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# connections

THE iSCHOOL @ SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY







**MEMBERS OF THE iSCHOOL'S PEER ADVISOR** group gather on the steps of Hinds Hall for a group photo and participate in 'ice breaker' games as they prepare to welcome the Class of 2020 in August. Peer Advisors are students who have been selected to assist the iSchool with tasks such as recruitment activities, tours to prospective students, mentoring new undergraduates, and representing the iSchool at events.

PHOTOS BY J.D. ROSS





# connections

THE **iSCHOOL** @ SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



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### ON THE COVER

Fatma Ngom '16 delivers her address as the winner of the Katie Bennett Undergraduate Leadership Award at Convocation in May. Ngom is a member of the first graduating cohort of women who participated in the It Girls Overnight Retreat, and wears a sash from the It Girls Alumnae group. Read more about the It Girls program on page 15. Photo by J.D. Ross.

# Dear Alumni and Friends,

## *Dean's Message*

SUSAN KAHN



**ELIZABETH D. LIDDY DEAN**

*"I am woman, hear me roar!"* is likely a line not known by most of our iSchool students, but I trust a number of their parents, iSchool supporters, and our colleagues have heard it.

I mention it, because I sense moments with our It Girls when the lyric comes 'roaring' back to me. That is because I started my career in the IT field at a time

when women were outnumbered 97 to 3. That is actually a common note I wrote on the upper right-hand corner of the agenda of professional conferences and funding agencies' program meetings. I would count the number of men and women in attendance, or listed on the speakers agenda. And there I was, 1 of 3 women, with 97 men. While I noticed this, I was not overcome by it, as I grew up with 3 brothers and learned early to compete. However, I know not all females were so lucky.

So today, when I see and hear our high school It Girls Retreat participants speak out from the front at Hendricks Chapel, on their last day with us, I hear them roar! The It Girls Retreat has supported their self-confidence, self-awareness, and eagerness to continue roaring.

Many do come back to be students in the iSchool, and to go on to succeed in their studies with us, and then excel in their careers upon graduation. They come back to mature into secure, proud, talented women who will both succeed professionally and have an impact on our field.

But I believe that even those who don't become iSchool students, are buoyed by the confidence, strength, and determination of the faculty, alumni speakers, and current iSchool students who share their personal stories during Retreat which inspire our visiting It Girls.

And while I am very, very proud of the many accomplishments of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni, our It Girls are very special to me, and I am brought to tears every year when I hear the strength and self-confidence they individually express when they step up during the final event – the Speak Out – to share what the It Girls Retreat has meant to them, and their plans for putting it into practice in their lives. I wish you all could hear them roar! But perhaps you can.





Yang Wang

STEVE SANTORI

## FACULTY BRIEF

### Wang Discusses Drone Privacy Issues at FTC Workshop

As technology has improved for unmanned aerial drones over the past several years, they have become more popular with and accessible to the general public. With this growth has come the need for regulation, both for operation of the small aircraft as well as for the privacy issues that they bring.

iSchool assistant professor Yang Wang discussed his research around drone privacy issues at a workshop held by the Federal Trade Commission in Washington D.C. in October.

"Right now there are no privacy regulations for drones," explained Wang. "There are regu-

lations focused on safety, but not on privacy. Academia, government and the drone industry are coming together looking for ways to address privacy issues around drones, but no one has a clear idea yet on how to do that."

Yang's talk provided an analysis based on research he published earlier this year in *Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies*.

The workshop was recorded, and is available for viewing at [ischool.syr.edu/droneworkshop](http://ischool.syr.edu/droneworkshop). ■

## STUDENT NOTE

### Information Security Club Takes Gold at NCAC

A TEAM OF GRADUATE STUDENTS from the Information Management and Telecommunications and Network Management programs at the iSchool and from the College of Engineering and Computer Science have won the Gold award in Phase I of the National Cyber Analyst Challenge (NCAC).

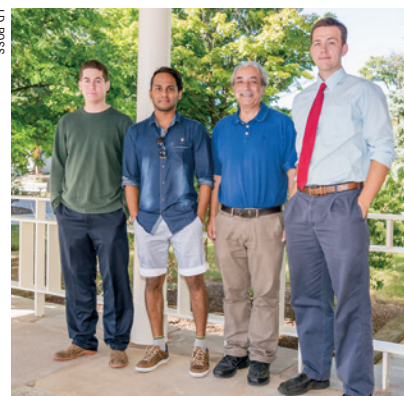
20 schools participated in the first phase of competition. The Syracuse team will now advance to the finals in Washington, D.C. The students are all members of the iSchool's Information Security Club.

The challenge was an online contest, and a different format from how the club's members were used to participating in cyber challenges.

"We typically participate in offensive-natured competitions, where teams defend their systems against hackers," explains iSchool Assistant Professor of Practice Bahram Attaie, who serves as the club's coach and advisor. "This competition was much more forensic based. Students were given tasks to carry out, for example, they were provided with a set of files and asked to look into them for anomalies or hidden information."

The competition, a joint initiative between Lockheed Martin and Temple University's Institute for Business and Information Technology provided the students with a valuable opportunity to analyze data from a real-world cyber incident, an experience often missing in typical academic coursework and capture-the-flag competitions. ■

JO ROSS



**Information Security Club** members who participated in NCAC, from left to right: Michael Hartley, Siddhesh Wadikar, coach Bahram Attaie, and Benjamin Murray.





## iSchool welcomes new member to Board of Advisors

The iSchool is pleased to welcome Beth Cofsky '85 to the Board of Advisors. Cofsky is Director of Cloud Services for Salesforce. The Board of Advisors is a collective resource of senior business people, professionals, industry leaders, and other supporters,

organized to assist in the development of the School and to help shape and realize its vision. For more information about the Board, contact Kim Pietro, Assistant Dean for Advancement at [kpietro@syr.edu](mailto:kpietro@syr.edu). ■



**From left to right:** Carl Haynes, Katrina Maust, Anjali Parasnis-Samar, Kenneth Roman, and Joshua Schulman.

## Congratulations to 2016 Beta Phi Mu Initiates

**P**i Lambda Sigma, the Syracuse chapter of Beta Phi Mu, the International Library and Information Studies Honor Society, is pleased to announce new members from the 2016 class: Anna-michelle Chovanec, Staci Costello, Carl Haynes, Alexandra Heidler, Katrina Maust, Anjali Parasnis-Samar, Juan Rivera, Kenneth Roman, Roger Schonfeld, Joshua Schulman, and Kathleen Swingly. ■

## FACULTY BRIEF

### Caicedo Releases Software Tool to Enhance Wireless Spectrum Management



STEVE SANDRI

**Carlos Caicedo**

**WITH THE RAPID INCREASE OF WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY**, devices, and services, more companies and their hardware are competing for a limited amount of available resources across the radio frequency spectrum.

This is an issue that iSchool associate professor Carlos Caicedo has been researching along with a working group from the Dynamic Spectrum

Access Networks Standardization Committee of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

In 2014, Caicedo was the recipient of a grant from Google to explore and develop a tool that would elaborate and evaluate wireless spectrum consumption models, and provide spectrum managers with data needed to determine compatibility of spectrum use between different wireless systems and devices.

Along with a graduate student from the College of Engineering and Computer Science, Caicedo developed a software solution that helps spectrum managers and radio engineers build spectrum consumption models and determine spectrum use compatibility between multiple systems in a given area.

The code for the tool, called Spectrum Consumption Model Builder and Analysis Tool (SCMBAT), was released this fall, and Caicedo hopes that the use of the tool will help spectrum managers understand when wireless systems will interfere with one another and identify spectrum sharing opportunities.

“Currently, it’s very hard to determine when two wireless systems might be able to share spectrum and efficiently participate in dynamic spectrum assignment environments because of the lack of a common means to represent how spectrum is used by each system,” explained Caicedo. “The IEEE is working on a standard to help with this problem, and the point of this tool is to facilitate the use of that standard.”

