



AI

# Meet CST's newest Goldwater Scholar

by Lindsay Hargrave



As a computer science major, Andrew Tran is captivated by robots and AI.

Tran's dedication to AI research helped earn him a Goldwater Scholarship, one of the oldest and most prestigious national scholarships in the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics in the United States. It is awarded to college sophomores and juniors based on their research merit and promise as a future researcher. Since 2018, eight Temple University students have earned a Goldwater Scholarship, with six having a CST major or minor.

Tran's research has been performed under the leadership of Assistant Professor of Computer and Information Sciences Stephen MacNeil in the Temple University Human-computer Interaction (HCI) Lab.

"Andrew's achievements, including over 400 citations, are impressive. However, these statistics only scratch the surface of his true influence on our lab, department and fellow students," MacNeil said.

Tran's research with the HCI Lab examines new generative AI models such as ChatGPT.

His work specifically focuses on the use of these models in the computing classroom, and answers questions such as, "How can students use these models to improve their learning?" and, "How can instructors use these models to improve their pedagogies?" Tran hypothesizes that some of these AI models may even replace search engines in educational settings someday, and that this research will impact classrooms very soon.

"The HCI lab overall has an amazing and very welcoming environment. Students get to solve real-world problems through an approach to thinking they might not encounter in the computer science classroom," Tran said. "The biggest highlight of my computer science career at Temple is my time with the lab."

In the future, Tran would like to delve into topics such as embodied AI, which is the concept of AI systems incorporated into physical forms like robots. "Andrew's collaborative nature and ability to advise peers affirm his potential to become a world-class researcher—someone who elevates those around him, a quality the scientific community direly needs," MacNeil said.



*Andrew's achievements, including over 400 citations, are impressive. However, these statistics only scratch the surface of his true influence on our lab, department and fellow students." - STEPHEN MACNEIL*



PHOTO: CONNOR MCVAIL