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# LSU research group participates 2015 Google Summer of Code program

LSU The Daily Reveille

For many, working at Google is a dream job.

Since Fortune Magazine and the Great Place to Work Institute named Google 2014's "Best Company to Work For," people from all over the world want to join the Google family, and with an internship through a University research group, students have a way in.

The STE||AR Group at the University's Center for Computation and Technology serves as a mentor organization for the Google Summer of Code 2015 Program for the second year, giving students from all over the world the chance to work on open source coding projects during the summer.

"Google is a company that has vested interest in open source projects," said STE||AR Group scientific program coordinator Adrian Serio. "During the summer, they will fund students to work on the open source project of their choosing. We have the honor to be one of those projects."

Open source computing allows any user to download a program's code, edit it and run the changed program, Serio said, so students can complete tasks from anywhere.

To be a mentor organization for the GSoC a group must submit an outline of the project they are working on, as well as a list of ideas students could pursue while participating.

Students interested in applying for the program must be at least 18 years old, either part-time or full-time students at an accredited institution and eligible to work in the country they will reside in during the program.

Serio said proving the organization's credibility is a major factor.

"Because we're an open source project, location doesn't matter," Serio said. "Last year, we had three students. One guy was in China, one guy was in India and we had one guy in Germany. They weren't physically at LSU, but they worked on the project that we developed. If you have a computer and have internet access, in theory, you are eligible for this program."

Students must submit proposals based on the work the organization does in order to apply.

The STE||AR group runs a project called HPX, the C++ runtime system works to distribute the work an application is doing throughout the nodes cluster of a supercomputer.

Hartmut Kaiser, computer science adjunct professor and CCT senior scientist, said as the computing power of machines increases, organizations like The STE||AR Group work to create software allowing applications and technology to use as much of the computing power as possible.

Kaiser, who served as a mentor on the program last year, encourages University students to submit proposals to the group.

"We want our students to be competitive, and this is a very good way for a student to get into a cool, open-source project and into a worldwide community and learn something in the process," Kaiser said. "The student proposes what he or she wants to do over the summer, types a plan, their tasks and the outcomes, and based on that, we select the best."

Despite the worldwide competition for a program spot, Kaiser said University students have the advantage of being in the same, or at least nearby, time zone with the mentors, making communication easier between mentor and student.

He said University students also have an advantage in that, if selected for the program and depending on performance, The STE||AR Group could offer them a spot as student workers to continue their collaboration after the internship.

While the organization won't receive funding from Google for this program, participants receive a $5,000 stipend, while mentors receive $500.

After the program ends, mentors and students are invited to the GSoC mentorship summit, a three-day networking opportunity.

Computer science junior Alexandra Willis, who is applying for multiple internship opportunities, said she's inclined to apply for GSoC.

"[Having The STE||AR Group as a mentor site for the GSoC program] looks really good on LSU ... [because] you learn so much more from actually doing coding projects than you do in class," Willis said. "If you could say in your résumé that you worked on a project that Google sponsored, it's fantastic."

GSoC will accept proposals from March 16 to March 27 through the program's website [http://stellar.cct.lsu.edu/2015/03/stear-group-accepted-as-a-gsoc-2015-mentor-org/]. The STE||AR Group will select as many students as Google allows them to. Kaiser and Serio said they expect to select two to four students.

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