

ON CAMPUS

## Students design mobile games



PHOTO BY RICHARD DOUGLAS

3D Gaming students David Cheung, left and Dave Daniels, show the award-winning designs for the mobile games *Fast Food* and *Mental Blox*.

BY RICHARD DOUGLAS

There's something new in the air, and it's the work of Seneca students.

Two teams of students have won a competition to create games that are downloaded, literally, through the air to be played on cell phones.

This unique competition was sponsored by AirG, a supplier of advanced multi-player mobile entertainment products and paired students from two programs: 3D Gaming (GAM) and Computer Programming Analysis (CPA). The GAM students created the look and feel of the games while their counterparts in CPA wrote the code that made them work. The winning games will be featured on Bell Mobility, Canada's leading cellular carrier.

First place went to David Cheung (GAM) and Justin Sawchuk (CPA) for the game *Fast Food*, which requires players to "eat" the food icons that pop up before time runs out.

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## Ryan wins Oscar® gold



A.M.P.A.S.

*Ryan*, the ground-breaking computer animated film, produced by Copper Heart Entertainment and the National Film Board (NFB) of Canada in association with Seneca College was handed the greatest filmmaking honour February 27 with the Oscar® for Best Short Film — Animated.

*Ryan* tells the 'riches to rags' story of Canadian animator Ryan Larkin and received critical acclaim throughout the digital-media, animation, and short film festival world before being named this year's Oscar® recipient in its category.

The film, directed by renowned digital animator Chris Landreth, features the work of students and graduates of Seneca College's Animation Arts Centre.

"We congratulate Chris Landreth, Copper Heart Entertainment and the NFB on *Ryan* receiving the Oscar®," says Seneca College President Dr. Rick Miner. "This is also an incredible honour for everyone at Seneca — students, graduates, faculty and staff — who played a role in making what is now an Oscar® winning film."

Seneca provided some of its best students and graduates, and the

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## Rick Miner applauds Rae Report

The provincial government's review of post-secondary education, headed by former Premier Bob Rae, has released its final report, and it has received the support of Ontario's colleges.

The sweeping report makes recommendations that cover issues including tuition fees, access, the transfer of credits and accessibility.

"Mr. Rae has recognized the critical importance of post-secondary education in terms of economic prosperity of this province," says Seneca College President Rick Miner, who is also Chair of the Committee of Presidents of the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario.

Chief among the report's recommendations is the call for more funding. It says the province must increase annual funding to colleges and universities by \$1.3 billion by 2007/08 in order to improve its "seriously underfunded" post-secondary education system. Currently, Ontario's

colleges receive the lowest per student funding of all the provinces.

The report also suggests that tuition fees be deregulated, giving each institution the power to set its own fees. Although this has caused concerns about sky-rocketing tuitions, there were also recommendations to offset additional expenses through increased grants and access to loans.

As well, there would also be reduced interest rates for students and more help in repaying loans.

"According to the Rae Report, tuition will be free for about 65,000 needy students, and another 30 per cent will qualify for partial grants," Rick says. "Mr. Rae's report has very cleverly created a series of checks and balances to ensure that students have access to an affordable education. I doubt you're going to see a lot of double digit increases,

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The recently released Rae Report on post-secondary education provides many positive proposals for our college system. It also makes an important and direct link between our colleges and the prosperity of the province.

For Seneca the report is a validation of the work we have been doing.

During the past few years, we have worked together to create a new vision for the College that is reflected in our 2004-2009 Strategic Plan.

I was pleased to see that much of what we saw as important to Seneca, the Rae Report has seen as important to the overall post-secondary system.

I have to congratulate the Senecans who contributed to our planning process. Your thoughts and opinions, and our shared vision, on matters relating to Seneca's future direction are echoed in this report.

The report's recommendations include:

- increased support for students in the areas of access, success and retention
- professional development
- transferability
- a strong international presence
- more opportunities for disabled students
- the extension of financial assistance
- ensuring we have state-of-the-art facilities

Seneca has already made great strides in many of these areas. We have significantly improved our campuses, we have a new vice-president supporting student success and we continue to build our already strong international presence.

In other words, Seneca has done its planning and is well placed for any changes that may occur as a result of this report.

Yet, with all that we have done, there is much still to do. Seneca, along with all 24 provincial colleges, is calling for increased funding to prepare more students for the workforce. At a minimum, \$400 million is required to bring our colleges to the national funding average.

