

Florida International University  
**University Technology Services**  
**UTS NEWS**

May 2003

Volume 2, Number 1

**Making Better Use of IT Resources**

**Enhancement for Faculty Instructional Technology Support**

Distributed education and face-to-face on-campus instruction are converging. On-line delivery systems and approaches are being employed for distant, commuting, and residential students. This convergence of old and new, in the form of technology-mediated education, is known as distributed learning. To stay competitive, FIU must quickly move toward its stated goal of building an effective distributed learning environment to better serve its students and faculty, and to increase institutional effectiveness.

To point the way forward, the University is creating a new unit to provide enhanced support for instructional technology. It will provide faculty with comprehensive support resources for integrating the use of technology within their courses, including the development of web-assisted or fully online courses, the integration of video or graphics into

course materials, training on the use of various instructional technologies, individual consultations with instructional designers, and access to workstations containing helpful software and media capabilities.

The existing technology support units that will directly participate in this effort include the University Libraries, the Center for Online Teaching (COT), and several University Technology Services (UTS) workgroups: Broadcast Video Production, Instructional Photography and Graphics, the Technology Training Center, Media Equipment & Engineering, and UTS Computing Labs. As a first step in creating the new entity, administration of the Center for Online Teaching (COT) has been transferred from the College of Continuing and Professional Studies (CAPS) to University Technology Services. The new unit will thereby build upon our on-going efforts to foster online and web-assisted instruction, and it will deepen cooperation with the Academy for the Art of Teaching, the iNET Steering Committee, and CAPS.

Announcement of the new unit, tentatively dubbed the Technology Enhancement Center, was made in mid-December by Provost Mark Rosenberg and CIO/VP John McGowan. Plans are now being completed for optimum consolidation of existing instructional technology resources into an entity that will insure easy access and comprehensive support. Organizers hope to have a functioning "hub" by summer and a perfected, fully integrated center by the end of the year. Stay tuned for details! ✪

*Ivon Foster*  
*Director,*  
*UTS Media & Technology Support*  
*Ivon.Foster@fiu.edu*

**UTS Launches Advisory Groups**

In accordance with our focus on becoming a more customer-centric organization, UTS recently launched two very important technology advisory groups at FIU: The Student Technology Advisory Committee (STAC), and the Customer Care Advisory Council (CCAC).

STAC was established to provide students with the opportunity to provide input into technology-related decision making and policies that have a direct impact on FIU's student body. STAC is a student-led committee initiated by University Technology Services (UTS). Dr. John P. McGowan, Vice President and CIO, commented that the student technology advisory group was one of the most active and highly regarded student organizations at a previous institution where he worked. "I was

*Continued on Page 3*

**Instructional Technology Support**



**UTS NEWS**

**What's Inside**

Enhancement for Faculty Instructional Technology Support . . . . .	1
UTS Launches Advisory Groups. . . . .	1
FIU Hosts Major Networking Workshops . . . . .	2
Voice over IP (VoIP) Project Update . . . . .	2
Internet: Keeping Up with Demand . . . . .	2
Meet Our New UTS Staff!; UTS/BVP Employee Honored . . . . .	3
TIPS & FAQs. . . . .	4



## FIU Hosts Major Networking Workshops

During the period from January 29 through February 7, 2003, the University hosted the America's Path (AMPATH) Workshop, [http://www.ampath.fiu.edu/miami03\\_agenda.htm](http://www.ampath.fiu.edu/miami03_agenda.htm), followed by the ESnet Coordinating Committee (ESCC)/Internet2 Techs Workshop, <http://www.ncne.org/training/techs/2003/0202/jt-miami.html>. Both these events were attended by a large community of researchers, technologists, industry companies and multi-national government officials. Over 100 people from the Americas attended the AMPATH Workshop, and approximately 200 attended the ESCC/Internet2 Techs Workshop. The bustling University Park Campus community and some of

Miami's best weather created a familiar and comfortable environment for these events.

In preparation for the workshops, which took place in the Graham Center (GC) Ballroom, UTS upgraded the network in GC to Gigabit Ethernet in the backbone and Fast Ethernet to user work areas. With the support of Cisco Systems and Internet2, a wireless LAN was installed in the plenary, in all the breakout rooms in the GC Building, as well as in a tent that was set up on the lawn for food and snacks.

