

Ideas for Chapter Activities*

The kinds of activities a student chapter can undertake are endless, depending on the creativity and interest of each group. But here are a few examples of academic, social, and professional activities that may be of interest to your group:

❖ High School Students Shadowing College Students

Type of Activity: Academic and Social

Description: Pair high school students with college students. The undergraduate should invite the high school student to spend the day with him or her, attending classes and eating meals together. (High school vacation days work well.)

Benefits: High school students will learn more about a college computer science major, since many high schools hide computing courses within business departments. The college student also provides a positive image of a “scientist” for the high school student.

❖ College Students Shadowing Professionals

Type of Activity: Social and Professional

Description: Pair college students with professionals in the students’ desired career field. A student can spend the day with the professional at his/her place of work.

Benefits: Shadowing a computing professional allows a student to receive an insider’s view of a career field s/he is considering, while revealing the necessary skills needed in order to thrive in the environment. Additionally, alumni maintain closer ties with their former major department.

Group Size: Unlimited groups of two

❖ Departmental Posters

Type of Activity: Academic and Social

Description: Gather a group of students to make posters advertising all of the departmental events. Alternately, students may create posters advertising course offerings for the upcoming semester, focusing on the fact that just one computer science course can be beneficial regardless of the person’s major.

Benefits: Poster making provides an opportunity for socialization while also providing the rest of the campus with information about the department.

Group Size: Large

* Adapted from *One Hundred One Ideas for Women-in- Computing Groups* by Gloria Childress Townsend, Stephanie Ball, and Laura Kuh. Contact gct@depauw.edu for a copy.

❖ Poster Session

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Organize a small poster session for students who have conducted summer research and participated in internships. Consider a cooperative effort with any and all local ACM student chapters.

Benefits: Invite friends, computer science majors, members of introductory computing classes, faculty members, etc.

Group Size: Small, ten people

❖ Interdisciplinary Posters

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Ask for volunteers who are double majors and who would like to be profiled in a poster display destined for the computer science lounge/laboratory area. Create high-quality posters, explaining how the presenters combine computer science with another major.

Benefits: These posters will help students see that computer science is compatible with almost any field and that pursuing a degree in computer science does not limit one to programming.

Group Size: Small

❖ Banquet/Award Ceremonies

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Reward academically outstanding students by recognizing them at an end-of-semester banquet. Rewards can include gift cards for local restaurants or stores, plaques, or certificates. Be sure to include at least one "most improved" award.

Benefits: An award ceremony makes an already rewarding experience that much more enjoyable, while encouraging all students to strive for excellence.

Group Size: Large

❖ Advisory Board

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Students in the computer science department are elected by their peers to serve on a committee that meets periodically with faculty members in the department. Students and faculty discuss issues such as curriculum, department activities, and any problems that arise during the school year.

Benefits: The creation of an advisory board allows students to deal with problems in a professional manner, helping to prepare them for life outside of school and to build a resume that balances technical skills with leadership skills. An advisory board also improves communication and helps deflect problems for future students.

Group Size: Small, about eleven people

❖ Newsletter

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Form a group of students who are responsible for writing a monthly newsletter. Topics for the newsletter may include articles from the alumni or faculty, senior profiles, advice from students, lists of upcoming events, etc. The newsletter can be a hardcopy or e-form.

Benefits: A newsletter keeps all students in the computer science department informed and connected to each other while giving the students in charge an experience that can be useful when looking for a job.

Group Size: Small

❖ Mentoring

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Pair younger students with older students based on similar interests and hobbies. Make sure that someone in the group is made explicitly responsible for driving group activities, so momentum begins early and keeps going.

Benefits: One-on-one mentoring provides much more quality time and promotes a closer relationship between mentor and mentee.

