OpenITWare

Students and Non-Profit Organizations
Team Up to Create and Provide IT Resources and Services

What is OpenITWare?
OpenITWare is defined by a community of students, faculty, alums, community partners, and professionals who share the goal of creating and making available high-quality information technology (IT) educational and professional resources and services for non-profit organizations, state agencies, and the general public. The premise of OpenITWare is “get real!” by relating IT teaching and learning to the real world of IT needs of organizations and people in Greater Manchester area.

Who Is Involved?
The Computer Information Systems (CIS) program at UNH Manchester has developed a collaborative and experiential learning model by which course curriculum integrates student team projects that investigate and solve concrete IT problems raised by the program’s external partners. Among the program’s partners are: New Hampshire Catholic Charities, Salvation Army in Manchester, Massabesic Audubon Center, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Manchester, YWCA in Manchester, the Way Home, the UNHM Mapping Movies film history research project, and the Division for Juvenile Justice Services of the Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of the collaboration is twofold: (1) CIS students serve the community with course projects that improve the non-profit organizations IT capital; (2) Non-profit organizations contribute relevant real-world experiences to the CIS curriculum. Their expertise, feedback, and participation improve the quality of the IT educational and professional resources and services that are developed and made available.

Features, Activities, and Outcomes
Several courses in the CIS program use a model of collaborative and experiential learning in partnership with non-profit organizations and state agencies. The courses’ curricular topics include database design and development, system analysis and design, and system implementation with database management tools. OpenITWare students work in teams and partner with IT clients; conduct site visits and interact with the users of the proposed projects; defend their findings and offer feedback to other student teams and projects; make public presentations and demonstrations and participate in the UNH Undergraduate Research Conference; work closely with community partners to test, configure, and install their IT solutions. Community partners contribute their time and staff to introduce their IT problems to the students; and assist students with the selection, application, and integration of the proposed IT resources.

For Further Information Please Contact:
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