The effective use of the technology was one of the most appreciated services FIU provided to support the activities. The wireless LAN in the GC Building and tent enabled attendees to enjoy the speed of the network, the quality of the video conferencing technologies, and the ubiquitous access to the Internet and Internet2's Abilene network. Many thanks to the teams from UTS and the School of Computer Science for making these sessions a technological success.

The theme of the AMPATH Workshop was Fostering Collaborations and Next Generation Infrastructure. The workshop provided an environment for AMPATH participants, potential participants, and those with a regional,

hemispheric or international interest in the project, to exchange ideas, form new and solidify existing collaborations, and form international teams to design next generation infrastructure. The workshop also provided a meeting venue for the AMPATH Working Groups, which are being formed around projects in multi-disciplinary interest areas such as biology, high-energy physics, and astronomy.

The ESCC/Internet2 Techs Workshop was successful in attracting Internet2's technical community from the U.S. Higher-Education community, the international research and education networking community from the Americas, as well as industry representatives. This workshop provided presentations on advanced technology, infrastructure updates, and case study sessions, with special focus areas on next-generation Internet protocols, (for example, IPv6), optical networking, and security. This was the second time FIU hosted an Internet2 Techs Workshop. Next year's winter Techs Workshop will be hosted by the University of Hawaii also their second time. However, the Internet2 folks have already asked us if they can come back to FIU in three years. ✪

*Julio Ibarra*  
Director, UTS Grants & Acquisitions  
[Julio.Ibarra@fiu.edu](mailto:Julio.Ibarra@fiu.edu)

## VoIP Project Update

We are excited to announce that by the end of this summer, all FIU campuses will be on the VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephony system. Once the University has transitioned to VoIP, along with a few other top higher educational institutions, we will be at the cutting edge of the telecommunications industry with over 4000 VoIP telephone sets deployed in 58 FIU buildings.

The VoIP System offers many benefits for the University—the primary one being that it will consolidate all the different FIU telephone systems and comprise a unified dialing plan featuring the convenience of 5-digit dialing to reach any campus. Another advantage to VoIP is that for the first time all FIU campuses will now use the same voice mail system. VoIP not only advances voice services; user access to the Internet will also be improved because the entire FIU network and cabling infrastructure has been upgraded in order to support VoIP. Basically, the end results of the VoIP Project will be improved reliability and redundancy of both network and voice services for the whole University.

Our implementation of VoIP would not have been possible without the assistance of the nearly 200 VoIP



Departmental Leads. These individuals made possible the transition process by providing critical departmental information and aid to the UTS VoIP Team and to their colleagues.

Although the deployment project is coming to a close, this is not the last you will hear about VoIP. In the near future, UTS staff will be working on the integration of the advanced features supported by the VoIP network infrastructure, such as short announcements, news, and weather updates displayed on the LCD screen of your VoIP telephone.

For more information, please visit <http://uts.fiu.edu> and click on the VoIP link. ✪

*Marcella Sparks*  
UTS Marketing & Customer Relations  
[Marcy.Sparks@fiu.edu](mailto:Marcy.Sparks@fiu.edu)

## Internet: Keeping Up with Demand

The demand for Internet bandwidth at FIU has grown exponentially over the past several years. Keeping up with the University's networking demands has been challenging at times. There are many reasons for the increase in network activity—some good and some not so good.

The recent upgrade of FIU's network infrastructure due to the Voice over IP telephone implementation has dramatically increased the network bandwidth in many buildings. That allows FIU students, faculty, and staff in those buildings much faster access to the outside world via the Internet. However, that access does place additional strain on our limited Internet capacity. The Internet has become the primary means for access to information for everything from advanced research to booking flight reservations. Additional network traffic is also attributable to the increase of unsolicited e-mail traffic (SPAM), entertainment media file sharing applications, and increased malicious activities that affect networks worldwide.