Group size: Unlimited groups of twos

❖ Tri-Mentoring

Type of Activity: Academic, Social, & Professional

Description: Forming groups consisting of a first-year or sophomore, a junior or senior and a member of the computer science faculty. Different groups can consist of a high school student, undergraduate student, and faculty member; undergraduate, graduate, and faculty member; or undergraduate, graduate, and professional. Again, make sure that someone in the group is made explicitly responsible for driving group activities so momentum begins early and keeps going.

Benefits: Provides all three members with a support network, where each person supplies a different point-of-view of the computing discipline.

Group size: Unlimited groups of three

❖ Tutoring, Peer

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: If at all possible, find funding for departmental tutors. (In extreme cases, where no funding can be secured, ask student volunteers to tutor their peers in specific classes.) Tutors can sign up for time slots; the information can be emailed to majors; and students can meet the tutors in the computer labs or in special reserved rooms. Strive to create the ideal balance of students, male-to-female, international-to-US, etc. The tutors have good contacts with new students; they are ideally positioned to recruit new majors.

Benefits: In most cases, both the tutor and the student can learn and benefit from each other. The tutor will be able to brush up on her skills from the lower-level classes and practice interpersonal, communication and teaching skills, while the student can learn many helpful tips from the tutor.

Group Size: Small

❖ Tutoring, High School

Type of Activity: Academic & Service

Description: Ask for volunteers to tutor local high school students, using a location on the high school campus.

Benefits: The tutor mentors a younger student, while making an important service contribution to the community. High school tutoring also exposes younger students to the field of computer science at a crucial time, when they are beginning to form ideas of what they would like to do after high school.

Group Size: Small

❖ Make a Website

Type of Activity: Academic & Professional

Description: Make a website for your chapter. Include upcoming activities, pictures and descriptions of recent events, and biographies of successful people in a wide variety of interesting computing-related careers.

Benefits: Making a website is a very effective and persuasive way to advertise the benefits of the computer science major and joining the chapter, while preparing for a career in computing. The skills used to make a website will be useful for the author(s) in almost any future venture.

Group Size: Small

❖ Study Sessions, Classes

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Students from the same classes can meet the night before a test to review the material and ask questions.

Benefits: An organized study session prevents procrastination. Students are able to combine their knowledge for a better understanding of the material.

Group Size: Medium

❖ Study Sessions, GRE or graduate school preparation

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Ask faculty members to hold a study session for students interested in taking the GRE. Afterwards, encourage students to review each subject area (such as computer organization) as a group, using at least two sessions where all students prepare for the first meeting using notes and textbooks from previous classes. Individual members of the group prepare presentations that address unanswered questions in a second meeting.

Benefits: Allowing the students to ask experienced faculty members questions about the Exams will calm nerves and kick off the test preparation phase. "Dividing and conquering" further preparation keeps the group on task and lends efficiency to the process.

Group Size: Large

❖ "Take Apart Your Computer" Day

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Faculty members help students explore the inside of a computer. Alternately, student volunteers take computers apart with younger students, such as students from local high schools.

Benefits: Participating in a "Take Apart Your Computer" Day gives people a new perspective, demystifies the computer as a black box, and creates a knowledge base that empowers people.

Group Size: Small

❖ Research Presentation

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Select several seniors from the capstone course (Senior Project, Senior Seminar, etc.) for a program where the seniors give advice to younger people. Some or all of them can demonstrate their work for the younger students.

Benefits: This activity provides role-modeling opportunities and helpful advice for younger students from experienced students.

Group Size: Large

❖ Visit Universities

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Small- or medium-sized colleges plan a field trip to a nearby large, research institution's campus to visit research project laboratories and/or hear graduate students talk about their research and their lives as graduate students. For large universities, plan a trip to a nearby small or medium-size college to present research and talk about lives as graduate students.

Benefits: This activity keeps the students up to date on current research and provides undergraduates with insight into graduate school life. Mentoring and practicing presentation skills reward graduate students.

Group Size: Large

❖ Meet the Grads" Night

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Invite recent graduates to talk to current students in the computer science department. The graduates should be a mix of people who went to graduate school and people who started their careers right after graduation.

