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RUSSIAN AND U.S. UNIVERSITIES CLAIM TOP SPOTS IN ACM INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING COMPETITION FOR TOP TECH TALENT

ACM President Cites Advantages of Preparing Students to Compete Globally

New York, NY – April 10, 2008 – Of the top ten winners at the 2008 ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest (ACM ICPC) competing to be the best computer programmers in the world, four teams were from Russian universities, one was from Ukraine, a former member of the USSR, and three were teams representing universities in North America, including Canada and the United States. First place went to St. Petersburg University of Information Technology, Mechanics and Optics (Russia), followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (U.S.), Izhevsk State Technical University (Russia), Lviv National University (Ukraine), and Moscow State University (Russia). Also among the top ten finishers were teams from Tsinghua University (China), Stanford University (U.S.), University of Zagreb (Croatia), University of Waterloo (Canada), and Petrozavodsk State University (Russia). This international competition, now in its 32nd year, is hosted by ACM (the Association for Computing Machinery), a society of 88,000 computing educators, researchers, and professionals worldwide.

The contest took place earlier this week in Banff, Alberta, Canada with 100 teams competing in the final round. Earlier rounds of the competition featured 6,700 teams representing 1,821 universities from 83 countries. The ACM ICPC is sponsored by IBM.

For the U.S., this competition was the first time since 2004 that two U.S. teams finished among the top teams. The only other U.S. university to finish in the top 20 was Princeton University, which tied for 13th place with nine other teams, including Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, Iran as well as four other teams from Russian universities, and teams from schools in Belarus, a former Soviet republic, Poland, China, and Japan. The competition in 2002 was the last time that North American universities claimed more than three winners among the top ten finishers. Full results are available at http://icpc.baylor.edu/icpc/

ACM President Stuart Feldman applauded the superior problem-solving abilities demonstrated throughout the competition from teams around the world. "The competition at the ACM ICPC World Finals continues to be of very high caliber. The contestants must attack a wide variety of problems, and the teams are facing stiff

competition from universities representing a remarkable number of countries," he said.

"This contest attracts students who are likely to be tomorrow's top prospects in the information technology and computing fields," said Feldman, who is also vice president of engineering at Google Inc. "The growing worldwide demand for technology skills will be tapping today's winners as future employees."

Feldman noted that the winners in Banff provide valuable lessons for the technology industry, which is seeking to strengthen computing education and fill the talent pipeline for future workers. "A workforce well-trained in the fundamentals of computing represents a significant advantage for any country that wants to compete globally in almost any industry," he said. "Bringing the best and the brightest into computing and computer science is a valuable strategy for any country that hopes to succeed in the future. Almost every major challenge facing our world calls upon computing for a solution, from fighting disease to protecting the environment to improving education."

In the U.S., ACM recently created a high-level committee of acclaimed computer scientists and educators to improve opportunities for quality education in computing and computer science. Chaired by Bobby Schnabel, dean of the Indiana University School of Informatics, ACM's new Education Policy Committee (EPC, http://www.acm.org/public-policy/education-policy-committee) is developing initiatives aimed at shaping national education policies that impact on the computing field.

ACM is also instrumental in efforts to help high school students, teachers, and parents better understand the kinds of careers enabled by studying computer science. For example, "Computing Degrees & Careers" is a concise brochure detailing expanding job opportunities for students with computing degrees. The brochure is accessible in PDF format from the ACM Web site at http://computingcareers.acm.org.

About ACM

ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery **www.acm.org,** is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

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