The **Russell L. DeSouza Award**

Collaboration and Cooperation

Or

The Importance of Community Service to Unidata

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4/1/2012

I’ve been asked to talk briefly about:

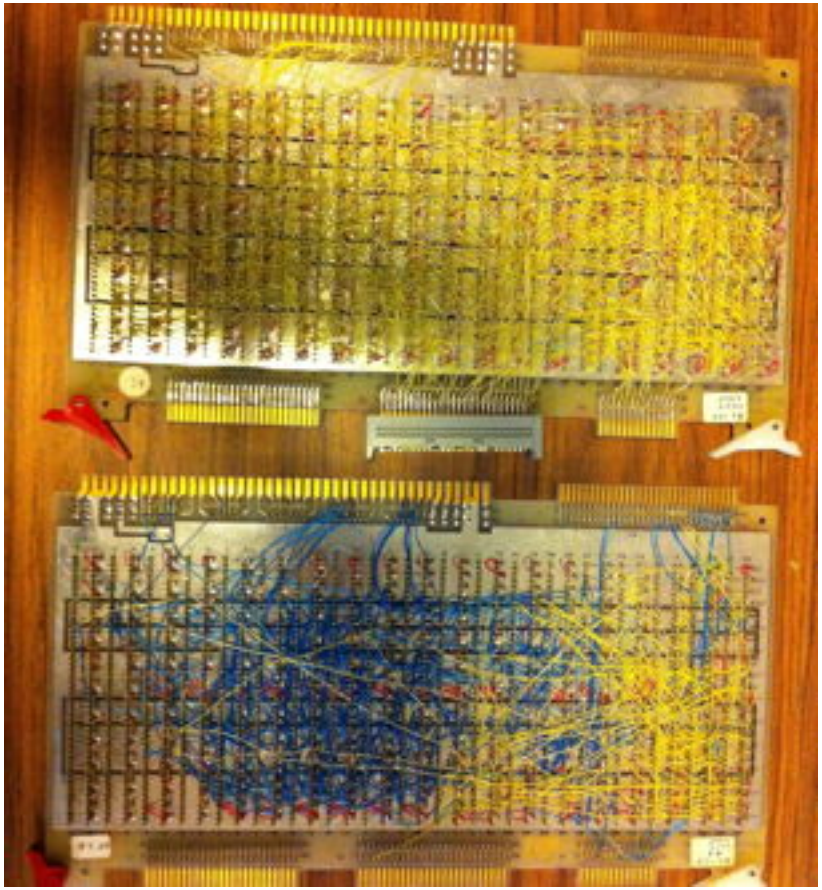
- My involvement with Unidata.
- Distribution of NLDN data.
- How we use Unidata data and software.

