

# The MEMorandum

SPRING 2007

## SECOND ANNUAL "NIGHT WITH INDUSTRY" A HUGE SUCCESS

By Zikai "Mark" Chang, Industry & Alumni Relations Committee, MEM Program Development Committee

The MEM Night with Industry 2007 was successfully conducted on February 2nd, 2007. This event was organized with the primary goal of creating an opportunity of dialogue between MEM students and established members from various industry sectors, as well as gaining further recognition for the MEM program within industry.

With high level managers from prominent companies like Medtronic, Alltel, Computer Associates, and The Advisory Board, to name a few, gracing the event, the Night with Industry was an extremely enriching experience for both students and industry members alike. Roundtable discussions between the students and industry members were arranged to allow for a more informal setting to facilitate interaction. The discussions were followed by a reception with dinner and dessert where everyone mingled and interacted freely.

Feedback from this event has been hugely positive. Industry members have asserted how deeply impressed they were with the MEM students and how much they enjoyed the

level of interaction between everyone who had participated. MEM students have also indicated that they found the event enriching and insightful.

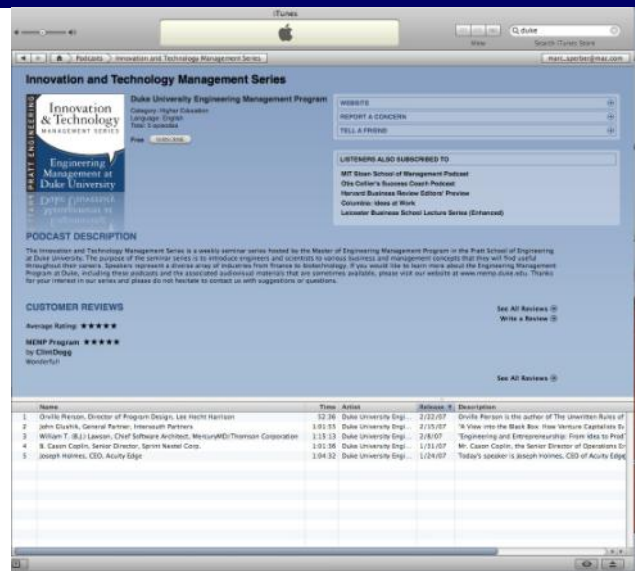
Even with this success, we must not rest on our laurels. Based on the feedback given from both students and industry members, the MEM program should strive to make the Night with Industry event an even bigger success in the coming years. Our industry networks should be expanded continually as we continue to impress upon more people the virtues of the MEM program. The steps are in place to help push the MEM program to even higher levels of excellence and recognition.

The MEM Night with Industry would not have been a success if not for the hard work of the Industry & Alumni Relations Committee members (Raj Bhortake, Niyanthi Reddy, Valerie Speth and Rachana Ponnappa), Susan Brown, the support of the MEM program, and, last but not least, the enthusiasm of the MEM students. Thank you to everyone involved for making the Night with Industry a great day for the MEM program.

## MEM DEBUTS FIRST PRATT PODCAST

This semester, the MEM program has started a podcast feed, the first of its kind from a Pratt School of Engineering department or program. The idea for the podcast was generated by Jeff Glass, Director of MEM Program, while attending the annual Engineering Entrepreneurship Roundtable Workshop held by Stanford University's "Technology Ventures Program", led by Professor Tom Byers.

The idea to podcast MEM's weekly seminars was brought back to Duke and implementation was handled by expert Marc Sperber of the Pratt IT group, with the help of Pratt web site designer Becky Tench and student Jon Reifschneider. The podcast series, titled "Innovation and Technology Management Series", is updated weekly and features MEM's business technology seminar series. It can be found in the iTunes Stores, accessed through the Apple iTunes software.



## MEM ALUM TAKE ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Interview with Aditi Misra, MEM '05 and Karan Maheshwari, Trinity '05

### Why did we start a non-profit organization?

We have both been interested in non profit work for a while, and individually we have worked with many organizations. When we moved to Atlanta, we wanted to make an impact on the lives of other people outside work, take on leadership roles, and play an active part in an organization. It seemed to us like we could fit in our passion even while excelling at our jobs. Therefore, we were actively looking for something worth our time and enthusiasm and commitment. That's when we heard of Child Rights and You (CRY).

### Why CRY?

CRY seemed very interesting because it was not a run-of-the-mill non-profit. First, the people we met from CRY were all highly intelligent, articulate, and logical people, successful in their own fields. They were not just filled with a passion to help the world but also with ideas on how exactly to do this right and with maximum efficiency – the internal processes and structures of CRY America and CRY India rival those of most for-profit organizations.

Second, CRY started out with an idea that was radical then in India – it was an organization that would not only directly work with children, but also support the thousands of grassroots activists in India that worked with children everyday. CRY would partner the grassroots organizations as a private equity firm – each infusion of funds would be accompanied by the non-financial inputs necessary to ensure their optimum utilization and maximum impact.

Third, over 27 years of operations across countries, CRY has figured out a unique philosophy of action. To restore child rights, CRY works at many levels – starting from direct action to advocacy,

policy change, and mass mobilization.

Fourth, CRY does not work superficially to provide relief, but attempts to eliminate the root causes of child rights issues, so that every solution is long-term. CRY employees and projects volunteers grapple with issues like poverty, gender discrimination, migration, adult unemployment, and municipal cleaning on a daily basis. This is a 'rights'-based approach, as opposed to a 'relief'-mode. So much so that CRY, which was initially Child Relief and You, is now changing its name to Child Rights and You.

### So what happened?

We were inspired and started the CRY Atlanta chapter. In 6 months, it had grown to an organization of 20 dedicated volunteers. We have raised \$5000 and have organized 3 very successful events. We have spent countless nights arguing over events, running around printing flyers and chasing volunteers, and calling on donors. But we love working with CRY because the canvas is so much larger than just our local impact. In our day-jobs we are both strategy consultants and consequently have gotten the opportunity to learn a tremendous amount about organizations. With CRY, we get to use a lot of this knowledge: we dream big, plan strategy, influence policy, work with media, meet fantastic people, and literally change lives – not just of children, but of communities. We would not trade the satisfaction of doing this for anything. Overall CRY has been an exciting, exhilarating and exhausting experience for us – It is one that we both are very happy with and are proud to be a part of.

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## ALUM HONORED FOR WORK AT ALLTEL

Sai Sarath C Yagnyamurthy (MEM '06) was recently honored for his work as a Senior Analyst in Marketing at Alltel Communications. Yagnyamurthy was involved in partnering and launching Enterprise Products on Smartphones and PDAs that help companies conduct their business efficiently. The products span a variety of vertical and horizontal markets, as well as various platforms.

In order to aid the development community and to market these products, Yagnyamurthy was responsible for building the structure, layout, and content of a series of websites. Officially, he was awarded "For the extreme effort he has given to The Alltel Partner Program and Business Solutions web-sites as well as his continued efforts to research Alltel's Vertical Segment opportunities". He says that what he learned through MEM helped him quickly understand the technical-marketing position and deliver on this large task.

### The MEM Program would like to thank its major supporters:

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