*Continued on Page 4*



## Welcome Our New UTS Staff

**Sean Bossinger**, Call Center Manger, UTS Support Center

**David Scott Collins**, Sr. Applications Developer, PantherSoft

**John Duran**, Security Administrator, PantherSoft

**Jeffery Gonzalez**, Associate Director, PantherSoft

**James Hardiman**, Computer Support Specialist, UTS Call Center

**I-Chen Lee**, Coordinator Computer System Control, Infrastructure

**Parandama Muniswamy**, Technology Analyst, PantherSoft

**Ana Vega**, Applications Developer, PantherSoft

### UTS BVP Employee Honored

Richard Pabon, Senior Broadcast Specialist in the Broadcast Video Production (BVP) unit, was selected as FIU's Customer Service Employee of the Month for November 2002.

Richard's primary responsibility is training OPS distance learning technicians. He works with the technicians and the faculty to ensure that the real-time delivery of the courses run smoothly. When there is a technical problem, he troubleshoots it or brings in the right people to provide the resolution.



Richard goes out on video shoots and edits videos for presentations. He is also the head video technician for big events and FIU commencement. In his position, Richard has the opportunity

to work with students, faculty, and staff and treats all with the same respect in providing them quality service.

Richard takes extra time to ensure that the BVP OPS staff is properly set up to video any event, which may require evening or weekend work. According to Debbie Sheridan, his supervisor, "he is an inspiration and a role model to all who work with him. Richard goes above and beyond the call of duty to get the job done and done well. He has the utmost regard for customer satisfaction because he cares about BVP, the client, and the University. He believes that the function of his department is to serve the University, and that serving a student is just as important as serving an executive."

Richard was previously nominated for the USPS Employees Recognition Award, the Gabor Exemplary Employee Award, and the Presidential Award of Achievement and Excellence.

He is a Miami native and a graduate of Miami Dade Community College, where he received his degree in Radio and TV Broadcasting. Richard has been working at FIU for 17 years; he began his career here as an OPS employee. Before coming to FIU, he worked for WLRN in the control room and for their radio station.

We congratulate Richard on being selected the Customer Service Employee of the Month! 🌟

*[excerpted from  
ThisWeek@FIU, 12/09/02]*

### Advisory Groups *continued*

surprised to discover that FIU did not have a mechanism or forum that proactively solicited student input on technology projects, policies and services that affect our students," said McGowan.

On January 16, 2003, STAC held a preliminary meeting with Dr. McGowan and other members of the UTS Leadership Team. The official kick-off meeting, under the leadership of the recently elected STAC Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Secretary, took place on February 13, 2003.

**"STAC was established to provide students with the opportunity to provide input into technology-related decision making and policies that have a direct impact on FIU's student body."**

STAC is open to registered FIU undergraduate, graduate and special students. It seeks representatives to serve as committee members from a cross section of student entities, such as colleges and schools, housing facilities, major campuses and sites, the Student Government Association, the Office of Disability Services, etc. At this time, STAC, which meets on a monthly basis, is soliciting for increased student representation. If you would like to nominate someone for the Committee or would like more information on STAC, please e-mail to [mystac@fiu.edu](mailto:mystac@fiu.edu).

In February, 2002, UTS initiated the Customer Care Project as a means to transform the organization's structure and culture to one focused on customer-centricity, pro-activity, and excellence. One of the initiatives of the UTS Customer Care Project was to initiate the establishment of an advisory committee composed of UTS customers to provide input and feedback on proposed and implemented customer relations projects and activities.

Accordingly, UTS recently established the Customer Care Advisory Council (CCAC), which is composed of a cross-section of FIU faculty and staff from all campuses and a representative from the Student Technology Advisory Committee. CCAC had its kick-off meeting on February 18, 2003.

The short-term charge of the CCAC is to ensure that the Customer Care Project's strategic initiatives are aligned with UTS customer needs. This encompasses providing feedback and input on the objectives,

**"The long-term charge of the CCAC is to serve in a continuous advisory capacity to UTS— providing input and feedback on the UTS support structure, service culture, and service levels."**

*Continued on Page 4*

## Tips & FAQs

**Q.** Isn't there something FIU can do to keep junk E-mail (SPAM) from coming into my mailbox?

**A.** This is a very serious problem affecting all universities, businesses, Internet Service Providers, etc. Because spammers are getting increasingly bold and devious in sending out voluminous junk that is not very detectable, things are getting worse, not better. It is very cheap and easy to send out SPAM; it is very expensive and difficult to intercept it. Some sort of legislation is probably the only thing

that will eventually get this under control.