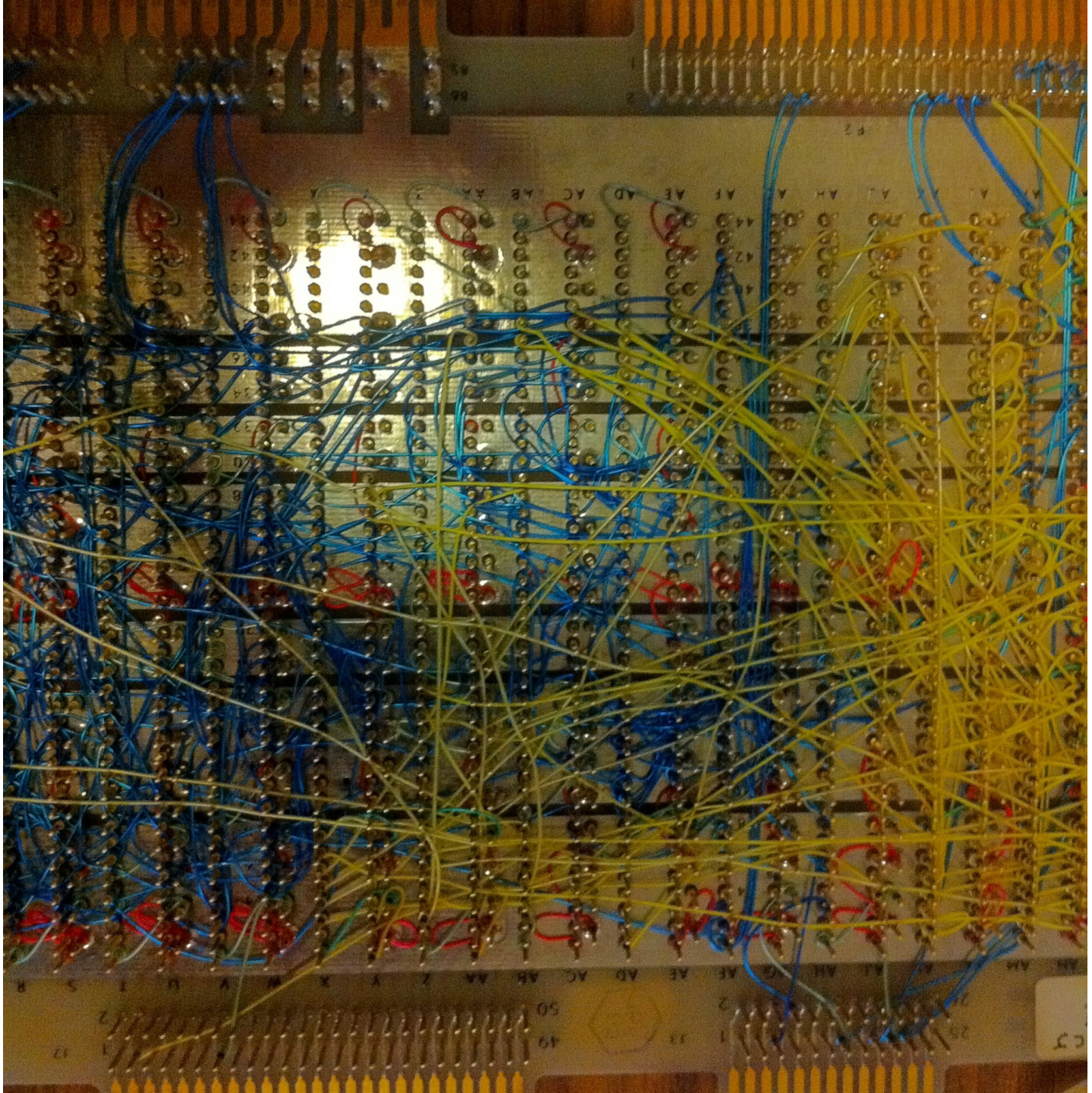
First a Little History

- Before there were desktop, or laptop, computers there were “mainframe” and “desk” computers.

One of these “desk” computers was a McIDAS (Man computer Interactive Data Access System) from Univ. Wisconsin

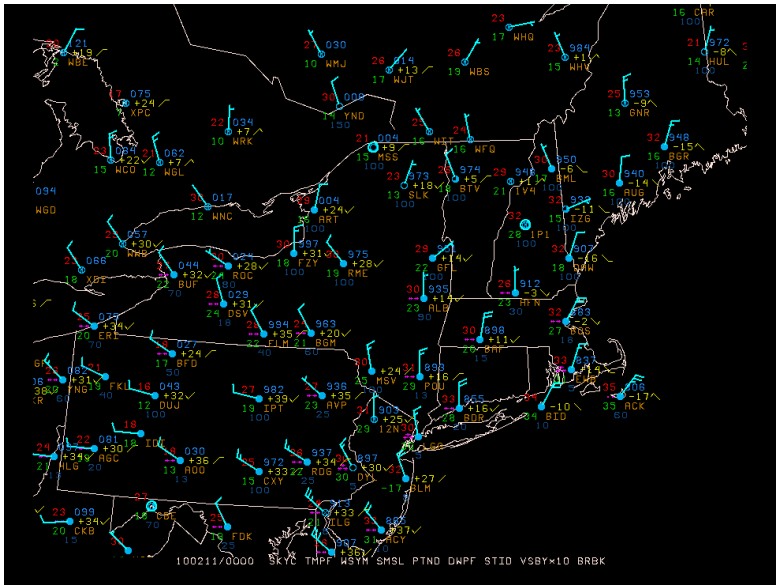
These took awhile to create





At about the same time, NASA released GEMPAK, (**GE**neral **M**eteorology **PA**c**K**age)

- Gempak had the advantage of running on commercially available Digital VAX (Virtual Address eXtension) systems



- Data was delivered via Satellite dish and/or dedicated land line.
- Many Universities were trying to create their own version of computer aided data analysis software.
- This resulted in a lot of duplicative effort.
- Not everybody could participate because the cost was high.
- Clearly this was not sustainable.

Fortunately this was realized and steps were taken.

- In the early 1980's a group consisting of people from UWisc, CSU, Purdue, Utah, UWash, UAlbany (then SUNYA) NSF, UCAR, and others, gathered to discus the situation and solution.
- In 1983 Unidata was formed.
- By combining University and Data, they cleverly came up with the name UniData.

Or maybe other words were used.

- United Data.
- Universal Data.
- Or perhaps it was just made up – somebody knows, but not me.

The important point is that Unidata was created through Collaboration and Cooperation.

Good decisions were made

- Housed under the existing UCAR umbrella.
- Supported directly by NSF.
- No membership fees.
- Shared Community based governance. Policy, Users, and Adhoc.

Unidata is a Community based on Collaboration and Cooperation

- You already know that, which why you are here.
- Without your efforts, and the efforts of many others, Unidata would not be possible. Thank You.
- Which brings me to why I am here today.

- I’m proud to have been nominated for the **Russell L. DeSouza Award**.

