

Mentoring Pays Dividends

DEBRA RICHARDSON, INTERIM DEAN
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

For me, it is always very exciting and rewarding to see all of you, our students and our mentors. You are a testament to over 10 years of CAMP success—10 years and counting.

In you, we see glimpses of the future in research, and we see the impact mentoring has on education through the dedication of you and UC faculty mentors.

These experiences are the sparks and the seeds that keep all of us interested in furthering our education, whether it's completing your bachelors degree, succeeding in graduate school or continuing in professional development in the business world. And for me, these experiences allow me to continue to learn as I mentor students and see the cycle begin again. CAMP is about life-long learning and educating.

I've had some absolutely exceptional experiences by participating in the CAMP program. Let me just tell you about one.

I had two students who had taken a software engineering class from me. They disagreed about one of the premises in the discipline – namely that formal software development techniques were more effective than informal ones. So, they decided to conduct their own experiment. They got another student involved so that they could better control the experiment – he was supposed to be the non-biased party!

To make a long story short, they proved the premise (lucky for me)! But along the way, they not only presented their work at symposia similar to the 2003 CAMP Symposium, but also at national conferences, including a poster presentation at ICSE – the top conference in software engineering. The students met the top researchers in the field – the people who had conjectured this premise – and were able to explain their experiment to them. That was an experience of a lifetime, and they came back energized about everything. It was an inspiration for me to watch them interact with the best and the brightest in the field.

Cooperation, as it most often is, was the catalyst for success for these students, their

peers, and their mentors.

The mentoring you receive from your faculty advisor, peers and other researchers in the labs will pay dividends in preparing you for any and all experiences you'll attempt in the future.

You have a wonderful opportunity in these experiences as undergraduate researchers. Your mentors have prepared you, and the CAMP conferences will prepare you for future talks and presentations no matter who the audience – in graduate school, as faculty or in business.

You and the University of California are setting the standard for undergraduate research that will be recognized nationwide, providing countless opportunities for your future.

But CAMP is about more than your research. It's about connecting. Through CAMP activities you are able to connect with researchers from the UC system and peers from throughout the state. Take the first step in getting to know these people and stay in touch. CAMP is the perfect venue for you to exchange ideas with fellow students doing research in areas that complement your own research. These could be peers that you meet up with in graduate school or that you reconnect with in business ventures. In short, the people around you could become lifelong friends and/or colleagues.

In CAMP's first 10 years, we've seen potential realized and built a strong foundation for the future. I look forward to being part of that future and to witnessing first hand the success of the program and its students for another 10 years.