Benefits: Students will receive knowledge about possible paths after graduation and helpful advice about their futures from successful role models.

Group Size: Large

❖ Bulletin Boards

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Gather a group of students to make announcement boards to be placed in public areas, advertising classes in the computer science department, career possibilities, research posters, pictures of local award winners and people in-the-news, tutoring opportunities, grants scholarships, other chapter meetings, etc.. Popular places to post would be restrooms, inside classrooms, and in dorms. Consider fun pictures of officers, blown up to poster size. This also helps to dispel stereotypes.

Benefits: Bulletin boards are a great, informal source of information that could draw curious people to the computer science department, especially if placed in unexpected but highly-visited locations.

Group Size: Large

❖ Scrapbook

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Organize a group with scrapbook experience to construct a "people in computing" scrapbook. When high school people come for visits, show them the book. When young people in introductory classes talk about majoring or when faculty members suggest it, also share the scrapbook with them.

Benefits: The scrapbook is useful for recruiting young people to the computing field. It shows the advantages and diversity the major has to offer.

Group Size: Medium

❖ Buddy System

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: At the beginning of each semester, hold a meeting where people can gather and meet the other people in their classes. The students can then pair up with each other (or form small groups) and set up times to meet outside the classroom throughout the semester, so that the class goes more smoothly for each.

Benefits: Previous research has shown that people thrive in smaller classrooms with small group interaction [15]. The buddy system works to achieve that small group interaction with people.

Group Size: Groups of two

❖ Communication Workshop

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Find an expert in communication who is willing to volunteer time. Many schools or offices specialize in providing teaching and training for campus groups and departments. Frame the workshop as a general-audience event: How everyone can improve communication practices.

Benefits: Communication is a critical part of computing project work success, and the topic had broad appeal.

Group Size: Large

❖ Lab Welcoming

Type of Activity; Academic

Description: The uninviting and unfamiliar COMPUTER SCIENCE laboratory environment can be daunting to people. Gather several older students and invite the laboratory assistants and any other student assistants in the department to a discussion session, providing information that will sensitize the students. The lab assistants should be sure to circulate among the students, be friendly, stop to ask how students who don't request help are doing, and not wait for students to summon a tutor.

Benefits: This welcoming session makes the students more comfortable in the lab environment.

Group Size: Small

❖ Invite a Friend

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Ask people to invite as many people as they can to a lunch or dessert event. Advanced students should briefly describe "why I am majoring in computer science" and "what our classes are like". The sponsor can suggest that taking one, single class can make a difference in one's career choices; that taking the introductory course is a win/win situation; that having no computing background serves as a filter to strain out future options. S/he also describes the support system in place for people-in-computing.

Benefits: Students with no computing background realize the benefits of taking a computer science course.

Group Size: Large

❖ Interdisciplinary Activities

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Invite students who are double-majoring or otherwise pursuing interdisciplinary paths, along with faculty members who perform interdisciplinary research to speak about projects. Examples include digital art, artificial life, mathematical simulation, etc.

Benefits: People are able to see other people pursuing a different path in computer science other than just writing code. These people can be role-models to students who want to use computers as agents to benefit the community.

Group Size: Large

❖ CS Alumni in Other Fields

Type of activity: Academic and Professional

Description: Ask an attorney, physician, or veterinarian, etc. who studied computer science to hold a short conversation with the people-in-computing group. Have the speaker concentrate on how the computer science undergraduate degree helped her to succeed in her chosen field.

Benefits: Alternative paths from undergraduate computer science majors are important choices for young people and can broaden their fields of opportunity.

Group Size: Large

❖ Combined Event

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Join forces with another campus group, such as an ACM-W chapter, a People in Science group, or the Society of People Engineers (SWE) for a combined event.

Benefits: More people can be more fun! A combined event can also broaden an organization's support system.

