

Computer Science, he worked with Professor Jack Dongarra, who is well known in the international computing community for many reasons, including as the keeper of the "Top 500" list of supercomputer sites (<http://www.top500.org>). Dorian worked for Dongarra for three years but always knew he wanted to complete his Ph.D. and moved on to the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2001 to do so. He is studying under Professor Barton Miller in the Computer Science Department, and plans to finish his Ph.D. this year. The title of his dissertation is "Failure Recovery Models for Scalable Tree-based Overlay Networks," and his research focuses on making high-performance computing resources easier for non-experts to use in efficient, robust, scalable ways.

What's next for Dorian? He plans a career in academia. "I want to be in an environment where I do productive research while working with talented students," said Dorian. "Research alone can be rewarding, especially if your algorithms and technology become popular, but interacting with students to help them accomplish their goals makes an even greater contribution to our field, and to society."

Dorian's path to joining the EL Alliance started with a chance meeting with Professor Brian Blake of Georgetown University, who told him about a future faculty mentoring program directed by Professor Juan Gilbert of Auburn. While participating in the mentoring program, he heard about the Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing (October 2007), which he attended using funds from an Intel fellowship, and there he joined the EL Alliance. Dorian said, "Before these interactions, I encountered very few minorities professionally -- we have a very long way to go. Nonetheless, it was enlightening to learn of other minorities (students, professors, and professionals) in the field. My professional network now includes a great number of leaders, future leaders and colleagues, and I look forward to sharing that network with my future students."

*Editor's Note: Since the time of this interview, Dorian has accepted an assistant professorship at the University of New Mexico to start this fall. Our congratulations!

Competitive by Nature: UC Berkeley Postdoc Doug Densmore's New Role in Encouraging Minorities to Pursue Ph.D.s-and More

Douglas Densmore, a UC Chancellor's postdoc in electrical engineering at the University of California, Berkeley is competitive by nature, and he's using this trait to excel in his own research and to serve as an example to others regarding the benefits of pursuing advanced degrees. After completing his B.S.E. in computer engineering from the University of Michigan (2001), he came to UC Berkeley where he completed his Masters (2004) and Ph.D. (2007) and is focused on embedded system design methodologies as a postdoc. He plans a career in academia, and is encouraging others to do so, as well. "A primary concern of mine is finding opportunities for minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers. A career in academics allows me to impact the scientific community while still directly helping others to achieve their goals," said Doug.

His actions exemplify that concern. Doug is a leader in UC Berkeley's Black Graduate Engineering and Science Students group (BGESS), is mentoring other minority students through the Summer Undergraduate Program in Engineering Research (SUPERB), and has coordinated numerous Oakland area high school science fairs during Berkeley's annual "Cal Day". He's given his presentation on "Why Postdoc?" (available at <http://www.empoweringleadership.org/resources>) numerous times to a range of student groups and colleagues. Furthermore, he is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), and serves as a representative to national conferences for organizations such as the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME). He recently joined the EL Alliance to further expand his network of professional contacts and resources.

According to Doug, "I'm a competitive person, and that always carried over to math and science. It started with sports--I was strong in soccer and basketball and it always frustrated me that as a black male it was often expected that this is where I should put my energy. But in high school, I had a chance to attend an advanced school for science and math, and it appealed to the left side of my brain as well as my competitive side. From then on, I saw how the same traits that made me successful in other areas (practice, dedication, knowing how to win or lose) also made me successful in math and science. I was

interested in academics as a means to empower myself, and focused my competitive drive on my coursework and on getting into the best universities."

Early on, his mother recognized his interest in computing and encouraged him to attend the University of Michigan for his undergraduate degree. During that time, Doug held several internships at Intel. "Internships are a great way to help you make decisions about what you are--or are not--interested in for a career. I learned that I'm much more interested in a career in academia, and in working with students while also pursuing research that interests me, rather than research driven by marketing and commercial needs. I like the prospect of failure in research, in a way--trying new approaches to a problem and taking risks. Why something didn't work is as interesting to me as something that did work."

Doug plans to stay active in professional organizations and mentoring programs, and sees his efforts at UC Berkeley as critical to his career. "I wanted to stay at UC Berkeley for my postdoc. I received an UC Chancellor's Fellowship, and am enjoying my ability to combine research with encouraging other minority students to attend college and pursue degrees. Passion is important, in any field or endeavor."



EL Alliance Partners and Partner News

University of Texas at Austin Kicks Off EL Alliance Student Group

<http://www.cs.utexas.edu/~yadi/ela/>

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/student/index.php>

More than 30 students at UT Austin participated in the first meeting of the EL Alliance Student Group on February 5, 2008. "The meeting was led by Juan Segueda, a UT Austin senior who is entering our Ph.D. program this fall, and the Chair of Computer Science, J Strother Moore, gave an inspiring opening talk," said Tiffany Grady, assistant director for academic initiatives, outreach, and retention. "I was really thrilled with everyone's energy and enthusiasm - Juan emphasized how important it was that the students become leaders and role models in the field and we brainstormed on what we want the organization to be." In addition to J. Moore, the faculty participants were Clint Dawson, Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics, and Steve Keckler, Computer Science. That same week, some of the students took a road show about computer science to more than 1000 students at South Texas high schools. The UT Austin students talked about the field of computer science and demonstrated "robo soccer dogs." The group has even more ambitious plans, including creating a mentoring and tutoring community, providing outreach programs, and developing service projects. Several students also participated in the first Texas EL Alliance meeting at Rice University in April (http://empoweringleadership.org/texas_meeting/index.htm).

Leadership Team Member R. M. Holmes' Book Released

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471164208.html>

Raquell M. Holmes, an EL Alliance Leadership Team member, just published a book entitled, "A Cell Biologist's Guide to Modeling and Bioinformatics." According to the publisher's (Wiley) Website, the book is "A step-by-step guide to using computational tools to solve problems in cell biology. Combining expert discussion with examples that can be reproduced by the reader, *A Cell Biologist's Guide to Modeling and Bioinformatics* introduces an array of informatics tools that are available for analyzing biological data and modeling cellular processes. All that you need is a working knowledge of algebra and cellular biology; the author provides all the other tools you need to understand the necessary statistical and mathematical methods." See a list of all of the EL Alliance Leadership Team members at http://www.empoweringleadership.org/About_Us/leadership.html

University of California Berkeley Hosts Internationally Renowned Speakers

<http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/>

<http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/Colloquium/Regents/allen.shtml>

<http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/Colloquium/McKay/estrin.shtml>