The SCMBAT tool is available for download on GitHub under an open source license: [github.com/cccaicedo/SCMBAT](https://github.com/cccaicedo/SCMBAT) ■





SIEVE SARTORI

## FACULTY BRIEF

### Garcia-Murillo Awarded Fulbright Grant for Research in Spain

Professor Martha Garcia-Murillo has been awarded a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Grant for the spring of 2017. The grant will allow her to conduct research at the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI) in Barcelona, Spain.

She will use the opportunity to take advantage of her background in economics, as the purpose of her research in Spain is to determine the effects of technological advances on unemployed individuals.

"This includes examining the coping mechanisms they use for their well-being, as well as the incentive systems that the government uses to motivate them to earn a sufficient income to make a living," explains Garcia-Murillo. "Given my work in the field of information and communications technologies (ICTs), I also want to determine the extent to which ICTs can be a mechanism, and source of, self-employment for these displaced workers."

The current economic environment in Spain provides the perfect setting for this research, as the country has suffered from high employment rates for many years, wavering between 10 and 25% unemployment since the 1990s.

"Research about employment trends in Spain can provide insights in designing programs that can help alleviate this problem," said Garcia-Murillo.

The research that Garcia-Murillo will be conducting through the Fulbright program gives her the opportunity to better understand the global nature of labor markets at a time when technology is becoming much more pervasive and disruptive.

"I'm excited about this opportunity and believe that it can lead to insights that can benefit society," she noted.

In addition to her research efforts, Garcia-Murillo will also teach a course entitled Information Technologies for Development during her time at the IBEI. ■

## FACULTY BRIEF

### Acuna Publishes Groundbreaking Chunking Research in Nature Communications

**THINK ABOUT A SIMPLE TASK YOU LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO**, such as memorizing your phone number, or learning how to tie your shoe laces. Chances are, you did this using a method called chunking. You put like things together in your mind – the area code ahead of the phone number, for instance, or the looping action of the lace ahead of pulling the knot tight.

As people repeat movements, these elemental actions are merged into chunks. Even after practice makes perfect, and you've learned to tie your laces, the basic complex movements remain organized in your brain as chunks.

Research published over the summer, and co-authored by iSchool assistant professor Daniel Acuna attempts to shed light on why chunking occurs, and how learning in this fashion can be cost-effective as far as the brain power exerted to learn in this way.

Published in the journal *Nature Communications* with a team of scientists from across the U.S., Acuna's research is groundbreaking because it makes theoretical advances on a well-known behavioral phenomenon in psychology, whose characteristics were well documented but whose causes were poorly understood.

"Chunking is taxing on your brain's mental power," says Acuna, "really it's



J.D. ROSS

Daniel Acuna

better not to chunk, but the more you do it, the more you improve, it takes you less time to recall things. The brain can learn complex movements with lower upfront costs that pay off in the long run."

"We proposed a theoretical model for the causes of chunking using the modern tools of computational motor control," Acuna explained. "By framing chunking as an economic tradeoff in the motor system, it opens up a broad range of questions regarding how the brain controls movements."

Traditionally, chunking has been studied in the working memory literature. The classic Miller's Study from the 1950s, one of the most highly cited papers in psychology, established that the capacity of a person's working memory, measured in discrete units that can be remembered at once, is 7 – plus or minus 2. Interestingly, the causal underpinnings described in such influential study remain poorly understood.

"Understanding chunking, and why the brain behaves the way it does, will be key in working with people suffering from neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, and stroke," said Acuna. ■



## FACULTY NEWS

**Meet the New Faculty**

**T**he iSchool is pleased to announce the addition of five new professors to the tenure-track faculty ranks. Each are exceptional scholars and will continue to burnish the top-ranked programs and award-winning research of the Syracuse iSchool.

**DANIEL E. ACUNA**

**D**aniel Acuna earned his Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Minnesota in 2011, and has been working as a postdoctoral researcher at Northwestern University's Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. At Northwestern, his work involved the development of machine learning software to solve scientific problems related to peer reviews, and institutional collaboration. He received his Master of Engineering Sciences in Information Technology and his Bachelor in Engineering Sciences from the University of Santiago in Chile.

Acuna's research interests focus on the field of "science of science," attempting to understand how scientists evaluate each other's work during peer review processes, hiring, and promotion.

"I have always been an interdisciplinary and collaborative person, doing research in computer science, cognitive sciences, and machine learning, and developing tools to exploit very large datasets through data science," explained Acuna. "I am thrilled to be joining the iSchool at Syracuse because it will allow me to apply the full array of approaches that I think are necessary to solve today's most pressing issues."

Acuna joined the faculty at the start of the fall semester, and teaches courses in information analytics and data mining. ■



DAVID BRODA

**RACHEL IVY CLARKE**

**R**achel Clarke received her Ph.D. in Information Science from the University of Washington Information School in 2016. Prior to her doctoral studies, Clarke was the cataloging librarian at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in Los Angeles, California. Clarke received her Master's of Science in Information Systems from the University of Washington, her Master's of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University (CA), and her Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing from California State University, Long Beach.

Clarke's research interests focus on the application of design methodologies and epistemologies to librarianship to facilitate the systematic, purposeful design of library services.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the Syracuse iSchool," said Clarke. "As someone heavily invested in the future of libraries, I was drawn to the school's status as one of the top MLIS programs in North America as well as the innovative approaches to the field demonstrated by current faculty research. I also appreciate how education and research is entwined among the various other programs, fostering a highly interdisciplinary atmosphere. I am looking forward to collaborating with faculty, staff and students on a variety of projects, especially the design of new tools, services, and pedagogical approaches for libraries and librarianship."

Clarke is teaching courses in cataloging of information resources; reference and information literacy services; and organization and access of information resources. ■





J.D. ROSS

## INGRID ERICKSON

Ingrid Erickson joins the iSchool after serving as an assistant professor of library and information science at the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University. Erickson received her Ph.D. in Management Science and Engineering from Stanford University's Center for Work, Technology, and Organization in 2009. Prior to her time at Rutgers, Erickson spent two years as a research fellow at the Social Science Research Council in Brooklyn, NY where she co-led a project to establish a learning network among cultural organizations in New York City including the New York Public Library, the American Museum of Natural History, the Wildlife Conservation Foundation and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum.

Erickson's research interests are focused on how work practices are shifting as mobile technologies dominate professional lives. During her time at Rutgers, she collaborated with Syracuse iSchool Professor Steve Sawyer on a grant-funded mobile knowledge work project.

"I'm excited to join the faculty at Syracuse because it feels at once very familiar and completely new," said Erickson. "Many of my friends and collaborators are already here, but I await all of the unexpected gems about the students, school, university, and Upstate location that I have yet to discover. And, of course, the snow is the best part!"

Erickson will join the faculty in the spring semester of 2017, and will teach courses in information management. ■



DON ERHARDT

## CAROLINE HAYTHORNTHWAITE

Caroline Haythornthwaite comes to Syracuse from the School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia where she has served as a professor since 2010. From 2010 to 2015, Haythornthwaite was the director of the school, responsible for overseeing its five degree programs, faculty, staff, and strategic direction. Prior to her time at in British Columbia, she served in various faculty positions at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She earned her Ph.D., her Master's in Information Science, and her Master of Arts in Psychology from the University of Toronto, and her Bachelor's of Science in Psychology from Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario.

Haythornthwaite's research explores the way interaction via computer media supports and affects work, learning, and social interaction. She examines how information is exchanged, knowledge is co-constructed, collaboration occurs, and how communities form in and in conjunction with online contexts.

"I am delighted to be joining Syracuse University and the School of Information Studies," said Haythornthwaite. "I have many long-term associations with friends on faculty relating to common interests in social informatics, social media, virtual organizations and communities, crowdsourcing, and more, and it is a pleasure to have the opportunity to add my interests in e-learning, distributed knowledge, social networks, and learning analytics. I look forward to new friendships with faculty and students that expand and complement our joint research and teaching initiatives."

Haythornthwaite teaches courses on social network analysis and information policy. ■



DAVID BRODA

## LU XIAO

Lu Xiao joins the Syracuse faculty after serving as an Associate Professor at the University of Western Ontario where she held appointments in the programs of Library & Information Science and Computer Science.

Since fall 2015, she has been conducting research as a visiting scholar for the iSchool's Center for Computational and Data Sciences (CCDS).

