Sakai Newsletter

October 16, 2008

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1. From the Executive Director

Greetings,

There's a great deal happening in Sakai these days. The 2.6 code freeze occurred just a few weeks ago. The UX Improvement Initiative is moving faster than ever. Planning work for an improved Sakai kernel is well under way. We've launched a new version of the Sakai website. We're in the process of selecting a new Quality Assurance Director. And two important events are just over the horizon -- The Virginia Tech Regional Conference and Educause 2008.

The Virginia Tech meeting on November 11 & 12 is shaping up to be a very exciting event. There are over 100 registrants already and we can only accommodate approximately 150 folks, so if you're intending to go you should you register ASAP at:

https://educonference.com/sakai/virginiaTech/index.php

And I'm sure, like me, many of you are getting ready for Educause 2008 in Orlando. There is an unprecedented number of Sakai-related events and presentations this year. You can find information on these events by visiting the Sakai website (http://www.sakaiproject.org) or in the flyer (included at the end of this Newsletter). For those of you who'll be at Educause, there's an Open Source Reception, sponsored by Kuali, DSpace, Sakai, Fedora Commons and JA-SIG on Wednesday evening at 6:15. You can find out more about the reception and RSVP at:

http://sakai.pingg.com/EducauseOpenSource

I hope to see you in Orlando and Blacksburg in the coming weeks!

Best regards,

Michael Korcuska
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2. Introducing Margaret Londergan -- Our Accessibility QA Lead!

Hi Everyone --

Margaret Londergan, the Manager of the UITS Adaptive Technology Centers for Indiana University, has offered to take over the accessibility QA process for Sakai! You may already know Margaret from her participation on the list in the past, or peripherally through the great work of Joe Humbert and Mary Stores from her department.

Margaret will be sending out information to you in several weeks about the Sakai 2.6 QA schedule, with links for signup, tools to be tested, test servers, etc., and asking for your assistance. Please sign on to help -- even if you only have time for one tool. Sakai is a community effort, and I'm sure there will be a lot to be done given that it's been over a year, and a version, since Sakai's accessibility was last reviewed.

Thanks in advance for helping out; and thank you Margaret for taking this on! Best wishes, everyone!

Mike Elledge
elledge@msu.edu

3. Sakai Board Call for Nominations

The Sakai Elections Work Group is pleased to announce the opening of nominations for two positions on the Sakai Foundation Board of Directors. The current terms for John Norman (Cambridge), Chris Coppola (rSmart), and Mara Hancock (Berkeley) expire in December. Ian Dolphin had previously stepped down earlier this year as a result of his new position with eFramework. We are only electing two new board member, instead of three, because the Board of Directors plans to reform the bylaws to allow for appointed board members. More information about the proposed reform will be forthcoming. Electing two new members still provides us with more than the required minimum of seven board members.

The Sakai Foundation is dedicated to the design and development of collaborative, open source software in support of education, research and related scholarly activities. The Board of Directors provides leadership for the Sakai Foundation by serving the interests of the entire Sakai community, promoting the objectives of the Sakai Foundation, representing and coordinating Foundation projects, ensuring that project management is consistent with the Foundation's mission, and that the Foundation operates within its fiscal resources.

The Board of Directors meets at least twice a year at such times and places as designated by the Chair. Board members regularly conduct Board business electronically. Monthly audio conferences have been the norm. Board members are not compensated for their work but expenses will be reimbursed in line with Foundation policies. Nominees will be expected to confirm that their institutional leadership approves of this commitment of time if elected. Board members shall serve for a term of three years. Board members may serve only two consecutive terms. More detailed information about the Sakai Foundation and the responsibilities of the Board of Directors can be found in the Bylaws of the Sakai Foundation.

Nominations must be emailed to sakaielections@umich.edu no later than 5:00 PM EST (GMT-5) on Sunday, November 2, 2008. Anyone can be nominated to stand for election to the Board. Self-nominations are also allowed. Receipt of any nomination you submit will be confirmed. The Elections Work Group will notify all nominees, explain the expectations for board members and confirm their willingness and ability to run for election. If they agree, additional information about them will be solicited.

