

# contest-winning programmers

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## UCF's teams dominate the southeast regional programming contest

*UCF is the only university that has finished in the top three in the region for 27 years in a row.*

In October, the UCF Programming Team swept the 2008 Southeast Regional Programming Contest—winning first, third, seventh, eighth, and tenth places over 73 other collegiate teams. This regional event is part of ACM's International Collegiate Programming Contest, a world-wide competition that ACM has sponsored for almost 30 years (see [WWW.ACM.ORG](http://WWW.ACM.ORG)).

These programming contests consist of a set of about ten problems. Teams of three students write computer programs in C, C++, or Java and attempt to get the correct output for as many problems as possible. The teams are ranked by the number of problems solved in a five-hour time span and by how long it takes to solve each problem. Additional minutes are added for each incorrect attempt at solving a problem. UCF's *Hypersolution sub-team* placed first, overall, solving five of the ten problems.

The top regional teams earn the opportunity to participate in the world finals, competing against the best collegiate programmers in the world. The 2009 world finals will be held during April in Stockholm, Sweden. UCF's first place finish automatically qualifies the team.

"The major thing is our consistency," explains faculty advisor Ali Orooji, Ph.D. "Other schools do well one year here or one year there. UCF is the only university that has finished in the top three in the region for 27 years in a row. No other university in the Southeast Region can match that."

Leading up to the 2008 regional contest, UCF's programmers took part in an extensive training program with coaches Glenn Martin, Jason Daly, Chris Gouge, and Arup Guha, as well

as Raymond Ho, Nadeem Mohsin, and Ben Douglass. Orooji organizes the team activities. "Really we have good students, that is the main thing," says Orooji. "The second thing is our commitment and hard work. We practice 25 Saturdays each year, and each practice is around 7 or 8 hours."

UCF's team consists of 15 student members who compete in teams of three. Each of the five sub-teams placed in the top-ten this year—an exceptional achievement.

Thanks to a donation from a UCF alumni, students on the programming team receive a stipend for their participation. "That is why we have more time to put into practice," says Orooji, who explains that the ultimate vision is to support the programmers just like college football or basketball players.

UCF's programming team members (and regional placement):

*Hypersolution sub-team* (1<sup>st</sup>): Michael Do, Jeremy Elbourn, Stephen Fulwider  
*Sublimation sub-team* (3<sup>rd</sup>): David Callies, Adam Holbrook, Ryan Kwong  
*Reaction sub-team* (7<sup>th</sup>): Jaime Flores, Travis Roe, Steven Robertson  
*Reduction sub-team* (8<sup>th</sup>): Luis Estrada, Lindsay Romano, Steven Zielinski  
*Cation sub-team* (10<sup>th</sup>): Clayton Andrews, Omar Hemmali, Chris Zonca



UCF's programming team at the 2008 Southeast Regional Programming Contest. Photo by the *Central Florida Future*.