Because the need for skilled workers is expected to grow, so too are the demands that will be placed on our colleges. If we act now, we will be able to prepare for these future needs and show the very real link between Ontario's colleges and its economic prosperity.

In order to build support for the Rae Report's recommendations, Ontario's colleges are working together with the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO).

An advertising campaign and online petition (at [www.fundcollegesnow.ca](http://www.fundcollegesnow.ca)) are asking the public to make its voice heard.

I urge you to join us in this campaign. It's through your support that we will succeed and our colleges will be able to meet the challenge that is ahead. Please make your voice heard by writing the Premier, the Minister of Finance or your local MPP and/or sign the online petition created by ACAATO. ■

*Dr. Rick Miner is President of Seneca College. He can be reached by e-mail at [president@senecac.on.ca](mailto:president@senecac.on.ca).*

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"My idea was to develop a game that was addictive – so I concentrated on the game play and then the visuals came afterwards," David says. "Now whether it will be for a few minutes on the subway or for a couple of hours at home, I'm excited that Fast Food will have the chance to bring a bit of fun into people's lives."

Justin (CPA) says he was surprised by the win. Other entries featured more complicated games, but he credits David's design and the simplicity of play for the win.

For his part, Justin had to learn a new computer language, called J2ME (which stands for Java 2 Micro Edition), used for this kind of gaming.

"I had taken a java course before, but not java game programming," he says. "It ended up taking a week to learn and develop, another few days to debug."

Dave Daniels (GAM) designed the second-place-winning Mental Blox, and like all great inspirations, his came unexpectedly: "I came up with the idea on the subway; I was dozing off, and then it hit me. I could show you the piece of paper I scribbled it onto – it's filled with diagrams and my chicken scratch. I was trying to think of something simple – like Tetris – that would appeal to all age groups and something that people can play with one hand."

Programmed by Carlos DaCosta (CPA), Mental Blox features 20 blocks and a race against the clock to match all of them in a game of hand-eye co-ordination.

Everyone involved with the games says the main challenge was to make an involving game that met stringent memory requirements: the entire game had to use less disk space than a half page Microsoft Word document.

"We were only allotted 32 kilobytes for the game and that included the programming, all the art, everything," Dave says. "Our game came in at 14 kilobytes."

For more information on the 3D Gaming program, go to: [www.senecac.on.ca/faculties\\_schools/digital\\_media](http://www.senecac.on.ca/faculties_schools/digital_media)

For more information on the Computer Programming Analysis program, go to: [www.senecac.on.ca/faculties\\_schools/computer\\_studies](http://www.senecac.on.ca/faculties_schools/computer_studies) ■

## New V.P. Student Success and Enrolment Services



Bernice Blackman is Seneca's new Vice-President of Student Success and Enrolment Services.

Bernice comes to Seneca after serving as the Toronto District School Board's Superintendent of Education. During her time with the school board, she held a number of progressive positions, including school Principal, and was responsible for pioneering part-

nership and outreach initiatives.

She worked with the business sector to fund community programs and to create innovative educational opportunities.

Beyond her varied experience in the public school system, Bernice brings a provincial perspective to this position as she was an Education Officer for the Ministry of Education (1997-1999).

Bernice holds an Honours BA in English and Linguistics and a Masters of Education in Curriculum and Linguistics. She also has a Specialist certificate in English as a Second Language/Dialect (Secondary).

## Ryan quotes

I'M SHARING THIS AWARD WITH...SENECA COLLEGE, DAVE BAAS AND MY CREW, YOU GUYS KNOW WHO YOU ARE. YOU'RE THE MOST INSPIRED AND DEDICATED PEOPLE I HAVE EVER WORKED WITH...

CHRIS LANDRETH, ACCEPTING THE OSCAR®

NATIONAL FILM BOARD PRODUCER MARCY PAGE SAID RYAN MIGHT NEVER HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT OF DAY WITHOUT THE "INCREDIBLY GENEROUS DONATION FROM SENECA COLLEGE OF THE ENTIRE INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE FILM," WHICH SHE VALUES AT ROUGHLY \$250,000.

GLOBE AND MAIL ARTICLE

IT WAS JUST UNBELIEVABLE, SO INSPIRING AND SO INCREDIBLE TO... WATCH THIS THING GROW...

