



# Computer Science Olympiad Community Project For Disadvantaged Schools

Donald Cook  
Department of Computer Science  
University of Cape Town  
Private Bag  
Rondebosch 7700

January 10th, 1994

## Abstract

*The project that we established in 1990, has as its goal the introduction of computer technology into black schools, has now run successfully for three years. Our aim to teach a number of black pupils computer programming and problem solving, is being realised. The sub goal; to have at least one programmer among the finalists in the Computer Olympiad within three years, is not within our reach at this stage. The disruptions at the schools has severely impacted our efforts in the last two years.*

**Keywords:** Olympiad, Community Project, Disadvantaged Schools

## 1 The Computer Science Olympiad

The Olympiad Project is adjunct to a computer literacy project that was begun under the auspices of the Computer Society of South Africa. The Computer Society has provided computers for the schools. (These were donated by a number of large commercial institutions in Cape Town). The Computer Society continues to use the help of professionals from Anderson's Consulting to initiate the first level of computer literacy training. This is only aimed at providing the barest minimum of basic computing knowledge. It is our intention to take the more capable pupils further and introduce them to computer science as a subject. In this way we hope by means of our assistance and their visits to the campus, to lure the better pupils to become students in this department.

We begun the project at Luhlaza High School in Khayelitsha, this was the first school that the CSSA equiped. At this stage we have 20 pupils in stds 8-10 who were identified by their Maths teacher as prospective candidates for the Computer Science Olympiad.

## 2 New Schools

In 1993 we extended the project to Trafalgar High School in what was District 6, 20 suitable pupils have been identified at this school. This year we had acquired the help of 15 students from the Computer Science 2nd year, 3rd Year courses to teach the pupils. We have improved the administration of the project by using two Honours students to manage the arrange-

ments for the visits to the schools.

Currently, 2 or 3 students, spend 3 hours on Wednesday afternoon teaching the pupils at Luhlaza High School. A similar session is held at Trafalgar High School each Monday.

## 3 The effects of Violence

Part of the scheme is to invite the pupils and their teachers to visit the University and participate in workshops so that they can experience computing technology and the environment at the University. This year, as a result of the violence and disruptions at the schools, the students from Luhlaza were obliged to travel to the Campus in order to make any progress with their studies. The time spent at the University was used for teaching the pupils on the computers in our GoldFields Computer Laboratory, rather than the extension work we had envisioned.

## 4 The future

Our Future plans include extending the project to more schools and setting up a formal student body to administer the project.

Permission to copy without fee all or part of this material is granted provided that the copies are not made or distributed for direct commercial advantage, the ACM copyright notice and the title of the publication and its date appear, and notice is given that copying is by permission of the Association for Computing

Machinery. To copy otherwise, or to republish, requires a fee and/or specific permission.

CHI94 Companion-4/94 Boston, Massachusetts USA  
© 1994 ACM 0-89791-651-4/94/0148...\$3.50