Xiao holds a Ph.D. in Information Science and Technology from Pennsylvania State University, a Master's of Science in Computer Engineering from the University of Florida, and a Bachelor's of Science in Chemical Engineering from China's Hunan University.

Xiao's research interests focus on understanding and supporting rationale-based activity awareness in computer-supported group activities. She has been studying the effects of the rationales in collective activities and exploring ways to identify and extract them automatically. Her secondary research activities include informal learning in community settings and digital humanities.

"I have had a wonderful experience at the iSchool as a visiting professor, and I am looking forward to bringing my unique set of research skills and experiences in reasoning and argumentation research in visual analytic support for human rights data, and in informal learning and community computing to the faculty," said Xiao. "I have a passion for teaching and mentoring students with my teaching philosophy of reflective thinking and learning by doing, and I look forward to working with everyone in the years to come."

Xiao teaches courses in information systems analysis and information retrieval systems. ■



# Barefoot, Through the Snow, Uphill... Both Ways

*The School of Information Studies had seven full-time faculty in 1986 when I joined the School. We also had a couple of dozen adjuncts and four staff members.*

**BY: MIKE NILAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**



J.D. ROSS

**B**arbara Settel and Roberta Segreti are two of the original staff members who remain at the School and I'm the last faculty member from that era. The School was located on two separate floors of Huntington Hall then. We had three degree programs – a Ph.D. (in Information Transfer, later changed to Information Science), a Master of Science in Library Science, and a Master of Science in Information Resources Management (later shortened to Information Management). One of the reasons I was hired was to establish and run a Bachelor of Science degree. We launched the program a year later in 1987 with 23 freshmen.

The IBM Personal Computer was released five years earlier, but had yet to be seen as indispensable to organizations, Apple was primarily seen as an educational tool and the Internet was rarely mentioned. In addition, all of the technology news in 1986 wasn't positive.

The first computer virus ("Brain") was released, the Challenger spacecraft exploded soon after takeoff and there was a melt down at the Chernobyl nuclear facility. It was clear to us, however, that the potential impact of the then nascent digital world would be significant.

Digital computers were being rapidly adopted, but there was an emerging Internet that many scholars felt would ultimately generate an unprecedented rate of change. At the time, it was sparsely popu-

lated and under construction by researchers and students who were mostly male and mostly from engineering disciplines. Network speeds were low, there wasn't much connectivity, and "global" was a distant dream.

The majority of public attention was focused on the computers themselves. They were the most tangible piece of the network, albeit with torturous command-line interfaces that displayed green (or orange) text on a black field and graphics that were extremely limited.

The conceptual model for our undergraduate program centered on the emergent nature of the Internet, thus on an educated guess more akin to a prediction of both the near and distant future. It was composed of two interdependent factors: The technology that included the hardware, software, and the emerging network (Note the Web did not emerge publicly until April, 1995) and the contexts of use that individuals, organizations, and society construct.

Drawing from earlier debate and experience with the organization-focused masters program in Information Resources Management, we decided to generate a curriculum with four areas: technology, management, content, and users. Our new undergraduates were seen as filling a "lingua franca" role in an organization where they would be able to negotiate and "move" among:

- the characteristics and capabilities of the digital technology,
- the perquisites of modern, emerging managerial structures and organizational roles,
- the rapidly expanding content in the digital world, and
- the users and customers interacting across the digital net.

Today, the iSchool has 48 tenure-track faculty and about 75 adjunct faculty. The scholarly and professional interests of the faculty are highly diverse and commensurate with the rapid changes engendered by the influence of the Web. We also have about 50 staff members who do the hard work recruiting, managing, advising and facilitating of internships and jobs for the students as well as managing our public relations to keep our own organization current and functional.

The School now has many more students in the four main programs. And, although we have offered distance education courses for many years, the School is currently in the process of launching some exploratory distance education programs to increase our presence and address demand.

The technical terrain is very different now. Internet network speeds have gone from 300 baud (which was maddeningly slow) to consumer network service speeds of 105 Mbps download/20 Mbps upload in the US, which is ranked in the middle of the pack in terms of network speeds





SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

**Professor Mike Nilan** works with a student in the early days of the iSchool's undergraduate program.

around the globe. Telephones are powerful digital computers operating on the same digital networks. Content is multi-media with very high resolution. Every user has the capability of producing and sharing such content on their computers/phones and do so prodigiously. And, the Web is nearly global!

Most successful organizations are defined by their capability to maximize the utility of digital technologies both internally for employees and externally for customers. Many focus on providing services to make the lives of customers easier and/or more productive. They interact with their customers via computing and sensing technologies bolstered by software applications ("apps") that are unsurprisingly different in function and appearance from 1986 "software." While entrepreneurship has long been a defining characteristic of American industry and culture, creative entrepreneurial service development may be the most essential trend in the continued health of American society the global economy.

The School of Information Studies and its community will continue to prosper and lead the way in the 21st Century. The School's faculty, staff and student body has become more cosmopolitan than ever. This is a reflection of the global culture spawned and intertwined by digital Web services. The School continues to help our students get a good balance of:

- insight into technology and trends,
- the skills needed to construct new technology and trends,
- exposure to current and emerging organizational structures and behaviors, and
- solid support in creatively engaging users/customers before, during and after initial contact.

The School of Information Studies' ongoing support of its entrepreneurial culture leaves open the possibility that thirty years from now there will be another piece written about the nascent technologies of the past and the drudges akin to walking barefoot, through the snow, uphill ... both ways. Imagine. We did.

**Editor's Note:** Associate professor *Mike Nilan* is retiring from Syracuse University this spring after 31 years of service. ■

## ISCHOOL NEWS

### Stanton Appointed Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

**PROFESSOR JEFFREY STANTON** was appointed Associate Provost for Academic Affairs in June.

In his new role, Stanton assists Vice Chancellor and Provost Michele G. Wheatly with the daily operation and optimization of the Division of Academic Affairs. He plays a critical role in supporting and implementing the Academic Strategic Plan and aligning it with the University's physical presence and infrastructure.

"Jeff brings to the position a distinctive appreciation for the multiple missions of Syracuse University, including teaching and learning, federally funded research, entrepreneurialism and organizational behavior," said Provost Wheatly.

"With years of experience in private industry, followed by a distinguished academic career, and higher education leadership experience and training, Jeff is extremely well suited for this new role.

Stanton, a faculty member in the iSchool since 2001, served as the iSchool's interim dean from January 2015 to May 2016. Before that, he was the iSchool's senior associate dean and chair of the University's Institutional Review Board. During the 2012-2013 academic year, Stanton was a fellow of the American Council on Education in its emerging leaders fellowship program.

"I am very excited to join Provost Wheatly's team," said Stanton. "I'm optimistic that my lengthy experience as a faculty member here at Syracuse, together with some of the administrative work I have done, will allow me to work effectively with all the people whose efforts depend on the academic affairs office." ■



SUSAN KAHN



**STUDENT PROFILE****TAYLOR DAVIS-VAN ATTA**

# Grad Student Finds LIS Program Lets Him Combine Personal Passions

**BY: DIANE STIRLING**

**T**hree personal passions drive graduate student Taylor Davis-Van Atta's pursuits at Syracuse University, and they triangulate the path he is carving for his future professional life through the study of librarianship at the School of Information Studies.

Davis-Van Atta, who worked as a Public Services Assistant at Bird Library's Special Collections Research Center last semester, began his studies in library science at the iSchool in August 2015.

The Helen Benning Regnier Scholarship recipient combines graduate studies, his library job, and roles as a music-events producer and the founding editor of an independent arts journal, *Music & Literature*. He envisions incorporating his music, publishing, and library interests into unique events that can be held on campus and in conjunction with community organizations while he's attending Syracuse.

the field of non-profit arts publishing," he says, "especially here in the States where, in this globalized era, we might tend to think we have access to everything, that everything is at our fingertips. That's really not at all true; libraries are working to dissolve that myth in practical ways and truly provide greater access to the world," Taylor explains. "This is a mission shared by *Music & Literature*, on both the local and global scale."