Board members will be elected by the institutional and corporate representatives as specified in the Sakai Foundation bylaws. A current list of institutional and corporate representatives has been posted at http://www.sakaiproject.org/portal/site/sakai-foundation.

The election is scheduled to be conducted online in November with results announced in December.

Thank you very much for helping us present the most qualified slate of candidates. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sakai Elections Working Group
Carl Jacobson
Mary Miles
Joseph Hardin

4. Are You Using Sakai?

It seems that fairly often these days new organizations already running Sakai are popping up on mail lists, commenting in the wiki, etc., which is great! Anyone is of course welcome to download Sakai from the website and start using it without letting us know. However, I would certainly like to encourage folks using Sakai to participate in the community, even just to let us know you're out there! In this respect there are a few things I would like to highlight: Sakai World Map, Deployment Database and Security Contacts List.

The Sakai World map is a Google Map of the locations of Sakai deployments that have self-reported themselves to the Sakai Foundation. If you participate no further, it would be great to have your organization marked on the map on the Sakai website:

http://sakaiproject.org/portal/site/sakai-community/page/d89dabbf-a033-412f-80c4-a38931056b26

The Deployment Database is a place where organizations running Sakai can share information on their software and hardware configurations, as well as support, administration, DBA, etc., staffing levels. It is an excellent source of information for folks both running or considering Sakai to get a feel for what it takes. (If you are already in the database, please take a moment to verify that your information is up-to-date; there are a number of places that we know have upgraded recently, but haven't yet updated their entry.)

http://jira.sakaiproject.org/jira/secure/IssueNavigator.jspa?mode=hide&requestId=11294

The Security Contact List provides a communication channel for announcing Sakai security-related patches. This gives organizations running Sakai a window in which to test and apply such patches before the security issue is publicized. You'll also find Sakai's Security Policy posted in this group's wiki space:

http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/SEC

If you are running Sakai, and would like to be added to the world map, deployment database and/or the security contact list, please contact Anthony Whyte (arwhyte@umich.edu).

Thanks!

Peter Knoop
Sakai Project Coordinator

5. Unicon to Collaborate with Johns Hopkins for uPortal 3 Upgrade

Unicon, Inc., has announced the completion of a collaborative project with the IT staff at John's Hopkins University for their upgrade to the latest uPortal 3 open source enterprise portal. As part of the upgrade process, Johns Hopkins University also contracted with Unicon to develop numerous uPortal 3 feature enhancements. Johns Hopkins went live with the uPortal 3 upgrade in August 2008 and contributed the newly developed enhancements back to the open source community.

"Johns Hopkins University once again demonstrates its leadership in information technology through its effective deployment of the uPortal 3 open source enterprise portal," said John C. Blakley, CEO of Unicon, Inc. "In addition to helping specify and develop key feature and performance enhancements for uPortal 3, Johns Hopkins has contributed the work done at their university to the open source community for the benefit of educational institutions and organizations worldwide."

Johns Hopkins contributed the following uPortal 3 enhancements to the open source community.
 - Usability Evaluation & Design
 - Theme and Skin Implementation
 - Fragment Administration Portlet
 - Theme/Skin Implementations: Namespacing and JavaScript Menus with jQuery

Joe Waldygo
joe@topspincommunications.com

6. Sakai Guided Tour Webinar from Unicon

Topic: Explore Sakai's capabilities, tools, and best practices with a seasoned expert.

When: Thursday, October 23rd, 2008, 2 pm Eastern (11 am Pacific)

Duration: 60 Minutes

Learn more about Sakai
- See a demonstration of Sakai functionality
- Discover what community source technology can do for your educational institution
- Interact with a Sakai expert and ask questions along the way
- Explore Sakai's capabilities, tools, and best practices together
- For more information, see this PDF:
http://www.unicon.net/files/File/sakai_brochure_unicon2.pdf

Interactive Webinar

The Webinar will be conducted both online and over the phone, to allow you the best opportunity to ask questions and explore the technology thoroughly. Once you sign up for the Webinar, you will be sent a direct URL for the session. Seating is limited.

