

CASC announces Charlie Bender Scholarship first recipient
Manhattan College systems administrator attends Linux Clusters Institute Workshop

June 12, 2023 - The Coalition of Academic Scientific Computation is proud to announce a Manhattan College systems administrator received the first Charlie Bender scholarship for Research Computing and Data (RCD) professional development. Wyatt Madej attended the LCI introductory Linux Clusters Institute (LCI) introductory-level workshop held on May 1-5, 2023, at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, OK for Linux system administrators new to high performance computing (HPC).



The scholarship, established in memory of Charles “Charlie” Bender, PhD, founding chairperson of CASC, aims to support research computing and data staff persons in their pursuit of professional and leadership development. The scholarship committee recognized Wyatt Madej’s passion for learning and attaining increased responsibilities in research computing and data administration at Manhattan College, as well as his interest and involvement in various extracurricular activities.

“Based on his initiative and the management-level skills Wyatt has demonstrated early on in his career, the committee of LCI and CASC members quickly decided that he was the ideal candidate for the first scholarship,” said Richard Knepper, CASC vice chair and director of the Cornell University Center for Advanced Computing.

Madej is a system administrator and engineer at Manhattan College, where he manages and maintains academic computing systems, including overseeing a computer lab standard operating environment (SOE) of approximately 1,200 devices, and leading cyberinfrastructure projects. At Manhattan College, Madej has led projects in advanced networking and cyberinfrastructure, HPC and grant writing. He has moved the college’s computing landscape forward by instituting open-source solutions, such as clientless remote desktop gateways, home-grown VDI solutions, the cloud, and research computing systems. He wrote the College's first Campus

Cyberinfrastructure plan; during the COVID-19 pandemic, he oversaw and managed the transition of licensed software onto an online virtual desktop environment.

I am deeply honored and grateful to be chosen as the first recipient of the Charlie Bender Scholarship," said Madej. "This scholarship will undoubtedly provide me with invaluable opportunities to further my education and pursue my dreams. I am excited to make the most of this opportunity and carry forward Charlie Bender's legacy."

"It was a fantastic week driven by great people that have 100% provided myself (and by extension Manhattan College) the information we need to further our investment in cyberinfrastructure initiatives."

The Charlie Bender scholarship supports education and training for RCD professionals for activities consistent with CASC's strategic plan objectives to develop leaders, establish strategic partnerships, and potentially broaden the CASC membership. The scholarships are awarded to support travel and/or registration for training events or professional development activities identified by the CASC Executive Committee. Initially, these training events include:

- PEARCxy, for its wide array of networking opportunities and content relevant to current and emerging RCD centers.
- Linux Clusters Institute (LCI), for its high-value training target at the RCD community.
- Cyberinfrastructure Leadership Academy, for its close, emerging relationship with CASC
- SCxy, because of its key role in bringing the RCD and CASC community together for a range of networking activities and relevant content.

At the LCI Introductory Workshop for which Madej received travel funding, participants learned HPC system administration concepts and technologies and how to apply them; gained hands-on skills building a small test cluster in lab sessions; and shared real-life stories and connected with an esteemed network of RCD professionals.

Lavanya Podila, project manager for the National Center for Supercomputing Applications NSF-ACCESS Award and leader of the Linux Cluster Institute, stated, "Our selection of Wyatt and future scholarship candidates is based on his professional progression and active participation in advancing networking and cyberinfrastructure within high performance computing."

Through the Charlie Bender Scholarship, CASC remains committed to its mission of empowering exceptional professionals to realize their full leadership potential in the RCD ecosystem. Additional scholarships will be awarded at future LCI workshops to support the leadership development of RCD professionals. The next Charlie Bender

Scholarship will be awarded in advance of the 2023 LCI Intermediate Workshop held August 21-25 at Mississippi State University in Starkville, MS.

CASC established the scholarship in honor of Charlie Bender, who throughout his lifetime was dedicated to furthering the research and development of high performance computing and networking and its application to business and education.

After his tenure as head of the Chemistry and Materials Science Department at Lawrence Livermore Laboratories and as associate vice president for Research at the University of Georgia, Bender became the first director of the Ohio Supercomputer Center and founding chair of CASC in 1987-2002. In 1996, President Clinton named Bender the academic director for the Department of Defense's High Performance Computing Modernization Program located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton. He then became director of the Computational Sciences and Mathematics Division of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. Bender served on the National Science Foundation Academic Research Infrastructure Program review panel among other advisory boards.

He graduated from Pacific University with a bachelor's in chemistry and a master's degree in atomic physics and received a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Washington. He did postdoctoral work in theoretical chemistry at Battelle Memorial Institute, in Columbus, Ohio.

To apply to the Charlie Bender Scholarship, please contact Kathryn Kelley at kelley@casc.org

About the Coalition for Academic Scientific Computation (CASC): The Coalition for Academic Scientific Computation (CASC) is an educational non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on advanced computing technology in the 21st century. We are composed of over 100 partner institutions with a shared mission of accelerating scientific discovery and developing a diverse workforce. Together, like-minded individuals and universities form a passionate community to support research computing and data. More information is available at <http://casc.org>.

About the Linux Clusters Institute: LCI is providing education and advanced technical training for the deployment and use of computing clusters to the high performance computing community worldwide. Founded in 1998, it includes some of the world's foremost specialists in building and deploying clustered high-performance computing systems. LCI is the premier international forum to share information on management, administration, and advanced computing techniques for high performance clustered computing. More information is available at <http://linuxclustersinstitute.org>.

