Departmental Focus

Robert Miller   Jim Wright   Leslie Sizemore   Jeffery Hinkle

David P. Simpson
Gaslight Reporter

When you talk about the Computer Science Department at Gaston College, you're in a sense talking about the creative genius behind it, Robert Miller.

Computer Science and Robert Miller

Mr. Miller graduated from Douglas County High School, just outside of Atlanta, Georgia. After High School, he attended Georgia Tech. until he was called into service during World War II. After the war, he returned to Georgia Tech. only to be called away again with the outbreak of the Korean Conflict.

While in the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Miller received his BS Degree in Mathematics at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Later he received his Masters Degree in Statistics (concentration in computations) from Stanford University. At that time there were no set degrees for computers.

Mr Miller soon joined the Air Force and soon found his second love — flying. After flying for several years he was assigned to OPS Anaylisis with CINCPAC, and then to the

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"It's the closest we can come to perfection, the only limit is ourselves." — Robert Miller

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Command Control Center (Information Center) for the Air Force. While in the Air Force, Mr. Miller went from a flying instructor to a platform (Classroom) instructor, and discovered that he really enjoyed teaching. So upon retiring from the Air Force he accepted a position at Gaston College to establish the computer program we now have.

The program which began with a class of 16 in the fall of 1970, has now grown into a curriculum with more than 272 students participating. Most of its success being owed to the man who set it up those 11 or 12 years ago.

What's in the future? With the vast store house of material to draw from, Mr. Miller will be the first to let you know, the future is unlimited. With the resources we have, computers can act as aids to help students learn regardless of the subject area.

With a seven handicap in golf, (a handicap

that has gone up four shots since he became the Director of Computer Services) it's not hard to realize where Mr. Miller spends many of his off campus hours. That is when he is not working with a computer somewhere. His love for computers can be felt just talking with him. As he says, "It's the closest we can come to perfection, the only limit is ourselves."

If you're interested in getting into the computer program at Gaston College, you should be prepared to work, it's not a spectator sport. You're hit in the face with the shovel, so-to-say, right off, and the learning takes dedication, there is no way you can fake a programming.

Finally, keep this thought in mind. According to Mr. Miller, if you were to get a call in the middle of the night, because one of your programs blew up, and you could turn over and go back to sleep, instead of going down and seeing what went wrong with it, you're going into the wrong business.

Computer Science and Jim Wright

Jim Wright is a native of Landis N.C., where he graduated from Landis High School. Upon completion of High School, he attended Lenoir Rhyne College where he received a BS Degree in Math and Business Administration.

Mr. Wright taught math at Belmont High School for two years after leaving Lenoir Rhyne, and then accepted a job with an insurance auditing firm where he stayed for three years.

Mr. Wright moved back into teaching again when he accepted a position at Elkhardt Jr. High School. After teaching at Elkhardt for three years, he accepted a teaching position at Richmond Technical Center, teaching computer courses. While at Richmond Tech. Center, he began attending conference at Madison College where he later received a position and was able to complete work on his Masters Degree in Business Education.

With his Masters Degree, Mr. Wright came to Gaston College to work in the Computer Science Department. That was some 10 years ago, he has been here ever since.

Off campus, Mr. Wright enjoys wood working. Perhaps you have seen some of his work hanging on the walls of the computer offices. His talent in wood working has led to many of his works being bought by a lady from Charlotte, who sells them to the Charlotte

market. Mr. Wright says the sales give him enought money to buy the wood for what he makes, but that's about it. He also makes toys for kids. "Making toys for the kids," he says, "is what I really enjoy."

According to Mr. Wright's philosophy, which cannot be quoted in this paper, but in short says, if you're going to take computer science, you better put your heart into it. The opportunity is growing for qualified computer programmer, but you have to be willing to work.

Computer Science and Leslie Sizemore

Les Sizemore's roots lie in the Tennessee mountains. He attended Ketron Memorial High School in Sullivan County, Kingsport Tennessee. While in high school, he played trombone in the school band. He also played in a rock-band outside school.

After graduation Mr. Sizemore went on to East Tenn. State where he received his BS Degree in Education with a music background. His interest were mainly in the business end of things, even with his band he enjoyed getting the engagements, and working out the terms more than playing.

Upon graduation at East Tenn., he taught band at Lynnview High School and worked at night selling pianos, organs etc. He liked selling so much that he went into it full time and soon became manager of the store he was working in.

The more you can understand the computer the better chance you have of making it do what you want. — Leslie Sizemore

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Knowing that computers was the future of business, Mr. Sizemore decided to further his education. Beginning at UNCC they advised him to come to Gaston College for his computer training, as Gaston College has a far better training program in computers. This brought Les to our campus and we just never let him go. Upon graduation he was offered and accepted a position to teach here at Gaston.

In his off time Mr. Sizemore enjoys playing golf, directs a church choir of 20, dabbles in ham radio, and each summer visits various associate friends he made while in business.