DAVE BACHELOR, ANIMATOR/SENECA GRAD

I HEARD IT, BUT I COULDN'T QUITE BELIEVE IT.

RYAN LARKIN, HEARING OF THE OSCAR® VICTORY

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College's Animation Arts Centre created a designated production suite equipped with eight high-powered workstations using the latest in 3D digital technology. In return for providing the space, equipment, and talent needed to create the film, Seneca's students received some of the best on-the-job training possible.

"With Chris mentoring, providing his expertise and inspiration, the Seneca students and graduates who worked on *Ryan* refined their animation technique and artistry to create the visual effect that makes *Ryan* so exceptional," says Jed DeCory, Chair, School of Communication Arts and one of *Ryan's* Executive Producers. "All of the 11 students who had a major part in the production of *Ryan* are now employed in the animation industry, and with this Oscar®, The Animation Arts Centre at Seneca has truly become a major player in the training of the next generation of great animation filmmakers."

The animated documentary offers a stylized portrait of artist Ryan Larkin, whose life as a 1960s

Canadian icon in the world of experimental animation was shattered by addiction, personal tragedy and homelessness.

With the help of students and graduates of Seneca's 3D Animation program, that story has been retold by Landreth through a striking marriage of interpretive animation and real-life audio clips from an interview he conducted with Ryan in 2000. "I started working on *Ryan* upon graduating from Seneca's Animation Arts program," says Sebastian Kapijimpanga, one of Ryan's animators.

"This film represents more than a year-and-a-half of my work – it was a fantastic learning experience and an integral part of the foundation of my career. As animators we did really put our hearts and souls into *Ryan*. We always hoped we were making something 'Oscar®-worthy' but actually getting the Oscar® is just incredible."

For more information on Seneca College's Animation Arts Centre go to: [www.senecac.on.ca/faculties\\_schools/digital\\_media](http://www.senecac.on.ca/faculties_schools/digital_media) ■

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## MAKING MUSIC@SENECA

Students from the Independent Music Production (IMP) program performed at the launch of IMP's first compilation CD. Held in The Hive, at the Seneca@York Campus, the launch celebrated the creation of a CD featuring 14 tracks from the program's first graduating class. The music can also be downloaded at [puretracks.com](http://puretracks.com) as well as through new *Independent/Unconventional* kiosks — one of which is located at Seneca@York — which were recently launched to promote independent music in Canada. Seneca's two-semester IMP certificate program is designed to give students a strong foundation in recording, performance and the music business. For more information on the program, go to <http://scaveb.senecac.on.ca>



PHOTO BY JOLIE CHEN

## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

The Seneca Student Federation Inc., Student Services, International Student Development, and numerous student groups once again held their annual International Day celebrations. The event, held Feb. 8 to 10, featured different parts of the world each day including Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Caribbean, Europe and the Middle East. International Days celebrates our cultural diversity with food, entertainment, and cultural demonstrations from around the world.

# From combat to improv, actors learn their craft

*"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."*

William Shakespeare

If all the world is a stage, Seneca can prepare you for it.

The Theatrical Performance Certificate offered by Seneca's Faculty of Continuing Education, was formed by Rose Dubin in 1979 as a single subject, and it has since grown to include five core subjects, four optional subjects and several workshops.

"Our approach to acting is basic and practical," Rose says. "All of our instructors come from the business and have extensive experience."

Students receive everything they need to proceed further with an acting career, but the program has also proven popular with those who have no intention of walking the boards as a thespian.

"This is a great way to improve your presentation skills," Rose says. "We had a student who was an architect who had difficulty presenting his material to clients, and this helped him in his career."

The program concentrates on acting techniques, scene studies and improvisation. Beyond the five main subjects, students are also required to complete an additional subject of their choice in areas such as improvisation or on-camera acting techniques.

The program has evolved to also offer its students weekend workshops in areas such as stage combat (fighting and swordplay) and voice training for film and theatre.

Through the years, the program has seen a number of graduates go on to success as performers. They have

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# Seneca students put skills to work in Jamaica

BY JOLIE CHEN

Seneca College students and faculty are putting their skills to work on an international level.

Sixteen students from the Early Childhood Education (ECE) and 25 students from the Social Service Work (SSW) programs are spending their two-week work/study program in Jamaica.

ECE students and faculty are visiting orphanages, a primary school for children ages two to six years old, a hospice for children with HIV, homes for teen mothers and special needs children in Montego Bay and Kingston.