Davis-Van Atta grew up in Minneapolis, where his lifelong enthusiasm for violin performance led him to study at the Lawrence Conservatory of Music. He next graduated from Kingston University with degrees in literature and writing, then moved to Vermont to pursue a master's degree at the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

While there, he interned at Graywolf Press, a small independent publishing house, then took an assistantship at Dalkey Archive Press before eventually accepting a full-time job at VCFA's Library, working with Syracuse University alumnus James Nolte as his supervisor.

That connection fueled Davis-Van Atta's interest in obtaining a library degree, he said. "[Nolte] strongly encouraged me to look at Syracuse as an option. Syracuse was responsive to *Music & Literature* and other projects I had done, and really understood that my background could be practically applied to librarianship—hopefully in innovative ways. Other places didn't necessarily respond in that same way," the grad student noted.

Despite pursuing an intensive work and library-studies track, Davis-Van Atta is maintaining his musical and publishing interests through his roles as the publisher and co-editor of *Music & Literature*. The non-profit, volunteer-run organization is devoted to preserving, publishing, and promoting the work of underrepresented artists from around the world. Its editors and staff, who are scattered around the U.S. and Europe, work together virtually and digitally to publish two issues of the journal each year and host a number of launch events and concerts in major cities around the globe, Taylor says.

"The journal is up and coming. It's been featured on NPR and elsewhere, but it's not in itself a career, not a money-making venture," he noted. "It has always been a project where the work

**Librarianship is experiencing a dynamic moment . . .**

**There are opportunities to incorporate diverse sets of experiences—in the classroom and on the job. It's great to find myself in a community that embraces its diversity of backgrounds, where people are trying to apply their personal passions to a career."**

—TAYLOR DAVIS-VAN ATTA

He also wants to continue that multi-layered, multi-disciplined type of career when he graduates, and believes the library profession is just the kind of diverse field that will let him do so. "I'm trying to feel my way toward a career path where my background in the humanities and publishing can be applied in a library setting, and that's really leading to a lot of interesting possibilities," Taylor explained.

The iSchool's LIS program has permitted him to recognize "some common ground between the field of librarianship and

JD. ROSS



takes place between nine at night, after the family goes to sleep, and two or three in the morning. That's true for everybody on staff; we all teach, have day jobs, so for all of us, it's that sort of labor of love that's fun to do at the end of the day."

Taylor's interests in publishing and librarianship have evolved together, leading to a perspective that "all of this activity is a single personal project in a way; the coursework informs the publishing practice, and the skills I've gained in publishing are immediately applicable and relevant to my studies," he says. He is striving to incorporate his experiences and interests to the projects assigned in class.

"At this point, I'm trying to reach out and learn as much as I can about what Syracuse and other academic library systems are doing in the realm of publishing, digital scholarship and the humanities, and I hope I can help find new ways of pushing the field into the future. Librarianship is experiencing a dynamic moment; that's what's so exciting about it. There are opportunities to incorporate diverse sets of experiences—in the classroom and on the job. It's great to find myself in a community that embraces its diversity of backgrounds, where people are trying to apply their personal passions to a career."

For the longer term, this applies to his future librarianship career, too, Davis-Van Atta recognizes. "It will be interesting to see what role, if any, the publication itself plays in my future career. I suspect it will need to evolve as well. As I start to build a career, I'm certainly looking for organizations and institutions that respond to the Music & Literature project as well as the portfolio of library-based projects I'm building. It's only natural to look for a place where the journal and the live arts programming around it can further enrich the community I'm serving as a librarian. ■





# Paying it Forward:

*Evin Robinson, Jessica Santana,  
and New York On Tech*

RENEE LEVY



**T**echnology is one of the fastest-growing job sectors in the U.S. Yet less than 10 percent of New York City high schools offer computer science or technology-related classes. That's what inspired School of Information Studies (iSchool) graduate alumni Jessica Santana '11, G'13 and Evin Robinson '12, G'14 to create New York On Tech, a nonprofit organization that provides pathways for underrepresented New York City high school students into the field of technology.

Since 2014, the organization has provided opportunities to 60 students from nine high schools. Students enroll as juniors and receive weekly classes from computer science/technology professionals, as well as mentorship and other professional opportunities. New York On Tech will accept a new cohort of 60-80 high school juniors for the 2016-17 school year, representing more than 50 high schools in the city.

Although Santana and Robinson had met casually at SU, it wasn't until they both attended a summer Ernst & Young Leadership Conference that they realized how much they had in common. "I went to take the A train back home to Brooklyn and she was taking the A train as well," recalls Robinson. "We started talking on the train about school, life, ambitions, wanting to give back. Turns out we were getting off at the same stop. We had grown up in the same neighborhood, but never knew each other until college."

A connection was forged. A couple years later, Santana had graduated and come back to campus after starting her career at Deloitte. She met up for

coffee with Evin, who was finishing his graduate degree in information management, and a couple of hours later, they had the concept for what would become New York On Tech sketched out on a pile of Starbucks napkins.

"When you go back to your neighborhood you realize you can really be a catalyst for change in marginalized spaces where companies are not recruiting from, where mentors are not living in," says Santana. "That was our call to action."

Although young, both were already accomplished professionals. Santana, who earned her undergraduate degree in accounting from Syracuse's Whitman School of Management and her master's in information management and technology from the iSchool, had secured prestigious internships while an undergrad, and went on to work as a technology consultant at Deloitte and Accenture. Robinson was a seasoned student entrepreneur who'd garnered numerous accolades including the Goldman Sachs Entrepreneur of the Year and the Kauffman Foundation Entrepreneurship Engagement Fellowship. He earned his undergraduate degree from the College of Visual and Performing Arts and his graduate degree from the iSchool.

For a time, both worked as technology consultants at Accenture in Manhattan, growing their nonprofit on the side. Then in 2015, Santana was accepted into the Camelback Ventures Social Innovation Fellowship program, which provided seed funding and other support to grow the enterprise. She left Accenture to focus on the non-profit full time; Robinson remains at Accenture,

but is also integrally involved in the overall operation.

New York On Tech is supported by corporate partnerships that provide funding, and professionals who teach classes at the corporate sites, as well as a board of 16 seasoned directors and advisors and approximately 40 mentors representing about 27 different companies.

The organization was born from Robinson and Santana's strong desire to give back. Only two years in, the duo can already see the impact they are making. "The transformation of the students is amazing," says Robinson. "They're learning how to do front-end and back-end web development. They're producing websites and mobile applications and video games."

And they're planning for their futures. "We're all about getting our students to continue on to college, and the majority of them do," he says. One student from their first year garnered a full, four-year computer science scholarship. Another student was selected to participate in the prestigious Google Computer Science Summer Institute this summer and a few will be doing internships at companies like BNY Mellon and Warby Parker.

"I never would have guessed that I'd be the founder of a nonprofit organization," says Santana, "but I feel like I'm on this earth to live a life of service. People need to think about the impact they want to have and whether what they're doing now is going to lead to that legacy. If you follow your heart, success is always going to find you."

To learn more about their non-profit venture, visit [www.newyorkontech.org](http://www.newyorkontech.org). ■





theitgirls  
Orange County  
**Taylor**  
Hawkins  
9-11-13 10-14

theitgirls  
Orange County  
**Emily**  
Hawkins  
9-11-13 10-14



# CREATING A NETWORK FOR WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

RENÉE K. GADOUA

Long before Madelyn Moore '16 G'17 landed at Syracuse University, she knew she wanted a career in communications and business. She grew up in Brooklyn and her mother runs her own film company. "That entrepreneurial thing definitely rubbed off on me," Moore said.

Despite a head start on her career plan, she credits the iSchool's It Girls Overnight Retreat with setting her on an educational path that connected her interests and strengths. "It helped me feel comfortable here," she said. "I knew what I was getting into." The retreat also jumpstarted her professional network, which Moore continues to build in her final year of the iSchool's accelerated master's degree program.

Moore was among 60 high school girls who attended the first It Girls Retreat in fall 2011. The iSchool created the two-day event to encourage girls to study information technology, build confidence and create meaningful connections with professional women and iSchool alumnae who work in the IT industry. Ninety-four girls attended the sixth It Girls Retreat held this October.