Group Size: Large

❖ Research

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Encourage professors to apply for grants from the National Science Foundation, ACM, etc. to fund research programs for students of all levels, not just upper-class students. Encourage fellow students to submit their research to current ACM Student Research Competition (<http://www.acm.org/src>) at conferences throughout the year.

Benefits: Participating in research gives students real world applications for classroom material, increases retention and promotes interest in graduate school.

Group Size: Small

❖ Laboratory Assistants

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Invite juniors or seniors to volunteer their time and help out during busy lab hours. Alternately, recruit people to serve as paid laboratory assistants. Profile current tutors, during a chapter meeting, encouraging the students to discuss the benefits/advantages of their work.

Benefits: Also, people in positions of authority act as role-models to recruit more women and under-represented groups in CS. These assistants fill extremely valuable roles, if the computer science faculty roster is all or primarily male.

Group Size: Small

❖ Book Club

Type of Activity: Academic and Social

Description: Invite students to participate in a monthly book club meeting, where they are free to discuss any interesting novels, but are encouraged to read computer science related books, such as *Unlocking the Clubhouse: Women in Computing*.

Benefits: A monthly book discussion can open up conversation among students.

Group Size: Large

❖ Oral Histories

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: People have valuable stories to share with succeeding "generations" of students. Have people tape each other and edit the footage into stories. Ask each pair to describe how each member chose computing as a major, what struggles s/he has had and how s/he overcame adversity, and her future plans.

Benefits: The people, who work together in pairs, are able to mentor and role model each other, as well as give advice to students in the years to come.

Group Size: Pairs of two

❖ Science Fair

Type of Activity: Academic & Service

Description: Ask for student volunteers to judge high school or grade school level science fair projects.

Benefits: Grade school and high school are crucial times, when young people are deciding if science is right for them. Seeing people role models at their schools could positively influence their decisions to become computer scientists.

Group Size: Large

❖ Brain Games

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Send out campus flyers from the chapter. The flyers should be filled with brain games and puzzles that exercise one's problem solving skills. Be sure to include a line that says "If you like these brain games, you'll love CS1!"

Benefits: Students who are good at problem solving often excel in computer science. People pursue paths that please them: If a student believes s/he might be good at computer science, s/he will be more likely to enroll in the class. The brain game flyers make the connection.

Group Size: Large

❖ Graduate School Information Sessions

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Ask computer science professors to hold a graduate school information session for students who are considering continuing education. Topics of discussion may include cost, what to expect, possible degrees one may obtain, and what to look for in a graduate school.

Benefits: This session provides the student with information about graduate school that they may not be able to find elsewhere.

Group Size: Large

❖ Visit High Schools

Type of Activity: Academic & Service

Description: Ask for student volunteers to visit local high schools to educate younger students about the field of computer science and its benefits. Call high schools to find out times and dates for college/career fairs or other counseling events. Offer to attend the event and represent computer science.

Benefits: High school visits expose the younger students to the concepts of computer science at a crucial time in their academic careers, when they are beginning to view themselves as college-bound. These visits spark interest in the students and persuade them to follow a science path.

Group Size: Small

❖ ACM Programming Contests

Type of Activity: Academic

The Association for Computing Machinery holds local, regional, and international contests each year. During the contests, teams of three students must solve eight problems in a period of five hours. The winners of the local and regional contests move on to the international competition, where finalists receive awards, scholarships, and prizes. For more information, please visit the ACM programming contest homepage: <http://icpc.baylor.edu/icpc/default.htm>.

Group Size: small

❖ Programming Contests

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Hold a programming contest for introductory students only, with questions supplied by local professors. Invite advanced students to prepare for and to attend programming contests hosted by professional organizations.

Group Size: Small

❖ "What Is COMPUTER SCIENCE, by the Way?" Showcase

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Organize a short-series of workshops that happen every week or two, where faculty members (and perhaps PhD students) provide short, engaging presentations on their research, aimed at undeclared, exploring undergraduates. Provide lunch.