University Technology Services is carefully studying the latest applications and methods to detect/filter SPAM, but we have not found one that would be cost effective or efficient enough to process all incoming FIU E-mail. The problem is that there is no insurance that we will filter out only "bad" messages. Like many other universities, we feel that losing vital, "good" messages could be much more of a problem than receiving SPAM.

While we cannot currently filter FIU E-mail globally, there are good countermeasures individuals can apply themselves to reduce incoming SPAM. These include avoiding getting on a SPAM list; deleting/not answering SPAM E-mails, and using your mailer program to do very selective filtering of your own E-mail. With the 'E-mail SPAM' link at web site <http://uts.fiu.edu>, we have summarized these countermeasures, provided instructions for filtering your own mail, and provided links to useful SPAM-related articles and organizations.

### Internet Demand *continued*

In order to ensure that FIU has consistent, high speed Internet access for its administrative and academic functions, University Technology Services (UTS) has moved forward on several fronts. First, the VoIP Project network infrastructure upgrade is on schedule and is due to be completed by the end of May. Almost every building on every FIU campus now has high-speed network access. The network is now capable of securely handling voice, video and data traffic at very high speeds. Second, in January, UTS upgraded its Internet capacity from 21Mbps (Megabits per second) to 33Mbps, and in late March it upgraded again to 45Mbps. If necessary, we are committed to upgrading that capacity again to meet the Internet demands of the University. Finally, UTS has implemented bandwidth management strategies that will prevent "runaway" Internet access.

The bandwidth management scheme we have devised allows us to effectively prioritize Internet traffic based on the type of activity that a device is performing. During peak access hours, devices showing sustained heavy use of Internet access are assigned a lower access priority. That type of activity is usually attributable to extended periods of large downloads or uploads of data, as in the case of file sharing applications. Prioritization insures that more common, brief duration Internet use is favored, as in the case of normal web browsing. Restrictions are lifted when the University's Internet traffic is not at its maximum. Bandwidth management techniques have been in place since January of this year and



# FIU

## UTS News

Vol. 2, No. 1 May 2003

Editor: Robert Holley  
[utspubs@fiu.edu](mailto:utspubs@fiu.edu)

have been effective in providing the University with a much higher quality of Internet service while keeping the costs down.

If you would like to see more information on FIU's Internet bandwidth management techniques, and guidelines for responsible Internet use, please link to the 'FIUnet' web page from the main UTS web site at <http://uts.fiu.edu>. \*

Al Losada  
 Director,  
 UTS Infrastructure  
[Al.Losada@fiu.edu](mailto:Al.Losada@fiu.edu)

### Advisory Groups *continued*

deliverables, and milestones of the Customer Care Project. "We would be remiss if were to initiate new policies, procedures and service levels to enhance our services, without first finding out whether our established goals and objectives meet the needs of our students, faculty and staff," said Dr. Ivon R. Foster, Director of the UTS Media & Technology Support Unit and Project Manager for the UTS Customer Care Project.

The long-term charge of the CCAC is to serve in a continuous advisory capacity to UTS— providing input and feedback on the UTS support structure, service culture, and service levels. CCAC will help measure customer satisfaction with, and utilization of, UTS projects and services, and suggest new customer relations projects and initiatives.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Customer Care Advisory Council, you may contact Dr. Ivon Foster at [Ivon.Foster@fiu.edu](mailto:Ivon.Foster@fiu.edu)

The establishment of both the STAC and CCAC organizations will enhance University Technology Services' ability to provide high-quality customer service to the FIU Community. \*

Yogi Misir,  
 Associate Director,  
 UTS Marketing &  
 Customer Relations  
[Yogi.Misir@fiu.edu](mailto:Yogi.Misir@fiu.edu)

## What's Next ..

- o LOOK FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE IN THE FALL
- o PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR OWN FIU COMPUTING EXPERIENCES TO [utspubs@fiu.edu](mailto:utspubs@fiu.edu) FOR PUBLICATION

- o WIRELESS AT FIU
- o NEW CALL CENTER FOR HELP