KATIE LEHMAN/CK



These five members of the first cohort of It Girls Retreat participants graduated from Syracuse University in May. From left to right, Bianca Concepcion, Nairobi Greene, Fatma Ngom, Chelsea Hawkins, and Madelyn Moore.

J.D. ROSS



## PROGRAM HISTORY

**T**he iSchool started the program to counter the significant gender imbalance in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. While women hold nearly half of all jobs in the U.S. economy, they hold less than 25 percent of STEM jobs, according to *Women in STEM: A Gender Gap to Innovation*, a report by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Women hold a disproportionately low share of STEM undergraduate degrees, particularly in engineering, the study found. Further, women with STEM jobs earn 33 percent more than comparable women in non-STEM jobs, and the gender wage gap is smaller in STEM jobs than in non-STEM jobs.

“The best thing is that the girls feel confident with themselves and within the academic space and open their eyes to IT careers,” said Stephanie Worden, Undergraduate Recruiting Specialist for the iSchool. “They continue on to become friends and be innovative students.”

In its six years, about 550 high school seniors and juniors have attended the retreat. More than 70 of those attendees are currently enrolled at Syracuse, and 50 are matriculated in the iSchool. Organizers partner with schools that serve underrepresented populations and actively recruit to encourage racial diversity, Worden said.

The 2016 retreat, held October 9 and 10, drew the most diverse cohort yet, she said. The 94 girls at the event included 24 Latinas and 22 African Americans.

“The iSchool is very interested in recruiting minority women into STEM fields,” Worden said. “It’s one thing to have a majority of females in information technology, but within that there is a lack of diversity. Beginning that pipeline early is important so the girls have role models.”

That’s a challenge Moore understands. “My mother made me aware that as an African-American woman I’m going to have to work twice as hard,” she said. “There are things set up systematically that make it harder for women of color. There are so many people I know who could do well but don’t have opportunities. It motivates me to be strong and work harder.”

“The best thing is that the girls feel confident with themselves and within the academic space and open their eyes to IT careers.”

—STEPHANIE WORDEN



**Past It Girls Retreat participants** have formed the It Girls Alumnae Group at the iSchool, and assist in running the program each year. Megan Swanson '18 addresses the audience at the 2014 Retreat.

## LEARNING CRITICAL SKILLS

**D**uring the It Girls Retreat, workshops – many led by students or alumnae who had previously participated in the program – give participants a taste of real problems they might tackle as IT professionals. Sessions introduced them to skills the iSchool emphasizes: public speaking, collaboration and brainstorming through experiential learning.

One of this year’s workshops discussed ideas for wearable technology. Girls broke into groups of four or five and brainstormed ideas, then shared them with the group. Among their inventions: earrings that buzz when the wearer slouches; a head band that measure how much the wearer sweats and how much water she needs to drink; and an improved Apple Watch, featuring a flashlight and more fitness-tracking options.

Heather Pyle '14 and McKenzie Miller '16, both technology advisors at EY (Ernst & Young), led the girls through the exercise. “Any job you’re going to get you’re going to need to understand technology,” said Miller, a member of the inaugural It Girl cohort.

Another workshop challenged the girls to use technology to make the world smarter. One group suggested that homeowners use sensors to measure the amount of energy they use. Another advocated for electric cars to reduce pollution. An ambitious proposal outlined a plan to create a digital health care profile that would follow people from birth to death.

Both sessions ended with questions about campus life. Asked what she likes best about Syracuse, Zannah Bailey '14, who works at IBM, didn’t hesitate. “I love the snow,” she said. “I love the way it brings people together. As an engineer, I love the heated sidewalks. They’re so cool.”



J.D. ROSS

Workshops held during the retreat give the participants experience with the types of problems they might work on in an information technology career.

Rosaly Salcedo, a senior Information Management and Technology major and an It Girl Retreat past participant, loves math. “I like the logic of figuring things out,” she said. “The iSchool helps you figure out who you are and what you’re good at.”

She also shared some advice. “Whatever your end goal is, know it, envision it, get to it,” she said. Salcedo also said she used to fear public speaking. “It Girls helped me get over it,” she said.

Pyle told the girls she was considering the engineering school, but switched to the iSchool. “I liked the technical component and the personal component,” she said.

Miller’s mother is a computer programmer, so she wanted no part of it. But after the It Girl Retreat, which included a session on coding, “I actually found I liked it,” she said.

Moore had a completely different experience with coding. “I loved It Girls and had a lot of fun, but coding scared me,” she said. “It’s great and necessary to diversify, but networking and java are not for me.”

One group challenge during Moore’s retreat called for the girls to develop ideas for apps. That exercise taught Moore an important lesson about IT. “It wasn’t just coding,” she said. “I’m an innovative person and I like teamwork, so that aligned with my entrepreneurial side. There was more to it than creating an app.”

The IT field, Moore learned, is very broad and very diverse. “You can apply it anywhere: to fashion, social work, health care, the FBI.”

## KEY LESSONS FROM THE WEEKEND

Those lessons are key to the weekend, Worden said. About 40 percent of It Girls participants who apply to Syracuse end up in schools at Syracuse other than the iSchool.

“It’s just as important for a student to know what they don’t like as what they like,” she said. “Being an It Girl is about exploring opportunities and knowing what’s good for you. If a girl says, ‘this isn’t for me,’ but still gets energized and supported, it’s a success.”

Over time, organizers have strengthened the program. In addition to workshops and socializing, the weekend includes the traditional sleepover at Archbold Gymnasium and a speakout at Hendricks Chapel to close the retreat. Both events allow the girls to get to know one another, and they’re full of girl power messages. Pep rally-style cheers remind them that, as their It Girls T-shirts proclaim, they are determined, passionate and creative.

## “The It Girls Retreat was a good step to build relationships. It creates a family.”

—MADELYN MOORE '16 G'17



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J.D. ROSS

*iSchool Undergraduate Recruiting Specialist Stephanie Worden welcomes the 2016 cohort of It Girls Retreat participants to Syracuse University during the event's opening dinner in the Goldstein Auditorium.*

"Every year it gets smoother and easier and better," Worden said. "This year we really ramped up the academic content so we were delivering really challenging material to get the girls thinking," she said.

The 2016 It Girls program participants are "the most academically qualified cohort to date," Worden said. The 94 girls came from 14 states, including California, Georgia and Alabama; their average GPA is 3.7. More than half—55 percent – have participated in Girls Who Code or Black Girls Code programs.

"We want to keep delivering really engaging academic content that is reflective of what the iSchool can give to students," Worden said. "Every year I want the girls to get a unique and exciting and challenging experience."

Behind the scenes, organizers are working on the program's infrastructure, improving the website and building a data system that can track It Girls' progress and relationships with each other.

Key to the program's success is alumni and employer involvement, Worden said. EY, JP Morgan Chase, IBM, and Synchrony Financial sponsored the retreat. Representatives of the companies, some of them iSchool grads and past It Girls Retreat participants themselves, volunteered to lead workshops.

The vast majority of volunteers are iSchool students or alumni, and most are female. But Worden said male students

are increasingly supporting the program. "That sends a great message to the girls," she said.

Alumnae engagement reflects the program's success at building relationships from high school through professional careers, Worden said. "It makes them so confident," she said. "It doesn't end here. It's a lifelong journey."

Moore's journey hit a turning point her junior year, when she took Enterprise IT Consulting, an iSchool course that includes Deloitte as a partner. "I felt I had incorporated my business side with my managerial side," Moore said. "I could see myself building a future and applying what I learned to a career."

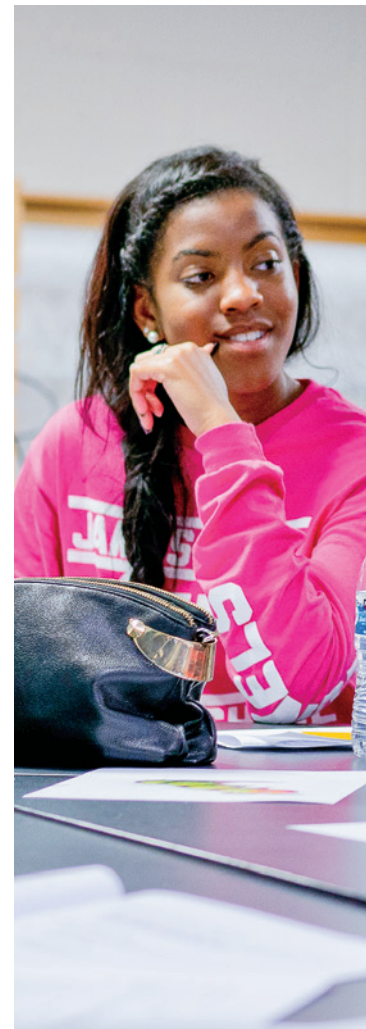
That summer, she interned with EY in New York, working on projects involving the financial sector and cloud infrastructure. The work, and the atmosphere in the busy, cosmopolitan city suited Moore. Her supervisors offered her a full-time job after graduation.