"This trip is an incredible opportunity for students," says Professor Lynn Caruso, co-ordinator of the trip. "Most will return home with a new or revised outlook on life and the role they can play in improving our world."

A previous trip to a state-run orphanage in Montego Bay showed Lynn areas where Seneca could help. Second and third semester ECE students, faculty, and lab school staff produced teacher resource kits and bags filled with items for orphaned infants and toddlers.

"We learned that the children had nothing personalized for them," she says. "They had no place to store personal possessions even if they received something. Creating these bags gives them something of their own, by which to learn how to share, respect materials, the environment, and to play co-operatively."

SSW students and faculty will travel to Papine, a suburb of Kingston, Jamaica, for their second annual trip. In partnership with community leaders, students are

working in under-served areas, including a rehabilitation centre for polio and accident survivors, a cancer hospital, a school for the deaf and two junior schools. They also plan to visit Mona Downs, a settlement for people without permanent housing.

Students were trained in team building, the socio-political realities of Kingston, theories of community development, needs assessment and barriers to engaging in cross cultural social service work.

"Students needed to be prepared for the hard work of community development," says Professor Felicity Morris, who is accompanying the students to Jamaica along with professors Kevin Kennedy and Rory Crath. "The trip isn't about 'helping the needy.' It's about learning from a community — about their skills, strengths, and existing resources — and sharing some resources that have been made available to us."

"When students go abroad they will work according to the needs, desires and resources of the community, giving the community the control to make decisions," Felicity says.

To finance their trip, students held fundraising events such as bake sales, raffles and a silent auction.

"Although the students are aware of how challenging the work will be, they are excited about participating in projects that help build relationships between communities," Felicity says.



## Alvin Curling returns to Seneca

As part of Seneca's Black History Month celebrations, the College welcomed the Honourable Alvin Curling, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and Liberal MPP (Scarborough-Rouge River), to the Seneca@York Campus on Thursday, Feb. 10.

Mr. Curling is a Seneca College graduate and former administrator. Speaking in the Lower Kaleidoscope Room, he called Seneca one of the "best families I've belonged to" as he spoke about his many accomplishments and the motivation that Seneca provided him — he says his first political aspirations were rewarded at Seneca when he was named student council president.

## Gaming students place in "Unreal" contest

Students and faculty of the Gaming program placed third in the Educational category of the Making Something Unreal contest.

They submitted two games that were developed during the last 18 months: *Arrgh!!!* and *Province of Demons*. Both games are modified versions of the popular video game Unreal.

Because of their hard work, the College will receive 10 state-of-the-art computers.

## Seneca offers new Competitive Gymnastics Coaching Program

The two-year Competitive Gymnastics Coaching Diploma Program will train and certify students under guidelines approved by the Coaching Association

of Canada and endorsed by both Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Ontario.

Graduates will be eligible for full-time employment in one of more than 700 private Gymnastics Clubs in Canada, 190 of which are located in Ontario.

Seneca graduates will assume leadership positions within these Clubs having acquired advanced skills necessary for the preparation of developmentally appropriate programs for all ages and levels of performance.

## Seneca students help with telethon

Eight Journalism-Broadcast students, three Broadcast-Television students and 22 Summer Institute graduates were part of the annual Easter Seals Telethon on the CBC.

The Broadcast students helped with behind-the-scenes prep work and running of the show on the weekend of February 5.

The 2004 Summer Institute Graduates produced a half dozen of the feature reports that aired during the Telethon. Seneca Journalism-Broadcast Professor Barbara Caines was a host of the telethon, and Professor Greg Mandziuk was the Executive Producer.

## Random Acts of Kindness Day

Random Acts of Kindness Day at Seneca@York proved that good works can be contagious.

Organized by the Student Mentoring in Life and Education (SMILE) program, the goal of Random Acts of Kindness Day was to spread kindness and goodwill throughout the College. Held on January 27, the event drew attention to National Mentoring Month.

