

Greetings from Tampa

Last time I wrote this column, I was in India. This time I am in Tampa, Florida. "What am I doing in Tampa?" you would ask. I was here this week to visit the SHARE conference. SHARE is for IBM System z (aka mainframe) what COMMON is for System i. No, I am not switching platforms, I am staying on the System i. I only came here to see how other users groups are presenting (inter)national conferences. It was a great experience. I learned a lot about the group and the conference. But, enough about the System z—let's get back to our beloved System i. (If you want to know more about my experience at SHARE, contact me personally.)

Computer Studies at Colleges

Some of you know about this because you may have studied there, but for the others—did you know that in the province of Ontario there are two major colleges offering education on the System i? They are the **Seneca College** (York University Campus) in Toronto and the **Lambton College** of Applied Arts and Technology in Sarnia.

You may remember that, back in October 2006, TUG had its "Going Back to School" day at Seneca and if you were there, you noticed the great lab facilities they have. There is some collaboration between these

two colleges but, for the moment I am not able to elaborate more on that point. What I can say though, is that TUG has started a program to recognize and promote colleges where System i is taught.

At upcoming TUG events, you will be able to meet and talk with some of the college representatives and maybe some of the students as well. TUG will set up tables for them to display their information material, in areas where conversation is easy.

"Why would TUG do that?" you might ask

Believe it or not but the System i is not dead yet and it has a great future. IBM is investing a lot of money into it and the System is thriving. One recent push for the System i was at the Lotusphere convention (last month in Orlando) where attendees noticed that IBM seems to be moving away from Windows as a server for Domino. Instead, they seem to really be pushing System i as the platform of choice for running Domino shops.

System i is here to stay and we need new blood. Many System i workers will soon retire and new personnel will be needed. (This situation is also affecting the System z field). Where are we going to get those replacements? Colleges and Universities are good places to recruit new personnel (in addition of course, to those who are already experienced on the platform and waiting for an opening.)


This co-operation between the Colleges/Universities and TUG can only be a win-win situation. At the college level the students will realize that there is life in the System i and they will want to learn more about it. The more that there are students who want to learn the System i, the more the schools will set up courses. For employers, these students are a good source of future personnel. The more that people know about the platform and TUG, the more TUG will maintain its membership level.



We are still at the beginning stages of this collaboration. We are still looking at venues to explore. As time goes by, we will continue to inform you about what's going on. If you have ideas to submit about the type of collaboration we should consider, please let me know. If you want to collaborate in that venture, send me a note. If you know of other colleges or universities offering System i courses that are not on our list, or if you think that your company could help in some way (like offering co-op employment or whatever) let me know.

TEC '007

In the meantime, don't forget about TUG's own education program. TEC '007 is coming fast, really fast: April 17th, 18th and 19th. Read more about it in this magazine and on our Web site at www.tug.ca/tec. Two days of tutorial lessons followed by a full day of hands-on labs at the IBM Toronto lab. Another event not to be missed!

For now, I have one more day to spend in Tampa before I go back to a white Toronto and shovel my way into my house. I hope the temperature gets a bit warmer than it was last week, both in Tampa and in Toronto. See you back at home! 

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BLAIR

Oops!

In the last issue of the TUG magazine, we incorrectly referred to one of our sponsors as "Blair Technologies", when in fact their company name is: "Blair Technology Solutions Inc." or "Blair Technology" for short. We sincerely apologize for this error.

— Editor