Moore decided to extend her education and pursue a master's degree. She spent a second summer interning for EY, and the company extended the job offer to spring 2017.

"The iSchool helps you figure out who you are and what you're good at."

—STEPHANIE WORDEN

J.D. ROSS





Moore's pleased with the job opportunity, but expects to start a business someday, perhaps in the entertainment industry. "I don't know how business and music would mesh, but I see areas where they complement each other," she said.

Since the first day she stepped on campus, It Girls have supported and encouraged her, from helping her find her first-semester courses to prepping for job interviews. "The It Girls Retreat was a good step to build relationships," she said. "It creates a family."

Moore stays in touch with many members of the original It Girls cohort, who held a reunion during the October retreat. Her advice to the new It Girls is simple: "Be open and be willing to meet new people," she said. "You may know these young ladies for a long time."

She mentors a younger It Girl, a Latina from New York City who recently interviewed with EY for an internship. This time Moore's the one offering encouragement. "Everything comes full circle," she said. ■

**Edwina Fitzmaurice,**  
*Global Advisory  
Business Development  
Leader at EY, delivers  
the keynote address  
the It Girls Overnight  
Retreat opening  
dinner in October. EY  
was a 2016 Retreat  
corporate partner.*



**T**he iSchool's corporate partners are key to the success of the It Girls Overnight Retreat. Gifts from partners have provided charter bus transportation, program scholarships, and travel stipends for attendees.

Corporate partners are also involved in much of the programming for the two-day event, helping by participating on panel discussions, hosting and moderating workshops, and joining the girls for events like the opening dinner and the speak out closing ceremony.

Support of the It Girls event will ensure young women can continue to attend this weekend of new possibilities and further the iSchool's efforts to nurture new talent and inspire new leaders. The It Girls Retreat can change a young woman's life and, ultimately, the future innovation of technology for our world.

If your company is interested in becoming a corporate partner, please contact Sarah Weber, the iSchool's Director of Employer Relations, at [sfweber@syr.edu](mailto:sfweber@syr.edu) or (315) 443-5801. ■





# Announcing Our New HINDSights Alumni Program



**BARBARA SETTEL**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALUMNI RELATIONS

**W**hen friends ask me what do I do as executive director of alumni relations, I simply say, "I help our alumni stay connected to the school, by engaging them with students, faculty and other alumni. By sharing their stories, experience and connections, alumni are our greatest resource as students find their way into the world of work and information-related careers." So how do we do this? We employ many online and social media tools, and we've recently launched a new alumni visitor series, HINDSights.

HINDSights brings alumni to campus for classroom visits, speaking engagements, and focused meetings with student groups. This formal visitor program ensures that a greater number of students will have an opportunity to meet with an iSchool alum and learn from their experiences. In addition to class visits and presentations, visiting alumni are treated to campus tours, meals with faculty members, and are able to spend time getting caught up on what has happened at the University since they've left.

HINDSights welcomed our first two alumni in the fall (at right), and we expect to invite 2 to 3 more visitors next spring. Jordan

Goldberg '02, Senior Account Manager for digital video distribution at Disney and ESPN Media Networks, gave students a first-hand view of what it is like to work in the entertainment and sports industries. Sean Keeley '00, author, blogger and creator of the Syracuse fan blog "Troy Nunes is an Absolute Magician", encouraged students to apply their understanding of social media tools in new and creative ways. Both alumni visitors were impressed with the changes in curriculum and the wealth of opportunities students have to get real world experience before they graduate.

HINDSights, along with our new Alumni Awards and Recognition program (see page 28), are two examples of efforts by the iSchool to highlight the achievements of our alumni, and to provide role models to our students of the many successful career paths available to them. And as always, we welcome hearing stories of your accomplishments, which you can send us via email, Facebook, or posted to our online update form at [ischool.syr.edu/alumninews](http://ischool.syr.edu/alumninews). ■



J.D. ROSS



J.D. ROSS

*Our first two HINDSights Alumni Visitor Program guests were Jordan Goldberg '02 (left) and Sean Keeley '00.*

## HINDSights

For more information about the HINDSights program, or to volunteer as a guest, please contact Barbara Settel at [basettel@syr.edu](mailto:basettel@syr.edu).

**Thank You to Our Corporate Partners and Employers** We thank our corporate partners and employers who sponsor programs at the iSchool and visit our career events to hire students for internships and full-time positions.

### Employers

Aerotek	Cognizant Technology Solutions	FTI Consulting, Inc. (Forensic & Litigation Technology)	MCS Mortgage Bankers, Inc.	Tata Consultancy Services
Amazon	Collaborative Solutions, LLC	GE	Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority	Teach for America
Assured Information Security, Inc.	Communication Services for the Deaf	Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.	Microsoft	The Hanover Insurance Group
AVANGRID Service Company	Cornell University	Gutchess Lumber Company	National Grid	The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc.
AXA	Corning, Inc.	IBM	Polaris	U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center
Bank of America Merrill Lynch	Crowe Horwath, LLP	INROADS	Pratt & Whitney	U.S. Navy
Black Knight Financial Services	Deloitte Consulting	ISO New England, Inc.	PwC	Vidaris, Inc.
Bloomberg	EtQ	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	Quicken Loans	Xerox
BMW	Excellus BlueCross/BlueShield	Keller Williams Realty	Raytheon Company	
BNY Mellon	EY (Ernst & Young)	KPMG, LLP	SRC, Inc.	
Cisco Meraki	FDM Group	M&T Bank	SUNY Oswego	
	Fidelity Investments	Marlabs, Inc.	Synchrony Financial	

## B.S. in Information Management and Technology

**Bence Oliver '95** received the Dean's Award in the iSchool's inaugural Awards & Recognition program.

**Jordan Goldberg '02**, senior account manager at Disney and ESPN Media Networks, participated in the iSchool's HINDSights program in October.

**Doraly Pantaleon '11** is a development operations engineer at NBCUniversal. She visited the iSchool this fall as an alumni guest speaker invited by the BLISTS student group.

**Sam Morrison '13** moved to Los Angeles in June and took a job as Digital Art Director at Media Arts Lab, Apple's dedicated ad agency. Morrison shared his news via his popular Instagram account, [instagram.com/samthecobra](https://www.instagram.com/samthecobra).



**Samantha Ruddy**

**Samantha Ruddy '13**, a stand up comedian, was named one of '50 Funniest People in Brooklyn' by Brooklyn Magazine. While at Syracuse, Ruddy was a member of the campus sketch comedy group Humor Whore.



**Sam Morrison** created this graphic to share via social media when he announced his new job news.

**Neil Winston '14** is an associate at Cognizant Technology Solutions in Boston. He received the Outstanding Alumni Service Award from the iSchool in September.

**Supreet Kaur '15** was named co-president Big Apple Orange, Syracuse University's Alumni Club in New York City. She works in Business Advisory Services at EY.

## M.S. in Information Management

**Anis Yusoff G'93** has been appointed as President and the CEO of the Malaysian Institute of Integrity, a state think tank under the Prime Minister's office. Andrew Farah '09 G'11 and his startup company, Density, raised a \$4 million round of venture capital funding in July. Their product is a small device that tracks and reports on the number of people in public spaces, businesses, and offices.



**Andrew Farah**

**Andrew Farah '09 G'11** and his startup company, Density, raised a \$4 million round of venture capital funding in July. Their product is a small device that tracks and reports on the number of people in public spaces,

businesses, and offices. Farah was honored with the iSchool's Bridge to Success Alumni Award in September.