- Honors individuals whose energy, expertise, and **active involvement** enable the Unidata Program to better serve geoscience. Honorees personify Unidata's ideal of a **community** that shares data, software, and ideas through computing and networking technologies.

- An honor indeed!

- I’m not sure when UAlbany started using Unidata software and data. I got there in 1988 and I think we were using it then.
- I served on the Unidata Users Committee 1993-1997.

This is where I first met Russ DeSouza, who was the Policy Committee liaison to the UserComm.

- Millersville managing the McIdas Educational floater.

- I served on the Unidata Policy committee from 1998-2001.
- Unlike some committees the Unidata governing committees are actually listened to.
- Committees are an important part of cooperation and collaboration in the Unidata community.
- People don’t mind working hard when their work is valued. Community service is more fun when the community cares.

NLDN Data

- In the early 1990's NLDN network left SUNYA.
- Around 1994 Ron Henderson had the idea to try and make NLDN data available to the Unidata community.
- A 1 year formal agreement was reached.
- By 1995, with the help of Unidata staff, data was flowing and decoders were ready.
- When Ron left SUNYA, I took over the NLDN feed. It was too important to the community to abandon!

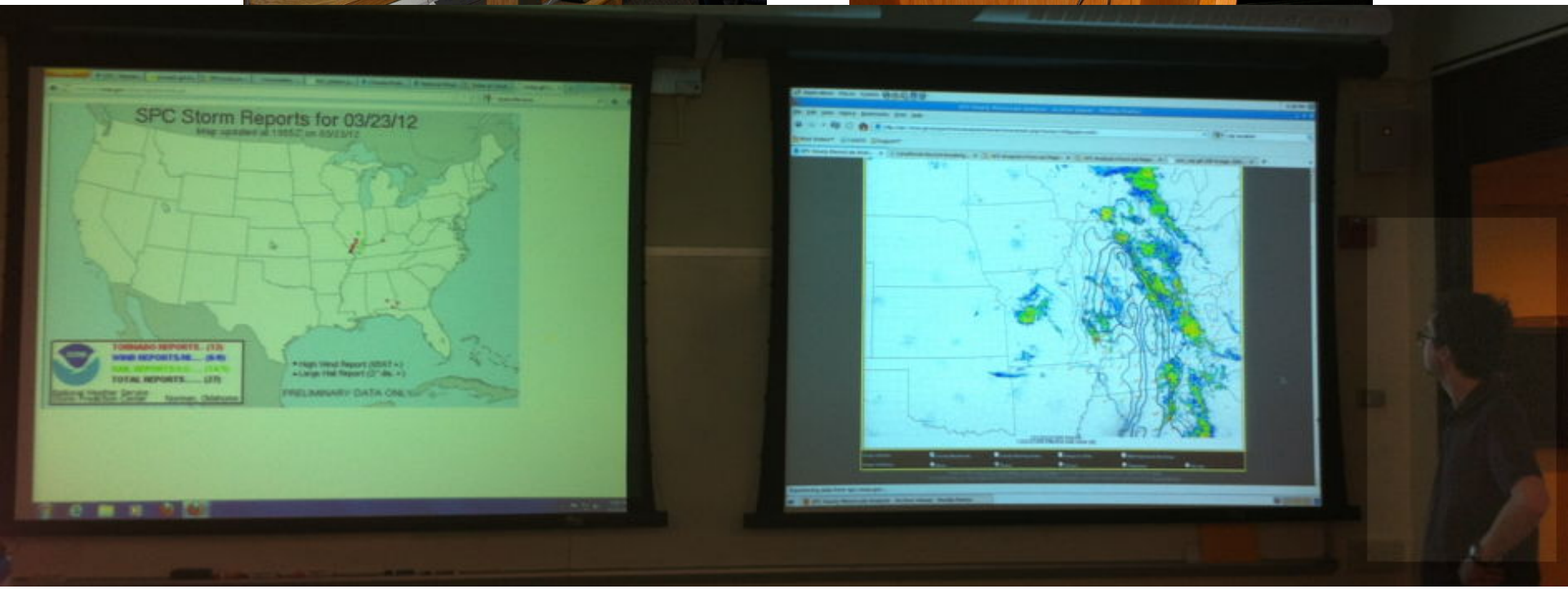
NLDN Data (cont.)

- The company was sold several times.
- Y2k - Sandy Whitesel - Unidata.
- Saying no.
- Vaisalla – Scott Sternberg - Tom Yoksas – Unidata.
- Cooperation, Collaboration, Community service.

Unidata data, software and tools.

- Used extensively at both undergraduate and graduate level.
- For both research and education.
- Web graphics.
- Normally I would show many examples.
- LDM - NetCDF
- Cooperation, Collaboration, Community service.

Unidata Software for “map” discussions



Send discussion summary to “map” mail list (~ 300 members)

Thanks again for selecting me to receive the

Russell L. DeSouza Award.

Discuss

Collaboration, Cooperation and Community service.

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