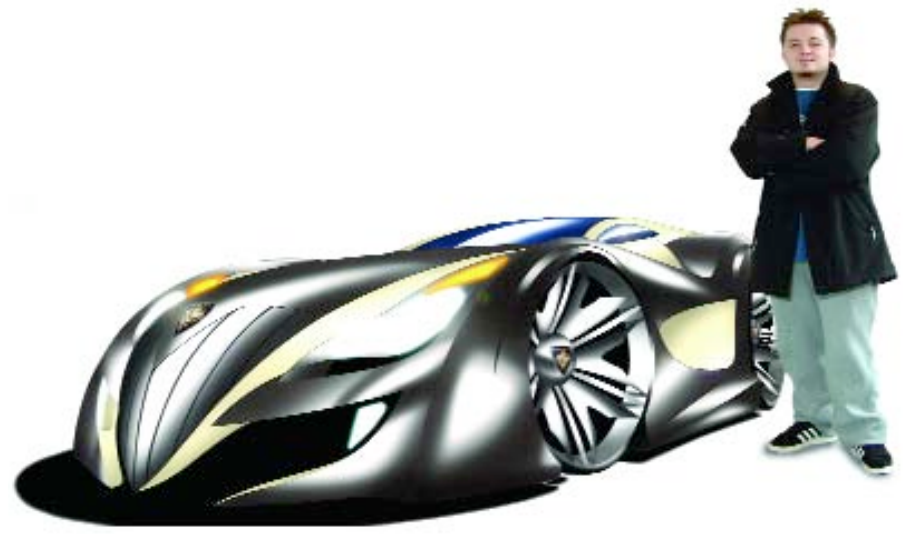
As part of the day, the Seneca community donated winter clothing to Covenant House, supporting youth at risk, and contributed food and more than \$200 to our Student Relief fund, supporting our student community at Seneca College. Hot chocolate, donated by Aramark, was given out through the day.

As well, spotters who saw random acts of kindness, gave away ballots for draws for various prizes, made possible by Thomson Grass Valley, Seneca Student Federation, Avon, The School of Communication Arts, and Student Services.

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formed theatre companies, created short films, been seen on television and film and recent graduates are currently touring as the improv troupe Nutty by Nature.

Students who meet certain qualifications may also receive credit from the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists. ■



## DESIGN FOR SUCCESS

Emre Hüsmen, in his first year of the Computer Programming Analysis (CPA) program, has a dream. It's to design cars. And it turns out he's pretty good at it. His design for the annual Peugeot Design Contest was one of ten chosen from around the world for this year's competition. Emre, who has come to Seneca from his native Turkey, sees the CPA program as a solid foundation for his career aspirations as a designer, and way to support himself as he works toward that goal.

## Student is a "Fresh Voice"

For the second year in a row, a Journalism-Broadcast student is a winner of the CBC's Fresh Voice competition.

Suzanne Urpez reported a story on youth gangs for national broadcast on CBC's national radio morning program Sounds Like Canada and its national television program CBC News: Canada Now.

## Busy study week at Seneca

Seneca College was filled with junior and high school students taking part in a variety of science and technology-

related learning activities during College study week.

The College hosted a number of events designed to create awareness of the many exciting and emerging science-related career opportunities available to young people today.

Students visited the Buttonville, Newham and Seneca@York campuses for a variety of hands-on experiences with technology subjects.

Seneca@York also hosted the York District School Board Science Olympics with 320 of the top science students from 19 secondary schools in the York Region District School Board. ■

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because universities and colleges would have to assume the entire cost of tuition for needy students if the fee is more than \$6,000."

An area that could provide savings for students, as well as the province, would be in the transferability of credits.

The report identifies the need to set clear standards for assessing post-secondary credits when students transfer to another college or university. If put in place, this would prevent students from having to take (and pay for) courses in which they have already shown a high level of understanding and competency.

There is also growing concern about the number of young people who do not proceed to post-secondary education. In order to maintain a productive, skilled workforce as large numbers of baby boomers retire, the province needs to see at least 70 per cent of students complete a post-secondary credential — a significant increase from the slightly more than 50 per cent who do so today.

To answer this, the report suggests increased access opportunities to our colleges.

This would include new opportunities to participate in higher education for Aboriginal students, students with disabilities and those who are the first in their families to attend a post-secondary institution.

Overall, Rick applauds the findings of the Rae Report and the links it makes between the province's prosperity and our post-secondary education system.

"We need to act quickly to ensure our future students, and in turn our province, are well served by the post-secondary system," he says. "Skilled workers will drive the economic engine of Ontario, and our colleges and universities need increased support to ensure that happens."

For more information, or to download the report go to: <http://www.raereviewon.ca>. ■



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# Seneca