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Prentice Hall Taps IWU Computer Science Professor To Author Book on Programming Worldwide Web Pages

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. An Illinois Wesleyan University computer science professor has won a contract from New Jersey-based publisher Prentice Hall to author a book about programming worldwide web pages.

Susan Anderson-Freed, IWU professor of computer science, is scheduled to deliver the book to Prentice Hall by Sept. 1, 2000. The book "Weaving Arachne's New Web" will be published three-to-five months later.

Anderson-Freed describes the book, estimated at 600 pages and fully illustrated, as a "comprehensive book on web programming intended for people with no background . . . It progresses from easy-to-learn computer languages to more complicated ones."

The title, Anderson-Freed said, is drawn from Greek mythology. The mythological character Arachne was a woman who challenged Athena, a goddess, to a weaving contest and was changed into a spider for her presumption.

Weaving web sites, she explains, is akin to spiders weaving their webs. Anderson-Freed teaches a computer science course, "Weaving Arachne's New Web," hence the book's title, which is described as a "rigorous introduction to software engineering using the worldwide web as the medium." The book and course deal with several programming languages, including HTML, Perl, JavaScript, and Java.

Anderson-Freed said her book is designed for a trio of audiences: students taking classes on web programming, professional programmers who might not know all the languages, and people at home who want to learn programming and progress from simple to more sophisticated languages at their own pace.

Time is the biggest challenge facing Anderson-Freed in writing the book. "The book has to come out soon," she explained, "to be timely since computer science changes so fast. The challenge is to come up with catchy examples and make sure they work and come up with graphics and text."

The book will be accompanied by a CD, containing all the computer programs discussed in the book.

"Designing good web pages is an art form," Anderson-Freed said. "Therefore, we need students with good programming backgrounds, but also backgrounds in graphic design."

Anderson-Freed is captivated by the worldwide web, which appeals to her imagination and creativity.

However, she also offers a few cautions to consumers of information on the web.

"I tell my daughter who uses the web for high-school research projects," Anderson-Freed said, "to be careful with sources use legitimate sources rather than those that have an ax to grind. Of course, print sources, like books, also have inaccuracies. So, in general, we should look at things cautiously," quickly adding, "The web is phenomenal- it puts information at your fingertips."

The first computer science textbook Anderson-Freed coauthored, "Fundamentals of Data Structures in C," was published in 1992. It sold 44,000 copies and was translated into five languages: French, Italian, German, Korean, and Chinese.

Anderson-Freed has taught about 30 sociology and computer science courses since she joined the IWU faculty in 1977. Her background in statistics, research methods, and quantitative sociology led her to the field of computer science.

She received a bachelor of arts degree (sociology) from St. Norbert College in DePere, Wis.; a master of arts degree and doctorate in sociology from Indiana University; and a master of science degree (computer science) from Bradley University.

Susan Anderson-Freed is married to John Freed, chair of the history department at Illinois State University in Bloomington. They are the parents of a daughter, Jenny, 17, a junior at Normal Community High School.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,070 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts, and a \$1.65 million baseball stadium. *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine* ranks Illinois Wesleyan University 12th among the nation's 1,600 private colleges in providing a high-quality education at an affordable cost. Also sharing IWU's rank are Princeton and Dartmouth.