Benefits: Many students, and especially people, come to school with the idea that computer science is programming. At schools where people do not have to choose a major right away, people may not be willing to commit to a "breadthfirst" introduction course or a mentoring relationship. The program allows for as little or as much participation in the workshops, while providing a small group community over the course of the workshops.

❖ Career Luncheon

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Ask several advanced students to research careers (e.g. project manager, consultant, Web page developer) and attend a luncheon "in character". Use several round tables, if the group is large. Have people rotate among tables describing their work and "what a typical day is like."

Benefits: Many people believe that careers in computing involve programming only. We must constantly reinforce the variety of available career options in computing.

Group Size: Large

❖ Open House

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Hold an information session close to registration time for prospective students. Invite current computer science majors as well as professors in the department to mingle with possible future computer science majors. Offer the prospective students tours of the department and its spaces.

Benefits: Open houses draw students to the department and introduce students, who may not have had any previous experience, to the field of computer science.

Group Size: Large

❖ First-year Orientation

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: During the spring, request inclusion in the school's first-year orientation program for students interested in the computer science major. Provide snacks and a good place for the students to circulate and get acquainted with other students and faculty in the department and learn about computing classes.

Benefits: Using the orientation period to introduce first-year students to other older students (and one or more faculty members) from the department provides the young students with a chance to make new friends. Doing this at such an early juncture in the academic year initiates the recruitment process properly.

Group Size: Large

❖ Conferences

Type of Activity: Academic, Professional, & Social

Description: Invite students to attend a people-in-computing conference, either locally or nationally, or persuade your university to host one.

Benefits: Conferences are a great opportunity for people to meet other people in the computer science field and to make good networking connections for future use.

Group Size: Large

❖ Workshops, Software

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Host a workshop, where volunteers from the computer science major teach other students the basics of certain software programs, such as Microsoft Office, Photoshop, PowerPoint, FrontPage, or even navigating the Internet.

Benefits: Hosting this workshop provides students with a free tutorial, while giving the volunteers experience in teaching others.

Group Size: Large

❖ Graduate School Applications

Type of Activity: Academic & Professional

Description: Faculty members, professionals, or graduate students give tips and advice to undergraduates who are filling out applications for graduate, professional school, assistantships, fellowships; writing personal statements and interviewing.

Benefits: This workshop provides students with a head start in filling out applications, a peer support group and practical guidance for success.

Group Size: Small

❖ Resume Building

Type of Activity: Professional

Description: Bring in one or more professionals to give tips to students about resume features that attract favorable attention from recruiters. Students bring resumes to the workshop that is held in a laboratory. After the general advice from the experts, students use the advice to rewrite portions of their resumes, while professionals circulate giving suggestions.

Benefits: Students build persuasive resumes. Hints and tips from a professional give students confidence and enhance their chances of being hired.

Group Size: Small

❖ Lego Mindstorms®

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Gather a group of students to experiment with Lego Mindstorm® robots.

Benefits: Experimenting with robots introduces students to the computer science sub-field of robotics. The experience demonstrates a real world application of computer science, which can be very attractive to some students.

Group Size: Small

❖ Community Service, Workshops

Type of Activity: Service

Description: Hold periodic workshops for people in the community. Students can help citizens with any computer problems they may be having, or simply teach them to set up and use an email account. Additionally, students may help the unemployed or under-employed construct resumes and learn basic technology skills. The Ohio State University's TWICE group (<http://twice.cse.ohio-state.edu/>) also helps teach a computer club for girls at a low-income elementary school and provides technical support for low-income neighborhood resource centers. An organization might also want to partner with a local freegeek chapter (<http://www.freegeek.org/>) to collect, repair and redistribute old PCs.

Benefits: Community workshops build positive connections between community members and university students. Additionally, students gain teaching experience and confidence in their computing skills.

Group Size: Large

❖ Job Hunts

Type of Activity: Professional

Description: Assemble a group of students to attend a job fair in the nearest big city.