**Prasanna Kulkarni G'16** is an Associate Web Analyst at Blizzard Entertainment in Irvine, CA.

## M.S. in Telecommunications and Network Management

**Majak Dut '06 G'07** received his Ph.D. in business administration from Northcentral University in July. Dut is believed to be the first 'Lost Boy' of Sudan to earn a doctorate in a field other than medicine. He works as a systems engineer at POMCO in Syracuse, NY, and was recently profiled in the Syracuse Post-Standard: [ischool.syr.edu/majakdut](http://ischool.syr.edu/majakdut)

## M.S. in Library and Information Science

**Bob Lalli G'76** has been a reference librarian at Utica Public Library for 38 years. He recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of his graduation from the iSchool, and wrote to share several memories which have had a lasting impact on his life. Those who attended graduate school with Bob may recall fondly three pivotal faculty: Pauline Atherton Cochrane, the



**Bob Lalli**

late Marta L. Dosa, and Antje B. Lemke. He writes they all showed a keen interest in him, both personally and professionally, long after his days at Syracuse were over. The School was much smaller then, a few hundred students, and maybe 10 faculty, and the student population were all graduate students. But even today, with more than 50 faculty and fifteen hundred students, we know students and faculty maintain very personal connections, which continue as alumni. It is why we think of ourselves as a family. And a family always looks after each other.

## Corporate Partners



JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.





**Fred Stoss G'82** is Associate Librarian at SUNY University at Buffalo, and recently served as a mentor for the 33rd training program conducted by Al Gore since the debut of the Academy Award Winning documentary film, *An Inconvenient Truth* in 1999. Stoss was responsible for training more than 500 individuals from the U.S. and more than 25 other countries to learn how to present the most recent version of Gore's climate change slide show. This was his fourth time serving as a mentor for these training workshops.

**Betsy Kennedy G'98**, director of the Cazenovia Public Library in Cazenovia, NY was named Public Library Staff All-Star of the Year by the Central New York Library Resources Council. The Cazenovia Library was also recognized by the Council as Public Library of the Year.



*Michele Ryan*

**Michele Ryan G'07** was appointed director of the Oneida Public Library in Oneida, NY in September. Ryan has worked at the library for 20 years, first as children's specialist and then as youth librarian.

**Christopher J. Anderson G'09** accepted an appointment as Associate Dean of Libraries at the Drew University Library in Madison, NJ.

**Olivia Tsistinas G'12** Clinical Outreach Librarian at the Upstate Medical University Health Sciences Library in Syracuse, NY was named Academic Library Staff All-Star for 2016 by the Central New York Library Resources Council.

**Sarah Bratt G'14** has returned to the iSchool as a student in the Information Science and Technology doctoral program. Bratt's research interests focus on digital communication, collaboration, and community-building.



*Tina Broomfield*

**Tina Broomfield G'16** has joined the Empire State Library Network as their Projects Coordinator. In this position, Tina is responsible for coordinating the network's delivery service, continuing education program, communications, and vendor relations.

### **M.S. in Library and Information Science—School Media**

**Sue Kowalski G'03**, a school librarian in the East Syracuse-Minoa School District, was honored with the iSchool's Impact of the Year award in September.

**Steven Inzer G'11** was named Teacher of the Year for 2015-2016 at Central Valley Academy in Ilion, NY. Inzer is the Director of Media and Library Services for the Central Valley School District. He is based in the district's high school and assists teachers and students

with projects ranging from research to the rollout of Chrome Books to every single student, and can often be found reading to the children in the elementary school.

**Penny Feeney G'13**, Library Media Specialist at Onondaga Hill Middle School in Syracuse, NY was named Featured Teacher for the month of June 2016 by the Central New York Regional Information Center.

### **Ph.D. in Information Science and Technology**

**Isabelle Fagnot G'11** has joined Audencia Business School in Nantes, France as Associate Professor in Management of Information Systems. She also serves as the school's Director of Quality and Accreditations.



*Steven Inzer reads to elementary school students.*



*Steven Inzer*

# iSchool, AT&T, City of Syracuse Partner on Data Challenge

J.D. ROSS



Use the enclosed envelope to make your annual gift and to let us know about your professional and personal accomplishments so that we can include them on our website, or in a future issue of *Connections*. Also, please keep us informed of any address or employment changes.

- Visit [ischool.syr.edu/alumniupdate](http://ischool.syr.edu/alumniupdate) to change or submit information.
- Visit [ischool.syr.edu/alumni](http://ischool.syr.edu/alumni) to participate in the online alumni community and make a gift to the school.
- Information can also be submitted via e-mail to [istalum@syr.edu](mailto:istalum@syr.edu).

## Barbara Settel

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Sam Edelstein '07 G'16, an alumnus of the iSchool's M.S. in Information Management program, speaks with Syracuse City Mayor Stephanie Miner at a press conference in Hinds Hall announcing the Syracuse Roads Data Challenge, powered by AT&T. The Challenge was a hackathon-style event held this fall to develop solutions to help the City of Syracuse use data it had collected on road quality conditions. Edelstein is the City's Chief Data Officer, and will work with hackathon participants to incorporate their ideas into the City's infrastructure plans.



*Robert Diamond '01*

# On Being in the Right Place at the Right Time

RENÉE K. GADOUA



Robert Diamond, with wife Jennifer, was honored at the Theatre Museum Awards in 2014.

Robert Diamond '01 spends long days in front of at least eight computer screens, writing and editing stories for his flagship website, [broadwayworld.com](http://broadwayworld.com), and overseeing the 14 entertainment sites of Wisdom Digital Media Publishing.

His website covering all things Broadway grew out of dorm room startup to a leading theater site, boasting up to six million monthly visitors. The evolution of Diamond's business reflects his personal passion, sense of humor, and hard work. It also highlights two key iSchool values: innovation and entrepreneurship.

Diamond jokingly blames his mother for starting him on his successful career path. "In my senior year in high school, I had early dismissal. I thought I'd have time to goof around, but my mother insisted I get a job," he said. He got a job with SYS-CON Media, then producing two print magazines. He earned \$7 an hour.

He worked for SYS-CON as he earned his bachelor's degree in Information Management and Technology. Diamond created SYS-CON's first website and worked for the company as it grew to publish 16 magazines and increased its staff from 6 to 50. The same year that Diamond graduated from Syracuse, Folio magazine recognized him as one of the top 30 thirty magazine industry executives under the age of 30.

Also as a college student, Diamond started creating web fan pages. His father had taken him to see "Phantom of the Opera," his first Broadway show, while he was in high school. When he heard Michael Crawford sing the title role, he

was smitten with theater, and charmed with Crawford in particular.

So he did what any tech-minded theater fan would do: He built a Michael Crawford fan page. "At the time it was the second largest Michael Crawford page on the web," he said. "I've always been psychotically competitive, and second wasn't good enough." He then spent weeks in his dorm room scanning information about Crawford into his computer. "For a week, I had the best Michael Crawford site."

The glory was short-lived. He soon received a letter informing the site was violating copyrights. "That included some photos Crawford was selling for charity, so not only was I going to be sued, but I was going to hell," he said with a laugh.

Diamond resolved that challenge by offering to create Crawford's official web page, which he did as he finished his iSchool degree. Crawford returned to Broadway in 2002 with the musical comedy "Dance of the Vampires."

Diamond helped to promote the show and starting looking at other Broadway sites for inspiration. "My first site was tech heavy," he said, and Crawford's show closed in a month and a half. But Diamond had stumbled upon the central concept for his web media business. "These are people who love theater, and there doesn't seem to be a site for them," he remembered. "So I created Broadway World a few weeks later, and the site took off."

At the time, he was still working at SYS-CON Media by day. He quit that job in 2005 and committed full time to [BroadwayWorld.com](http://BroadwayWorld.com) and Wisdom Digital Media. [BroadwayWorld](http://BroadwayWorld.com) covers Broadway,

the West End, 100 U.S. cities, and 30 countries worldwide. The site offers Broadway, off-Broadway, and regional theatre news, ticket discounts and reviews.