To register, go to:
http://www.unicon.net/contact?cat=9&subject=Sakai%20Guided%20Tour%20-%2010/23/08

About Your Guide -- Charlie Shelton's expertise includes the functional aspects of Sakai as well as the business processes needed to make Sakai a success. In addition to his 25 years of information technology experience, he has over 5 years experience as an adjunct faculty at several colleges and universities where he employed learning management systems.

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7. Position Announcement: ePortfolio Project Coordinator

Position Description: ePortfolio Project Coordinator Office of Academic Affairs

Position Summary: The IUPUI Electronic Portfolio (ePort) Initiative seeks a Project Coordinator to help manage the wide array of collaborative efforts involved in launching and maintaining a complex, campus-wide program. The position requires a self-starter who enjoys working with major academic initiatives and moving them forward, can work effectively with faculty and staff, and has strong communication and analytical skills. The Coordinator will report to the Director of the ePortfolio Initiative and be a member of the ePort Executive Committee.

The ePortfolio Initiative aims to improve curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment of learning at IUPUI through the development and implementation of an electronic student learning portfolio. The initiative's components and activities include faculty development; pilot projects funded through an internal grant process; integration of the ePortfolio with other major campus initiatives, including the academic plan; and software

planning and development. The program involves IUPUI faculty from multiple disciplines, as well as administrators and staff from at least six university offices.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- Becoming knowledgeable about electronic portfolios in higher education and the IUPUI ePort program.

- Working with faculty and administrative leaders of the ePort program to ensure that its various parts and sub-projects continue to move forward and that goals are met.

- Planning and organizing faculty development activities and events related to ePort.

- Developing and updating the content of the ePort website.

- Developing Institutional Review Board materials for the project, as needed.

- Developing planning and progress reports, timelines, and task charts for sub-projects.

- Coordinating a small grants program that funds curriculum development around ePort.

- Staffing ePort committees (e.g., scheduling and attending meetings, writing minutes, ensuring follow-up on meeting-generated tasks).

- Disseminating the ePort initiative, including participating in workshops and conferences for various academic audiences.

- Co-authoring articles for publication in relevant academic journals.

Required Qualifications:
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate complex projects and communicate and collaborate effectively with multiple stakeholders.

- Ability to prioritize, solve problems, address complex issues, and multi-task with minimal supervision.

- Very strong organizational and analytical abilities and excellent written and oral communication skills.

- Understanding of current higher education issues.

- Expertise with basic office computer software tools: Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Outlook.

- Master's degree required; advanced degree preferred.

Salary: Commensurate with qualifications

Application Process: In keeping with IUPUI's commitment to increase the diversity of the campus community, candidates from less represented populations and/or individuals who have experience working in culturally diverse environments are particularly encouraged to apply. Candidates should submit a letter of interest providing evidence of the qualifications outlined above, c.v., and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least three references able to comment on the applicant's qualifications for the position. Electronic submission is encouraged. The search and screen committee will begin review of applications on October 20, 2008, and will continue until the position is filled. Inquiries should be directed to Dr. Susan Kahn at (317) 278-3604 or skahn@iupui.edu.

Applications should be sent to Jill Thomas at jt31@iupui.edu or mailed to
Search and Screen Committee
c/o Jill Thomas
755 W Michigan Street, UL 1140
Indianapolis, IN 46202

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8. Recent Email Group Discussions

Here are some topics that have been discussed in the last couple of weeks in Sakai email groups. Most of these discussions can be found at these Nabble URLs:

- Sakai-dev - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Development-f18040.html (DEV)
- Sakai Portfolio - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Portfolio-f18155.html (PORT)
- Sakai Pedagogy - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Pedagogy-f24248.html (PED)
- Sakai UI - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---User-Interaction-f25634.html (UI)
- Sakai Migration - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai-Migration-Group-f27621.html (MIG)
- Sakai Announcements - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Announce-f28489.html (ANN)

To join an email group, go to http://www.collab.sakaiproject.org. While you are in your workspace, click the "Membership" link in the left-hand menu and then click the "Joinable Sites" link. Click "Join" next to any of the groups.