Benefits: Job hunting as a group prevents procrastination, and may serve as a support system for individuals.

Group Size: Large

❖ Mock Interviews

Type of Activity: Professional

Description: Have professors or professionals from area businesses volunteer to participate in mock interviews for students contemplating graduate school or entering the work world.

Benefits: Practicing interviews with professors gives students and opportunity to freshmen their interview skills in a less threatening environment. Practicing with professionals gives a more real world experience, and possibly creates networking relationships.

Group Size: Small

❖ Lectures

Type of Activity: Professional

Description: Invite a speaker from a computing-related business or nearby research school to speak to students. Use ACM's Distinguished Speakers Program: <http://dsp.acm.org>

Benefits: Lectures give students information about different career paths and research areas that involve more than programming. The speakers also offer students a chance to ask questions or advice and view new role models. *Group Size:* variable

❖ Panel Discussions and Roundtables

Type of Activity: Professional

Description: Invite three or four people from the technological workforce to speak with students about their careers and lives outside work.

Benefits: The discussion time is more informal, maximizing personalized and meaningful conversations that may be more valuable than formal lectures for many people. Group Size: Large

❖ Database of Interview Questions

Type of Activity: Professional & Academic

Description: Construct a database of interview questions and add to the database as each year's group of seniors interviews. The database may also include general tips and advice for interviews.

Benefits: Students understand what to expect from future interviews so that they are not blind-sided by interviewing situations. Adding a session where students practice mock interviews with the database questions and participate in a group discussion of the mock interview results enhances student preparation and builds confidence.

❖ Database of Research Opportunities

Type of Activity: Academic & Professional

Description: Compose a database which contains information about different research opportunities available to undergraduates.

Benefits: Many students fail to realize that there are research opportunities available to undergraduate students. Using a luncheon event to advertise the database by having advanced students talk about research experiences (both academic and social) will encourage younger students to apply to several summer programs. If the experienced students have produced posters or journal articles, display the poster or distribute copies of the papers.

Group Size: Large

❖ Database of Scholarships and Grants

Type of Activity: Academic

Description: Build a database of scholarship opportunities for people in computing. Encourage people to provide the names and contact information for scholarships they have applied for or received.

Benefits: Searching for scholarships can be a very time consuming and erratic activity. Students can synergistically share information, so that the current group and future groups of people in computing profit.

Group Size: Large

❖ Database of Internships

Type of Activity: Academic & Professional

Description: Have students submit reviews of their internships -- location, specifics of the job, feedback, etc. -- or keep on record places that are accepting students for internships.

Benefits: Internships are an important step in one's career, and sharing resources benefits all in the chapter.

Group Size: Large

❖ High School Computer Science Demonstrations

Type of Activity: Service

Description: Ask student volunteers to travel to local high schools to give computer science demonstrations for the younger students. Suggestions for presentations include robotics, basic game programming with graphics, and website design. Talk with principals and college administration to determine if high school students can audit or enroll in undergraduate CS1 classes. If both parties agree, advertise CS1.

Benefits: Science demos give younger students a look at the entertaining side of computer science. The earlier students are exposed to the field and its role models, the more likely they will be to take a course, when they enter college.

Group Size: Large

❖ Grade School Visits

Type of Activity: Service

Description: Ask volunteers to take trips to area grade schools to educate students about the computer science field. Alternately, invite a grade school class to the college.

Benefits: Adolescence is a time when children begin discovering themselves and what they enjoy doing. Grade school visits expose the students to new ideas, and encourages them to explore computer science.

Group Size: Small

❖ Philanthropies and Community Service Days

Type of Activity: Service

Description: Select some local philanthropic organizations and volunteer to help, either by raising money, participating in individual events that the charities sponsor or organizing a people-in-computing team to contribute to the success of a fundraising activity. Events include walks for cancer, blood drives, etc. Volunteer at the local humane s/helter, soup kitchen, nursing home, etc.

