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CIPS CONNECTIONS

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Daniel Leblond, Award-Winning Imagine Cup Top Student Researcher Carleton University

This week, Stephen Ibaraki has an exclusive interview with Daniel Leblond.



Left to right: Mana Zargar, Daniel Leblond, Rohit Zijoo, Joyce Alsayegh

Daniel Leblond is the team leader of one of Carleton University's entry teams in the Imagine Cup competition under the supervision of Professor Gabriel Wainer. Daniel is a 4th year Computer Systems Engineering (C.S.E.) student, with experience focusing in software development. His group's research topic focuses on providing services to community members to help take on some of the world's tougher challenges. He has experience in both the public and private sectors. He has been part of a team at Natural Resources Canada developing applications for the Shared Services Office (SSO) for the past two years, with prior experience in Waterloo, Ontario, working in the private sector. Daniel has accomplished many achievements in recent years, including being part of the Carleton University team in the

2011 IEEEExtreme competition, ranking 33rd worldwide with over 1500 teams competing. He also finished 1st place in the Carleton 2009 robotics competition and 1st place in the Carleton 2010 software challenge. He aims to further represent himself and Carleton in future software and hardware challenges in the following months including entering in the **Imagine Cup** competition.

Joyce Alsayegh is a fourth year C.S.E. student originally born in the United Arab Emirates, who moved to Canada 5 years ago. With a longstanding passion for robotics, her family has encouraged continuous development in the pursuit of her dream. She placed 2nd in the Carleton 2010 robotics competition.

Mana Zargar is a fourth year C.S.E. student from Iran who has been studying at Carleton for 4 years. Mana is proud to be studying in one of Canada's leading institutions in the field of engineering.

Rohit Zijoo is also a fourth year C.S.E. student from Mauritius who chose Carleton for its world-class learning facilities and immersive courses. Rohit won first place in the Carleton IEEE FPGA 2010 competition. He is passionate in offering services to help build a stronger community.

This interview follows the discussion with award-winning Professor Gabriel Wainer, Dept. of Systems and Computer Engineering, Carleton University.

<http://blogs.technet.com/b/cdnitmanagers/archive/2011/11/14/professor-gabriel-wainer-multi-awarding-winning-top-researcher-blazing-innovative-trails.aspx>

To listen to the interview, click on this [MP3 file link](#)

The latest blog on the interview can be found in the IT Managers Connection (IMC) forum where you can provide your comments in an interactive dialogue.

<http://blogs.technet.com/b/cdnitmanagers/>

DISCUSSION:

Interview Time Index (MM:SS) and Topic

:00:23: Daniel, you are leading the world through your innovative award-winning research work. Thank you for sharing your work and experiences with our

- :00:33: What factors were a catalyst for your team's interest in the Imagine Cup?
"....We had a project that we needed to do. We chose a project that we thought would make a big difference so we chose Imagine Cup and that was our starting direction...."
- :01:11: How is the University supporting your team's Imagine Cup research?
"....They've been very enthusiastic to help us as this is a bit of a new direction for them...."
- :01:56: Daniel, what is the overall theme and goals for your Imagine Cup research?
"....We want to provide as many services as possible to individuals, and we want to do it efficiently by giving them something on their mobile as well as on their desktop....We want to add all those things in one central place that's easy to find and maintain...."
- :02:38: What are the wider implications of your project?
"....We'll have to convince cities, neighbourhoods or property developers who build large amounts of houses in a certain area that our project would provide them with things that are truly lacking right now...."
- :03:08: Describe the overall design of your project.
"....It is essentially a central application that has several smaller applications within it, each one targeted at focusing on a specific service...."
- :03:29: What are the world's tougher challenges that you want to help with your project?
"....Increase environmental awareness....Provide relief to individuals who are struck by disaster....Provide a means for people to get in touch and help individuals or groups of people as soon as possible....Help combat hunger...."
- :04:13: What role is each of your team members playing in the project?
"....As we are also doing this project as our 4th year engineering project we all have split essentially the same role — everyone is taking part in the development, the business aspects, as well as the legal determining of how this is all going to be handled...."
- :04:49: What impact do you see this having on Microsoft and in mobile and cloud development?
"....We are really hoping to add our mobile version as an application on the Microsoft Azure Cloud...."
- :05:12: How can we follow the progress of your work?
"....Once that beta launch is alive then we will be advertising how you can join the beta. Joining the beta itself will be restricted to Carleton students but anyone will be able to view our work...."
- :05:48: Daniel, what's the user experience going to be when I turn on my mobile device?
"....We want to make it very touch friendly and very accessible....It's driven really by what it is you're

looking for and it should be very precise in terms of getting you there...."

- :06:47: Daniel talks about some of the menu options.
"....Our various applications currently offer planning and joining events that can now be just about anything...."
- :07:44: Daniel, what triggered your interest in Computer Systems Engineering (C.S.E)?
"....I've been working on programming since Grade 9 and I'm very fond of it so it was pretty much a no-brainer when it came to figuring out what I wanted to do...."
- :08:28: Daniel, can you describe the 2011 IEEEExtreme competition?
"....It's a 24 hour programming competition and it's held worldwide. The questions are really awesome...."
- :09:55: Profile your work in winning 1st place in the Carleton 2009 robotics competition and 1st place in the Carleton 2010 software challenge.
"....The robotics challenge involved making a maze-solving algorithm....The software challenge was a relay-style programming competition which was pretty cool...."
- :11:04: What goals do you want to achieve in your career?
"....To get my P. Eng....Eventually to start up my own company....Before that to travel and see different companies worldwide....Continue learning...."
- :11:34: Do you have a burning passion to discover the next 'this or that'?
"....My interests have really fallen into software and I'd like to come up with some software that is truly helpful in day-to-day lives....Hopefully one day I will be in the right place at the right time to make it happen...."
- :12:06: Who do you admire who is in the software field?
"....Gabriel Wainer....He's inspired me a lot to continue doing what I'm doing and to keep it up...."
- :12:39: In all the things that you do what do you find cool?
"....I love writing software which I know sounds quite nerdy, but I truly do...."
- :13:16: What innovations should we be watching for in the next five years?
"....We will see a change in the software that we currently use....Phones will provide even more help in terms of our day-to-day lives....Mobile will be pretty much required in your day-to-day lives...."
- :14:13: What are your thoughts on computing as a recognized profession like medicine and law, with demonstrated professional development, adherence to a code of ethics, and recognized credentials?
[See www.ipthree.org and the Global Industry Council, <http://www.ipthree.org/about-ip3/global-advisory-council>]
"....Software you write has implications beyond that of what people realize at first....Computing is truly a

:15:31: Can you profile all of your team members who are working on this **ImagineCup** project?
"....Fellow team member: Joyce Alsayegh....Mana Zargar....Rohit Zijoo....Our team supervisor: Gabriel Wainer...."