GAP NEWSLETTER; OCTOBER 2020

Dear GAP Members,

I hope this email finds you, your families, and your academic institutions doing well. Despite the continued challenges of the pandemic, it is fortunate that we live in a digital age where so many institutions and educators have been able to provide students with access to continue their studies online.

Following is the current edition of our bi-annual newsletter, including highlights from the past six months:

- **GAP is 100 members strong and growing!** Thank you to everyone who renewed their GAP membership this year and completed our online survey. I'm pleased to confirm that we currently have over 100 universities in 35 countries teaching Ada and/or SPARK in their 2020/2021 academic curriculums. This is excellent news! And indicative of the health of the Ada/SPARK ecosystem.

- **Welcome to the five new university members that have joined GAP** since April 2020. New members include:

  o University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom
  o The University of the Basque Country, Leioa, Spain
  o Graz University of Technology, Graz, Austria
  o International Technological University, Santa Clara, CA, United States
  o Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, Natal, Brazil

- **New regional GAP representation.** In response to growing membership on an international scale, we are expanding our GAP support team. While I will continue to process all new memberships and support the majority of GAP members, we have assembled several native-speaking representatives to facilitate communications in our core geographical regions, including the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Central Europe (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and The Netherlands). With that, I would like to introduce you to our new regional GAP representatives:

  o France - Yannick Moy (moy@adacore.com)
  o Spain - Juliana Silva (silva@adacore.com)
  o United Kingdom - Emma Adby (adby@adacore.com)
  o Central Europe (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, The Netherlands) - Ingo Houben (houben@adacore.com)

- **Our 5th Annual 'Make with Ada Competition' launched on July 31, 2020** and will run to January 31, 2021, offering over $9,000 in total prizes. Geared to both experienced and new Ada and SPARK users, the contest's objective is to design and implement an innovative embedded software project using Ada and/or SPARK as the primary language. We strongly encourage submissions by students or student teams. There is a student-only prize of $1000, and, as an added incentive, projects submitted by students are eligible for both the student-only prize and the other cash prizes. Participants can register on the Hackster.io developer platform. We hope you encourage your students to enter.

- **An 8-Part blog series on Ada for micro:bit is currently underway** that may be of particular interest to your undergraduate students. Below are links to the first three of eight blogs written by AdaCore's Fabien Chouteau that provide simple examples on how to program the BBC micro:bit with Ada.

    - Ada for micro:bit Part 1: Getting Started
    - Ada for micro:bit Part 2: Push buttons
    - Ada for micro:bit Part 3: Pin Output

- **Sharing GAP Accounts.** We've had feedback from a few members regarding concerns about different departments within a given university/college having to share GAP accounts, and so I wanted to clarify our process:

    - Each university/college is given a single, unique account in our system.
    - Under this university "umbrella" account, we can open separate GNAT Tracker accounts per department or individual, as requested.
    - For each GNAT Tracker account, there must be at least one Administrator. The Administrator can be a teacher, a graduate student, or a contact within an IT department.
    - Administration duties are minimal. Being an Admin allows you to grant GNAT Tracker access to additional team members. For example, a teacher can give undergraduate students who would not otherwise be eligible for GAP membership access to their account.

    I also want to remind members that we purposefully designed GAP to be an open forum. The free professional support that comes with GAP membership, via our GNAT Tracker web interface, involves sharing support discussions with _all_ GAP members. We see this as a benefit of membership - facilitating learning and the sharing of ideas. If this is a concern to you, please know that we can offer private, professional support services as part of a paid subscription.

- **Are you working on an exciting project using Ada or SPARK?** We are always looking for unique ideas to share with the community. If your students have recently completed an exciting course, assignment, thesis, or doctoral that utilizes Ada and or SPARK, we'd love to add it to our growing list of GAP member projects and blogs. All we need are a couple of paragraphs describing the work and an accompanying photo.

- **Reminder: Member students get priority consideration for AdaCore internship opportunities.** Being familiar with Ada and SPARK technologies, GAP member students are at a distinct competitive advantage for internship and career opportunities with AdaCore and potentially our customers.

- We are currently putting together a **GAP Welcome Package** full of books, collateral, and swag for new members. If you would like to receive a GAP package, please send me an email and provide the best address to ship it to (be it your university or your home). We hope to have the packages ready to go by early December.

As always, thank you for helping us keep Ada and SPARK at the forefront of university study. We truly believe that exposing your students to these state-of-the-art programming languages will help them become more skilled programmers.

On behalf of the GAP team, I wish you continued health and success navigating the academic year ahead.

Kind regards,

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