

BUY PHOTO REPRINTS ONLINE

BIRTH IS JUST THE BEGINNING

SUBSCRIBE TO THE GAZETTE ONLINE OR IN PRINT

GAZETTENET.COM

Daily Hampshire Gazette - Established 1786

Amherst Bulletin The Recorder Valley Advocate Pioneer Valley Many Hands Hampshire Life

Sign out Account Trouble finding something? Contact us Classifieds

news search

Local News State/Region U.S./World Obituaries Sports Business Schools Colleges Politics Opinion Entertainment Health Living Sci/Tech

At Smith, computer dissection offers hands-on understanding

By THE DAILY HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE Staff Writer

Email this page Printer-friendly version

Saturday, October 4, 2008

NORTHAMPTON - Motherboards, memory chips and processors: the "techie" generation knows these terms, but perhaps with only a fuzzy idea of the physical objects they represent. Smith College students in a recent class on how computers work met these computer innards in person.

Dominique Thiebaut, an associate professor, fortified the students in McConnell foyer with coffee and instructed them to take apart a computer tower as best they could.

"I want the students to not be afraid of computers," Thiebaut said.

"You kind of have to think differently about it" after taking a computer apart, Morgan Middlebrook, 21, said.

Thiebaut asked Smith's technology services for dead computers and got 15, mostly Dells. The assignment was to take everything apart, take pictures of each piece and identify it. The students, working in pairs, will then create a Wikipedia page as a sort of lab report.

"It's awesome. I'm trying not to break stuff, but it's not going to bite me," Sierra Brezina, 20, said.

Most of the students didn't know when they registered that the class would involve taking apart a computer. The tables were filled with colorful cables, screws and a variety of metal pieces. Students were allowed to use a screwdriver and their hands to deconstruct the towers.

"We're really glad Dominique gave us coffee before we took apart something technical," senior Emily Everett said. "I have more respect for those people who do their own computer stuff," Virginia Lunt, 18, said. "It's very interesting."

Several people from the Smith Information Technology Services offered assistance.

"This hasn't been formally done before. Students know how to use computers, but now they know what goes into them. It's a good, basic familiarization," Eric Jensen, one of the ITS people on hand, said. The computer pieces will be recycled.

1 2



GORDON DANIELS

Smith College senior Jenna Christie, left, and Samantha Travis-Mioos, a sophomore, disassemble a computer.



Amherst Laser & Skin Care Center. Summer's coming... and so is the beach. Contact us for a free consult for... Permanent Laser Hair Removal Laser Body Sculpting. amherstlaser.com 413.253.2214

Popular stories

- Getting the 'Edge': Film crew shoots Mel Gibson project around the region next week
- UMass defense shines in 17-7 win
- Trucks hit, kill moose on I-91, damaging vehicles
- University examines crosswalk accident
- Shooting for 'Black Light' movie set for region, too

Gazette Newspaper Ads

View all ads gallery

TRADEMARK REAL ESTATE. A NEW, FULL SERVICE REAL ESTATE AGENCY. (413) 665-2155 • www.trademarkre.net. Serving All of Hampshire & Franklin County!

Click to enlarge

Ads by Google

Investment Advice

Fee-only. Objective. No sales pitch Northampton, MA

www.HighRidgeFinancial.com

Filed Under: colleges local northampton

Comments

Post new comment

Your name:

thiebaut

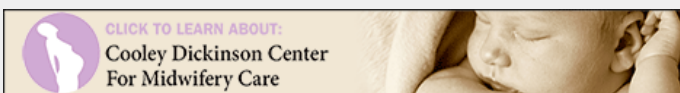
Subject:

Comment: *

- [Local News](#)
- [State/Region](#)
- [U.S./World](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Schools](#)
- [Colleges](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Living](#)
- [Sci/Tech](#)
- [Blogs](#)

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Allowed HTML tags: <a> <i> <code> <cite> <div>
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

[More information about formatting options](#)



[Copyright Notice](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Help Center](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Subscribe to the Gazette](#) | [Advertising](#)

Daily Hampshire Gazette © 2008 All rights reserved