Discussions:

A thought about Content Authoring   DEV
Attempted to cache a user record without an eid   DEV

Calculated question types   USER
CM provider question   DEV
course management api, users not showing up   DEV
creating a sakai site based on template   DEV
Dual language Sakai installation   USER
Getting DataSource object   DEV
Have you redefined types and roles in project sites?   DEV, PORT
Help build Awareness of Teaching and Learning Issues   PORT
importing black board format tests   DEV
Improving the CLE 1 - Create a Site (a follow-up project)   USER
JForum Oracle users   DEV
Kernel 1.0 artifacts added to maven2 repo   DEV
Matrix import blows up - wrong URL   PORT
Messages Tool Error   DEV
Osp portal styles   PORT
OSP: feedback on the new 'portfolio-workflow' interface from nightly2   PORT
Position Announcement: ePortfolio Project Coordinator   PORT
Preferences' Tool Language Setting : Site Creation : Changing Language   DEV
Release Goals (was: Updating the Sakai Roadmap for 2.7(?)/3.0(?))   DEV
Report Tool Quest   DEV
Round 1 mock-ups for course management / create a site   USER
Sakai search tool modification   DEV
Site Setup (creating a course site) - best practices.   USER
Thoughts on Instructors setting up own courses vs. automated upload of courses by Sakai admin   USER
Upgrading sakai from 2.4 to 2.5   DEV
using a custom role with the Sections tool   DEV
View Details on resource tool not working   USER
Wicket   DEV

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9. Events

2008 International Eportfolio Conference
Maastricht, the Netherlands
October 22-24, 2008
http://events.eife-l.org/ep2008/overview

Sakai Fall Regional Conference
November 11 and 12, 2008
The Inn at Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia
https://educonference.com/sakai/virginiaTech/index.php

ONLINE EDUCA BERLIN 2008
14th International Conference on Technology Supported Learning and Training
December 3-5 , 2008
Hotel InterContinental Berlin
Berlin, Germany
www.online-educa.com

The OPEN Forum for Higher Education Executives
December 7-9, 2008
Palm Springs, California
http://theopenforum2008.com/index.html

2009 JASIG Spring Conference
March 1-4, 2009
The Sheraton Dallas Hotel
Dallas, Texas
http://www.ja-sigorg

10th Sakai Conference: Boston
July 8-10, 2009
Cambridge Hyatt
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Here are email addresses to contact if you encounter problems with
various Sakai Community systems:

Collab -- collab-admins@umich.edu
Confluence -- confluence-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org
Jira -- jira-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org

Sakai At Educause
October 28-31

This year's Educause Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida features an unprecedented number of Sakai-related events. Here are few to put on your calendar…and don't miss the Wednesday evening reception!

Sessions About Sakai

Open/Community Source Innovation Showcase
Featuring the Executive Directors of Sakai, Kuali, DSpace, Fedora Commons and JA-Sig. Wednesday at 10:30 am.

Lessons Learned from Deploying Sakai
Featuring Indiana University, Marist College and Oregon Health & Sciences University. Wednesday 11:40 am.

Transitioning Learning Management Systems
With Nancy J. O'Laughlin, Instructional Designer at University of Delaware. Wednesday at 2:15 pm.

Is Sakai Right for Your Institution?
A poster session featuring Marist College and Sakai Board Member Josh Baron. Wednesday at 4:15 pm.

Deploying an Open Source, Online Evaluation System
With University of Michigan, Maryland and Virginia Tech. Friday at 9:30 am.

