Cecil
Rm. 215, College West, University Club
Info: 585-4747
- Feb. 16-20
Mid-term break
No classes
- Wed., Feb. 18 - 10:30 a.m.
Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy Lecture
"The Future Ain't What It Used To Be: Moving Toward a Revitalized Innovation Strategy for Saskatchewan"
Speaker: Dale Botting
Gallely Building, College Avenue Campus
Info/RSVP: 585-5775
- Thurs., Feb. 19 - 12:10 p.m.
Coffee House Controversies
Informal talks given by Faculty of Arts professors
"The People Killing People: The Death Penalty in Canada"
Speaker: Ken Lynton-Brown
Rm. Jack Jack, 1939 South St.
Info: 585-4226
- Feb. 20
University holiday
University closed
- Mon., Feb. 23 - 4 p.m.
Psychology colloquium
"The Development of Memory and Inhibition in Infancy: Remembering Your Do's and Don'ts"
Speaker: Sandra Wishe
Rm. 566, Education Bldg.
Info/RSVP: 585-5221/4157
- Tues., Feb. 24 - 7 p.m.
Richard Dillman lecture
"Chiliness of Dallie"
Speaker: Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire
Education Auditorium, University of Regina
Info: 585-4779/4226
- Wed., Feb. 25 - 3:30 p.m.
Latin America Interest Group seminar series
"Mexican Revolutionary Propaganda and the Turner Thesis, Pancho Villa as 'Francoist'"
Speaker: Mark Anderson
Rm. 313, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4113
- Wed., Feb. 25 - 7 p.m.
International Film Series
"Jakob the Lie"
German with English subtitles
RIFM Auditorium, Campion College
Info: 585-4595
- Wed., Feb. 25 - 3:30 p.m.
Playwright Reading Series
"Connections between Harmony and Invention: The Developmental Process of The Red Prices"
Speaker: Miko Duchi
Shy-Box Theatre
Info: 585-5562
- Wed., Feb. 25 - Noon
Saskatchewan Instructional Development & Research Unit seminar
"Education and Nation Building"
Speaker: Lisa Comeau
Rm. 215, Education Bldg.
Info: 585-4309
- Thurs., Feb. 26 - 3:15 p.m.
Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy seminar
"Privacy Legislation Compliance In Saskatchewan"
Speaker: R. Gary Dickson, D.C.
Gallely Building, College Avenue Campus
Info/Registration: 585-5777
- Thurs., Feb. 26 - 4 p.m.
Humanities Research Institute Profiling Scholarship Series
"Put Your Best Face Forward: Sturm and Drang and the 4th Wall"
Speaker: Wes D. Pearce
Rm. 050, Riddell Centre
Info: 585-4304
- Fri., Feb. 27 - 4 p.m.
History Colloquium
"Japan and the Visualization of Manchuria, 1932-1937"
Speaker: Philip Charlier
Rm. 348, Administration-Humanities Bldg.
Info: 585-4211

For a complete Calendar of Events at the University of Regina visit our Web site at www.uregina.ca



More than 40 U of R students volunteered to help out with the Children's Health Foundation (CHF) Radiothon, which raised \$148,758.26 (approx.) in Saskatchewan last week. This group at southland Mall Feb. 5 included (back row, l-r) Warren Gilroy, kinesiology professor June LeDrew, and Tara Storie and (front row, l-r) Melissa Tzupa, Robyn Benoit, and Lindsey Niebergall.