Benefits: Supporting community organizations strengthens the bond between community members and college/university students. Community service allows students to think about something besides computer science and the protected, insular campus world.

Group Size: Large

❖ Achievement Parties

Type of Activity: Social & Academic

Description: Celebrate when students or faculty members in the department gain special recognition. Examples include job offers, graduate school acceptance or receipt of an award of special significance.

Benefits: A person's achievement always means more, when shared with a group of close friends. Recognition allows students a chance to celebrate the benefits of hard work, while motivating other students to strive for their best.

Group Size: Large

❖ Ice Cream Parties

Description: Invite professionals from various companies and seat them at different tables, each with a different ice-cream topping. When students arrive, they receive their ice-cream, and move from table to table to complete their sundaes. At the same table, they are able to meet and talk with the professionals. Alternately, place upper-class students at the tables and invite first-year and sophomore people to construct sundaes.

Benefits: The informal setting allows for a more relaxed atmosphere, while still providing the students with great opportunities to learn more about a computer science career or major.

Group size: Large

❖ Movie Night

Type of Activity: Social

Description: People spend a simple, relaxing night with other people in the computer science department, watching movies and eating popcorn. Recognize scenes where errors demonstrate that the producer had no computing consultant present or ask students to silently record the errors and award a prize for the "best set of errors". *Benefits:* Movie night provides an opportunity for socializing and a break from studying. Many movies have computing themes (e.g. The Net, Hackers, The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes, The Matrix, The Matrix Reloaded, The Matrix Revisited, Hot Millions, His Other Woman (or Desk Set), Weird Science, Pi, Swordfish, War Games, AI, The Animatrix, Enemy of the State, Explorers, Johnny Mnemonic, The Lawnmower Man, Simone, Strange Days, Takedown, Tron, 2001: A Space Odyssey, 2010, Virtuosity, You've Got Mail).

Group Size: Variable

❖ T-shirt design contest

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Gather a group of people to participate in a people-in-computing t-shirt design contest using computer generated graphics. Students vote on the best design, which will be used to make t-shirts for the entire group.

Benefits: The contest unifies the group and provides a creative medium for recruiting and promoting people in computing.

Group Size: Large

❖ Fundraising

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Selling Ethernet cables or any other computer equipment to other students by collecting free remnants from contractors and attaching connectors.



Benefits: Raising money for clubs increases funding so that members can organize more activities and draw more people into the people-in-computing organizations.

Group Size: Large

❖ Revamp Display Cases

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Redo the computer science department display cases so that they draw attention to more people and other underrepresented groups. Alternatively, as a creative, light-hearted, and social prelude, organize a "sculpting" party to produce computer art for the display cases -- sculptures built from discarded computers and parts. Include pictures of the "artists".

Benefits: The display cases are able to educate everyone about the computer science department.

Group Size: Small

❖ Computer Jewelry

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Design computer jewelry. Buy earring backs, beads, stringing material, glue, etc. and use old chips or motherboards to make computer-inspired jewelry. *Benefits:* This activity is a fun and creative outlet for students and provides "free advertising", when other students ask about the jewelry.

Group Size: Large

❖ Exercise Group

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Set up times during the week for a group of computer science students to meet at the gym or at another location with video facilities

Benefits: Staying in shape is important, and working out alone is a drag!

Group Size: Medium

❖ Computer Science Lounge

Type of Activity: Social

Description: If the school has no computer science majors' lounge, organize a group of at least half people to approach the computer science faculty members and/or the administration to create a lounge with a kitchen area. If the school already has a computer science lounge, organize a task force to improve it. Again, request that faculty members provide help.

Benefits: Creating a comfortable lounge area will give the current computer science majors/minors a nice place to study and socialize. This area may also raise campus interest in the computer science major.

