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Canada's Association of Information  
Technology (IT) Professionals

## Resident Bloggers

[Stephen Ibaraki](#) Technology Journalist I.S.P., DF/NPA, CNP

[John Oxley](#) Director IT Pro Evangelism  
Microsoft Canada

[Barnaby Jeans](#) IT Pro Advisor  
Microsoft Canada

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## A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe

I had a wonderful conversation with [Dr. Maria Klawe](#). She is a World Renowned Computer Scientist, past Dean of Science at UBC and current Dean of Engineering at Princeton. Talk about a prominent Canadian; her ideas are so important that this summer Maria was the moderator at the world computer science faculty summit where she fielded questions with Bill Gates. In fact we talked about this important summit in our chat this week: the situation with computer science education and declining enrolment. Its implications are profound since it impacts future business maintaining their competitive advantage with sufficient talent.

Maria is one of the most prominent global leaders in computer science and in education. In our talk she also shares her very important work and research, the global situation in China and India, and her passions. She makes a strong case for an upsurge in expanded computer career opportunities and in ways IT is critical for all areas of society. It's a broader perspective that is important for IT professionals to hear.

Here's the interview: [http://www.microsoft.com/canada/technet/media/Dr\\_Maria\\_Klawe.mp3](http://www.microsoft.com/canada/technet/media/Dr_Maria_Klawe.mp3)

We would be interested in hearing your views...

Thanks,

Stephen

posted on Friday, December 02, 2005 2:39 PM by [joxley](#)

[Post a Comment](#) ::

## Comments

### # re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe

Friday, December 02, 2005 5:42 PM by [Craig Atkinson](#)

Congrats on another great interview Stephen! I love the audio format and am very glad to see you are now a podcaster!

### # re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe

Friday, December 02, 2005 8:03 PM by [Dave](#)

It was great to hear such an esteemed person provide her vision of the future of Computer Science and Engineering. Her perspective needs to be shared with all involved in Computer Science and Engineering education. Too often we become emeshed in the discipline itself rather than with the good it can provide for our world. Obviously Maria does not suffer from this myopic perspective.

### # re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe

Saturday, December 03, 2005 12:40 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#)

Thank you for the comments ...

I found Maria's integration strategies combining computer science with other disciplines quite interesting. I also agree with the need for IT professionals to work in a multi-disciplinary fashion. Which areas in her discussion did you find most compelling? Do you have ideas to add to those Maria provided?

Thanks,

Stephen

Stephen

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Saturday, December 03, 2005 12:43 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#)

I have been receiving e-mails asking for this, so here it is... I appreciate your input.

Interview Time Index (MM:SS) and Topic:

1:03: Vision for Princeton

3:40: Where the work is heading

5:06: Research interests such as the Aphasia project

6:40: Most significant events or achievements

11:31: Increasing women in science and engineering

14:20: EGEMS project findings

17:29: Decline in computer science enrollment

19:53: Implications of this decline

20:14 Reversing the decline in student interest

23:52: Decline in funding for computer science

26:43: What can be done?

27:23: Predications for the future and what IT professionals must do to prepare

29:36: China's progression and their impact

30:20 India's progression and their impact

32:05: Students from China and India and the implications

33:28: Future contributions to make a difference

34:50: Favorite activities

35:11: Favorite gadget

35:30: Favorite passion outside of work

Thank you,  
Stephen

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Sunday, December 04, 2005 3:07 PM by [dave](#)

On its operational side the human body could be thought of as a combination of applied engineering and computer science. Dr. Klawe like others of similar vision see this and understand the opportunity to assist people with problems such as Aphasia. It would be wonderful if others could work on helping people coping with other neuro-mechanical challenges. I know there is a lot happening in areas related to medical science and it is all good - just want to encourage other researchers to follow Dr. Klawe's lead.

And thanks for the timing Steve. It will help in reviewing specific parts of Dr. Klawe's interview.

