

## ACS Foundation students win Microsoft internships

**CONGRATULATIONS** to ACS Foundation scholar, Jeffery Palm of the University of Western Australia's (UWA) School of Computer Science and Software Engineering, on winning one of 14 Microsoft internships offered to Australian students in 2008. Palm follows in the footsteps of another ACS Foundation scholarship winner, Oren Nachman, who won a similar Microsoft internship last summer.

Jeffery, 22, who has just completed a Bachelor of Computer Science, was one of 300 students who applied for an internship and one of just 36 who made it onto the shortlist for a face-to-face interview with Microsoft executives in Melbourne.

He left Perth at the end of November to spend 12 weeks in Redmond, Washington, where he is working with Microsoft's Capes Group on software update technology, gaining hands-on experience with products used by millions of people every day.

With a High Distinction average, Jeffery is currently planning to do his Honours next year, but if he performs well at Microsoft, there is the potential to build a career with the software giant.

Speaking before he left for the US, Jeffery said he was excited by the chance to travel and work overseas.

"A friend of mine, Oren, won a Microsoft internship last year and really enjoyed it, so I decided to apply. This is a great opportunity to work with some of the best programmers in the business and see how a company like Microsoft operates. And if they like you, you can receive an offer of full time work with the group where you're placed, which is something I would definitely consider," he said.

Jeffery first learned about the ACS Foundation at a UWA Open Day and was successful in apply-

ing for a three-year scholarship. Throughout his degree, he received \$10,000 per annum, thanks to sponsorship from the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, where he also gained experience in network administration and database development by doing work placements over his summer holidays.

At this early stage in his professional life, Jeffery says he is yet to decide on a particular area of focus.

"I've really enjoyed quite a few areas of technology so far and would be happy working with databases, networks, artificial intelligence, cryptography and protocols, so there are plenty of opportunities. Right now, I'm just looking forward to enjoying the trip and learning as much as I can," he said.

He had plenty of advice and travel tips from Oren, who completed a similar internship last year, spending three months working as a software development engineer in the testing section of the Windows Anti-Malware team.

"It was a great experience," said Oren. "Not only did I get to do lots of cool technical things like mucking around in the Windows source code, but I also learned about what it's like to work in a massive company like Microsoft and how it all fits together, which was very interesting."

Oren so impressed his co-workers and management at Microsoft that he received two offers to return there and work, although personal commitments in Perth have prevented him from taking them up.

He currently works full time at Internet Service Provider, iiNet, while also studying full time to complete his degree program.

This year he has also served as a Microsoft



From left to right, in front row: Andrew Parsons from Microsoft, Prof Mohammed Bennamoun, and Prof Rachel Cardell-Oliver. Back row: Jeffery Palm, David Nidorf and Oren Nachman.

Student Partner on campus at UWA, organising and running Microsoft-focused events for faculty and students.

These have included a general Microsoft information event that attracted over 220 people, a Game Camp where Oren gave a live demonstration of how to build games for the Xbox, and another event where attendees saw a demonstration of LiveMesh.

A mature age student at 27, Oren said his ACS Foundation scholarship and the Work Integrated Learning component have been great experience, giving him excellent contacts within the industry.

"In the past three years, I've managed to hop between IBM, a three month project at Google, Microsoft and now iiNet," said Oren, who encourages other students to always take action.

"The opportunities are there and it never hurts to apply – sometimes things fall from the sky for students." ♦

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