Group Size: Medium

❖ Stress Relief

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Prior to finals time, bring materials for making stress-relief icons: silly putty, bean bags, rubber bands to snap, don't-worry dolls, don't-worry beads, etc. Use the activity as a light-hearted approach to finals time; however, augment the activity by asking junior and senior people to give general advice about preparing for finals. Ask each woman what computer science final(s) s/he will take. Ask for volunteers (who have had each class) to give specific advice for each final. Lastly, group people according to finals and invite them to organize study groups.

Benefits: Sometimes students simply need time to relax and take a break. The activity provides a time to relieve stress, while also helping to prepare students for their finals.

Group Size: Large

❖ Communication Tools

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Organize a listserv, Blackboard, or similar communication tool for local people-in-computing communication and/or among regional chapters and computing-organizations.

Benefits: Keeping communication lines open is very important to the people-in-computing cause. It helps broaden the support system and makes organizing events easier.

Group Size: Small, Medium or Large

❖ Organized Outings, Student's Choice

Type of Activity: Social

Description: During one meeting, ask each participant to describe his/her favorite out-of-class activity (amusement park, concert, walking, hiking, working out, etc.) and then organize the event/activity in which the group shows the most interest.

Benefits: Exploring the extracurricular interests of people in computing demonstrates the balanced lives of the members. (Many people believe the myth that all computing students must program all the time.)

Group Size: Large

❖ Dinner

Type of Activity: Social

Description: Meet another people from another chapter from a nearby institution at a restaurant that is approximately halfway between the two schools.

Benefits: Meeting with another people-in-computing group exposes people in each group to other computer science majors and allows opportunities to share ways the respective universities deal with the problem of underrepresentation and to brainstorm additional strategies.

Group Size: Medium

❖ Senior Celebration

Type of Activity: Social

Description: At the last spring chapter meeting, celebrate the seniors. Order a cake with seniors' names. Photograph them for chapter archives, Web pages, scrapbook, etc. Ask each student to tell about her plans for the future, advice to younger people, etc.

Benefits: A celebration of achievement makes soon-to-be graduates feel proud of their four years of hard work. It also gives the younger students something to look forward to in the years to come, encouragement to proceed and more ideas about career/post-graduate plans.

Group Size: Large

❖ Luncheons, Professional

Type of Activity: Professional & Social

Description: Invite professionals from various fields (databases, software engineering, project management, etc.) to speak to students during lunch time. More students are likely to attend the lecture in this informal setting where lunch is provided.

Benefits: Attending luncheons can benefit students by creating opportunities for networking. Luncheons also provide students with new views of computing careers that dispel the myth of the isolated programmer. Career people give special insight, regarding how to deal with situations unique to people.

Group Size: Large

❖ Meet the Faculty

Type of Activity: Academic & Social

Description: Set up a luncheon date at the beginning of each school year and invite students and faculty to meet and socialize. Organize "how to succeed in computer science" discussions at these kinds of socials.

Benefits: Meeting the professors in a stress-free environment will initiate more open communication among students and faculty.

Group Size: Large

❖ Blogs, Wikis

Type of Activity: Social

Description: During a lunch or other event, invite people who write blogs to share by reading an entry. Hold the event in a tech-equipped room, so that the blogs can be viewed, as well. Distribute a handout with URLs. Ask the people to describe the process of creating a blog.

Benefits: Sharing blogs provides another means of communication and role-modeling among people with the same interests. It also provides an enjoyable way to put one's computer science skills to use.

Group Size: Large

❖ Summer Camps

Type of Activity: Social & Academic

Description: Form a group of students and dedicated faculty members to host a weeklong science summer camp for the local area grade school or high school students. Investigate small grants. Give young students a glimpse of "the other science: computer science", along with the more traditional sciences.

Benefits: The younger students receive an early introduction to the field of computer science, increasing the likelihood of their pursuing a science major when they reach college. Female camp counselors also act as positive role models for the younger girls, reinforcing the idea that science is interesting and that people are capable of doing science. The college-aged students gain experience in teaching and communication skills, which can benefit them later in their careers.

Group Size: Large