Wisdom Digital Media also runs sites including BWWTVWorld.com, BWW-BooksWorld.com, BWWMusicWorld.com, BWWArtWorld.com, BWWFitnessWorld.com, BWWDanceWorld.com, BWWClassicalWorld.com and BWWOperaWorld.com. One of its newest sites, BWWGeeksWorld.com, launched in January and is devoted to home entertainment, mobile technologies and social media.

One of Diamond's competitors praised BroadwayWorld.com's business model in a 2013 Crain's New York story. "Rob was the first to make a go of it using an advertising model," James Marino, a former actor who runs BroadwayStars.com, an aggregator of theater news," told Crains. "Before he started his business, he asked me if I wanted to partner with him. I said no because I didn't think it would work. That was a big mistake!"

Diamond jokes that "not a day goes by that I don't blame Michael Crawford." But he quickly adds that the two are friends ("He's still my favorite") and that he's happy to have found a career that connect his love of theater with his tech skills. "I still hate public speaking," he said. "Performing is not in my blood or skillset. My business uses my strengths in an area I love."

The iSchool, he said, reinforced his computer programming skills, and his switch from majoring in computer science made perfect sense. "A lot of what they were teaching (in computer classes) I

already knew and it was easy for me," he said. "I was more interested in management and practical applications."

By the time he started at Syracuse, he "already had a good, solid, self-taught base of programming and was already making websites," he said. "I started before everyone and anyone had a website. I was in the right place in the right time." ■

## Thank you

from the iSchool's Enrollment Management Team

Thank you to all of our alumni who recommended students to our undergraduate and graduate programs. We enjoy meeting with them and make sure they experience all the warmth and sense of community that you valued when you were here! To learn more about events for prospective students, visit: [ischool.syr.edu/admissionevents](http://ischool.syr.edu/admissionevents)





*Students on the iSchool's Fall Road Trip stopped to pose for a photo while visiting the Red Bull Arena in Harrison, New Jersey. This trip focused on sports and technology.*



JULIE WALAS HUYNH



JULIE WALAS HUYNH

**Seniors Jesse Krim and Chris Whelan** at the Road Trip evening reception in New York City.



JULIE WALAS HUYNH

**Falk College alumnus Ben Norowski '12** (at right) answers questions as part of a panel discussion at Red Bull stadium.



FOOTBALL

# Boston Bound!

**The next iSchool Road Trip is headed to Boston in April 2017.** We're looking for alumni hosts and companies to visit while we're there. The theme of this trip is technology and healthcare / biotech – so if you and your company would like to host approximately 45 undergraduate students and showcase what you're working on, please contact Julie Walas Huynh at [jlwalas@syr.edu](mailto:jlwalas@syr.edu).



# 7th Annual MLB College Challenge

For the seventh consecutive year, Major League Baseball's Advanced Media division (MLB.com) and the iSchool teamed up to challenge students to develop new ideas that could end up on Major League Baseball's official website or mobile applications. The November event attracted more than 125 students from across the University.

**Alumni at MLB** who returned to campus to help run the Challenge this year, from left to right: Josh Frost '08, Joe Kanakaraj '00, Ben Romy '12, Carlos Ruiz '13, Marc Squire '11, Sammy Pardes '16, and Andy Pregler '15.



**SAVE THE DATE:**

**Boston Alumni Reception**  
**Thursday, April 6, 2017**  
**6:00 – 8:30 PM**  
**Harvard Club of Boston –**  
**Downtown**  
**One Federal Street, Boston**



**Julie Walas Huynh** (standing), director of student and alumni engagement at the iSchool, gives directions to a College Challenge team as they begin their 12-hour overnight stint of brainstorming and developing their ideas in response to the prompt given.

**The winning MLB College Challenge team**, from left to right: Olivia Lavelle '19, Caitlin Burke '18, Sarah Lundmark '18, and Mallory Miller '17. Olivia, Caitlin, and Sarah are all Sport Management majors in Syracuse University's Falk College, and Mallory is a dual Sport Management and Information Management & Technology major in the iSchool. This is first all-female team to win the College Challenge.







## The New Alumni Awards and Recognition Program has arrived!

**KIMBERLY A. PIETRO** ASSISTANT DEAN FOR  
ADVANCEMENT

### It's about the future

We are on a mission to celebrate the huge amount of value our alumni bring to current students. You are helping us to raise the profile of the iSchool. Those millennials you keep hearing about will form a crucial part of our workforce and alumni community in the future. They will want to be part of an award-winning family within their successful alma mater that gives them the opportunity to get involved in interesting and challenging projects. Entering, being shortlisted and, winning an award in this process is rewarding.

### It's about recognizing our lifelong community

We all work hard. The frenetic pace of business means our alumni are constantly moving from one deal or career to another, working on several projects simultaneously, and rarely giving themselves time to step back and admire their good work. Of course, it's a balance, but occasionally taking time to consider what has been done and to thank and congratulate those involved in good work is crucial. Of course, there are many ways to do this, but few are as rewarding, as public, and as unifying as our Alumni Awards.

### It's serious

Our awards attract many entries, from all over the world and from every conceivable industry. Being shortlisted is a huge achievement, winning even more so. Ensuring our alumni know their talents feel championed is important to us, and by capturing excellence within our awards we are better able to celebrate and support our community and pass on the knowledge to our students to do likewise. Celebrating our alumni makes us all better.

Recognizing individuals who have demonstrated significant leadership, achieved career success and provided outstanding service to their profession and our current students is a way for us to celebrate our iSchool family. ■

### Call for Nominations

If you know an alumna/us who meets the criteria for one of these awards, visit the Call for Nominations page on our website ([ischool.syr.edu/alumniawards](http://ischool.syr.edu/alumniawards)) to learn more and fill out a nomination form.

## 2016 iSchool Alumni



### BENCE OLIVER '95 | DEAN'S AWARD

Bence Oliver worked at eBay as Director of International Strategic Sourcing and previously as founder of the company's Sustainability and Renewable Energy Program, where he coordinated all aspects for multiple renewable energy investments, formalizing the building blocks behind eBay's commitment towards energy conservation, and chairing eBay's executive Sustainability Steering Committee. He served as the iSchool's convocation speaker in 2013.

## Awards Winners



J.D. ROSS

### **SUE KOWALSKI G'03** | IMPACT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Throughout her career as a librarian, Sue Kowalski has stayed in close contact with the iSchool, generously giving of her time to participate in information sessions for prospective students, visit classes, supervise interns, and serve as a role model for future librarians. At her school library, she has received recognition from many sources, including a National School Library Program of the Year award from the American Association of School Librarians in 2011, a Teacher Librarian Leadership Award from the Teacher Librarian Journal in 2012, and the I Love My Librarian Award from the New York Library Association in 2012.



J.D. ROSS

### **ANDREW FARAH G'11** | BRIDGE TO SUCCESS ALUMNI AWARD

Andrew Farah is the CEO of Density, Inc., a company that has developed a small sensor that measures how busy a location is in real time. Density is an offshoot of his prior venture, Rounded, a digital agency and software development firm that was based in Syracuse. Andrew found his entrepreneurial spirit at the iSchool, taking courses in the School's Information Technology, Design, and Startups curriculum, and spending time in the Syracuse Student Sandbox developing and launching his venture. Density announced the availability of their sensor product, and closed a \$4 million round of Series A venture funding this summer.



J.D. ROSS

### **NEIL WINSTON '14** | OUTSTANDING ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

Neil Winston has been active and generous with his time with the regional alumni clubs in Cleveland and Boston, and is a strong supporter and advocate of the iSchool's experiential learning Road Trip programs. He frequently returns to the iSchool's career events to recruit students for his company, Cognizant Technology Solutions, where he currently serves as an associate. While a student, he was awarded Outstanding Freshman by iSchool faculty and staff, was a member of the Syracuse University Emerging Student Leaders program, participated in the General Electric Leadership @ Work Conference, the Ernst & Young LAUNCH Program, and received the Undergraduate Service Award at graduation.



# connections

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STEVE SARTORI



**S**tudents walk across the recently completed Einhorn Family Walk. Over the summer of 2016, University Place was closed to vehicle traffic and replaced with this pedestrian friendly promenade between Crouse Drive and College Place.