Other Sessions of Interest

The Future of IT in Higher Education
Hosted by CampusEAI, with Michael Korcuska, Sakai Executive Director and Dave Melone, Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. Wednesday at 12:30 pm. RSVP at www.regonline.com/educause2008.

Community Source: Promise or Peril for Higher Ed?
Featuring Brad Wheeler, CIO of Indiana University and former Sakai board member. Wednesday at 3:50 pm.

IMS Learning Information Services (LIS) Forum
Hosted by IMS and sponsored by Oracle, the Sakai integration should be mentioned. Located at the Rosen Center Hotel. Tuesday at 1:30 PM.

UC Berkeley's Approach to Course Casting
I'm sure Sakai will get at least a mention here. Presented by Sakai Board member Mara Hancock, University of California, Berkeley. Wednesday at 4:55 PM.

Community Source Reception

Sakai, Kuali, DSpace, Fedora Commons and JA-Sig are co-sponsoring a reception on Wednesday, October 29 from 6:30 - 8:00 PM in room W307AB of the West Concourse of the Convention Center.

The reception is open to all, but please RSVP at http://sakai.pingg.com/

The Sakai Foundation - www.sakaiproject.org - info@sakaifoundation.org

Sakai Commercial Affiliates at the Educause Expo

rSmart is a leading open source application software company serving the education market. rSmart packages, certifies, deploys, and supports a suite of enterprise financial, collaboration and learning applications for colleges, universities, and organizations serving grades K–12. This year at EDUCAUSE rSmart is featuring its special Sakai Adoption Package. Start using rSmart Sakai CLE on your campus in 2 to 6 weeks with a complete enterprise Sakai deployment, custom configured, initialized, hosted and fully supported. Visit rSmart at booth 942.

Serensoft works exclusively with higher education, helping institutions like yours deploy and support e-portfolios and learning management systems using Sakai and OSPortfolio. With e-portfolios in particular, their highly customized approach—called "Providence Methodology"—helps institutions determine the most effective way to use and deploy e-portfolios, whether it's within a single department or institution-wide. Visit Serensoft at booth 842.

CampusEAI Consortium (CEAI) is a global not-for-profit information technology solutions and consulting services provider focused on helping its members implement enterprise e-business solutions timely and cost-effectively. CEAI provides comprehensive hosted solutions and services for Sakai. See CampusEAI at their special event on Wednesday at 12:30pm. Complimentary registration required at http://www.regonline.com/educause2008.

Since 1993 Unicon has designed, implemented, and managed open source technology solutions for major universities, colleges, and corporations. Their Sakai expertise includes custom development and integration with campus portals, collaboration, learning, calendaring, and e-mail technologies in addition to ERP systems. One of Unicon's greatest strengths is its expertise in planning new and expanded Sakai implementations. Visit Unicon at booth 848 & 850.

Oracle serves more than 4,200 higher education institutions worldwide, helping them manage the business of education. 10 of the top 10 Research institutions and 9 of the top 10 academic universities worldwide are running on Oracle applications. Oracle collaborates with key partners, open source communities, and standards organizations to deepen and broaden Oracle's solutions in support of the academic enterprise. Visit Oracle at booth 817.

IBM has created a cloud-based, virtualized learning environment built on Sakai in our exhibit booth. They will be demonstrating an infrastructure showing the power of IBM's Open Education vision for Anytime, Anywhere, Any Device Learning. The infrastructure includes Sakai, built on rSmart's Collaborative Learning Edition, delivering education content to eight different user devices - from laptops to thin clients to web tablets to gaming devices, along with their Virtual Client Solution and System x Blade Server. The Sakai collaborative environment will allow you to explore learning modules highlighting IBM's comprehensive solutions for Higher Education. Visit IBM at Educause Booth 1101.

We welcome your inquiries about Sakai. Write us at info@sakaifoundation.org

The Sakai Foundation - www.sakaiproject.org - info@sakaifoundation.org