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Monday, December 05, 2005 12:38 PM by [Shami Shaligram](#)

Congrats on a marvelous interview. This is Shami from India, founder president of an NGO - Prithvi, working in the grassroots development of rural India. I am certainly interested in starting a dialogue on getting the Indian rural women involved in the IT integration at the grass roots level, that we have begun in small ways through our Project Tara. The basic issue is more social and cultural than technical, and I would like to get your views on that. I think that integrating the technology with relevance to the routine is very important. I agree that diversity should be considered and computers should become more a tool to assist in the day to day life or quenching the thirst of knowledge, whatever field or discipline, it is immaterial. I am dealing with very low levels of formal education, but very high levels of understanding and have proven that technology doesn't necessarily have to be through a degree or a diploma. Getting over the fear of computers and technology is so important. Would sure like to get talking more on this one. I also agree that games are helping a great deal in overcoming the fear of technology. India sure needs more informal technology training, more on the application of it at the end users side, for more businesses and disciplines, or areas of life in general of the society at the rural grass roots. Working in the health care arena, this is more of an affirmation of my own faith in bringing the technology to its aid, with special reference to the HIV AIDS epidemic in my country. Thank you Steve Sama, this is a great gift to the rural areas for us.

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Monday, December 05, 2005 4:08 PM by [E. Marie](#)

I too found the area of discussion regarding Maria's integration strategies combining computer science with other disciplines very interesting. Information technology has become globally mainstream affecting all areas of our society. Working to have that reflected in the makeup of student enrollment in engineering courses is right on the mark.

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Monday, December 05, 2005 11:38 PM by [Pat Gaudet](#)

This is a great interview, with lots of detail and touching on a number of critical aspects re. the future of IT.

I am involved in the CIPS 'Women in IT' initiative and am also concerned about decreasing numbers of students entering IT studies (see URL provided, about assistance needed, and as background, please refer also to the old 2005 event CIPS Toronto 'WIT' info at [http://www.cipstoronto.ca/activities/event\\_info1.php?261](http://www.cipstoronto.ca/activities/event_info1.php?261) and the CIPS National website at <http://www.cips.ca/it/women/>).

Our informal findings and feedback from high school girls is in line with what Dr. Klawe has said.

I don't envy our colleges and universities which must be very challenged with trying to attract IT students, meet the <perceived> needs that the students have while trying to provide education that will also meet future needs of employers and industry ... whose challenges and needs are shifting as we speak.

Pressure on IT employment (such as outsourcing) are highly visible, aided by companies still laying off large numbers of head office / administrative staff, which includes IT employees. It is the big picture into the future that is difficult for students and their parents to see.

Worse yet, the high school counsellors and business / technology teachers may not fully understand the implications of the changing landscape and the issues and opportunities. Even if they do understand the issues, to what extent is timing of industry and career options a factor for the future opportunities?

And are the employers cognisant of the future and direct implications for them if we are not developing / recruiting home grown IT talent?

Thanks, Stephen and Dr. Klawe, for such a thoughtful interview.

P.S. -- Suggestions about our 'Women in IT' and 'Students in IT' initiative as described at <http://www.cipstoronto.ca/about/VolEventInfo.php?11> are welcome.

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Tuesday, December 06, 2005 10:21 AM by [Camilla Rhodes](#)

I enjoyed your interview with Dr. Maria Klawe. Very insightful. It's always encouraging to hear from women who are highly successful in their chosen field(s), especially IT.

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Tuesday, December 06, 2005 7:03 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#)

Everyone,

Thank you for taking the time to post comments. If you haven't done so already, click on her name in the interview--it's a hot link to her profile. You can see what she says is her passion and she's pretty open to engagement.

Thanks,  
Stephen

**# re: A Fascinating Chat this Week with, Dr. Maria Klawe**

Friday, December 09, 2005 12:55 AM by [John Boufford](#)

Somewhat belatedly, thank you Stephen and Maria for highlighting many important issues which are fundamental to improved productivity and competitiveness for Canada. Both threats (declining enrollments leading to increased outsourcing in the future, competition from China) and opportunities (Southeast Asian doctoral candidates are coming to Canada post-9-11) were identified. There are very important messages in this interview for government policy makers, post-secondary institutions, and professional societies.

Speaking to reporters at a round table following a seminar in Ottawa on December 6, 2005 Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, reinforced these messages about the importance of educational institutions in making Canada a world leader in IT. He said, "I would [advise the government to] put the money into doubling the size of computer science and electrical engineering departments at Canadian universities and figure out how to fill he seats". (The Ottawa Citizen, December 7, 2005 at page D3)

Another prominent theme in Maria's interview was the importance of balance between professional and personal life. Maria seems to have achieved that balance - admittedly in part during conference calls ;<)

Maria is a fine role model for Canadian IT practitioners but especially so for women contemplating a career in technology.

Well done folks.

John Boufford, I.S.P.  
CIPS National Vice President