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Elijah Mayfield to present research in Singapore

Summary: Elijah Mayfield ‘09, will present his original research during the Student Workshop for the 47th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics, to be held in Singapore August 2-7.

(May 13, 2009)-by Ruth Hamberg ’09, Oakdale -- Elijah Mayfield ‘09, Fergus Falls, will present his original research during the Student Workshop for the 47th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics, to be held in Singapore August 2-7. The workshop is aimed at third- and fourth-year graduate students who have settled on a thesis direction but still have significant research left to complete. His paper, “Sentence diagram generation using dependency parsing,” was developed using work from a capstone project for the University of Minnesota, Morris Honors Program.

The Morris campus is pleased to call Mayfield one of its own. “The initiative and quality of Eli’s work here would be impressive in an advanced graduate student, so it’s something the university should definitely be proud of,” said Professor of Computer Science Nicholas McPhee.

“I expect great things from [Eli],” said Associate Professor of English Janet Schrunk Ericksen, who advised Mayfield on principles of grammar and sentence diagramming. “He’s been fun to work with in large part because of his independence and imagination, both of which contribute to his success so far in computational linguistics.”

Mayfield’s research involved the use of a computer program to convert linguistic graphs into sentence diagrams using an analysis of the relationships between words. “I put an enormous amount of time into this defense,” Mayfield said. “I felt that I was working at a graduate level, and [my paper’s acceptance at the conference] confirms that belief.”

The trip will be paid for by the conference, which is the largest in the field of computational linguistics. Next year, Mayfield will attend graduate school at the Language Technologies Institute at Carnegie Mellon University.

Mayfield’s involvement in campus life has followed diverse channels, including positions as the ACM (Association of Computing Machinery) Club President, Computer Science Student Representative, and an editor for the campus’ student-run newspaper. He has also been the recipient of a UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program) grant and last year presented work at a conference in Montreal.

Photo by Ruth Hamberg ‘09: Elijah Mayfield’s imagination, and that of photographer Ruth Hamberg, is illustrated in this photo of Mayfield in front of the cow sculpture located in the campus’ Imholte Hall. The building formerly housed an auditorium called the “cow palace” during the West Central School of Agriculture era.

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