Concerned with his carbon footprint, Jon finds an alternative to driving on his daily commute.

Jon Froehlich

Graduate student, Computer Science & Engineering

Microsoft Research Graduate Fellow

WHAT IF YOUR PHONE COULD TRACK YOUR LEVEL OF EXERCISE OR A SMALL INEXPENSIVE SENSOR COULD MONITOR HOW YOU'RE USING WATER AT HOME? Imagine if this information were fed back to you in dynamic ways? That's what I'm working on with my colleagues — using technology to create different kinds of mirrors into your life: things that motivate you to walk instead of drive, turn off a tap, or make a run a priority in your day.

I'm part of this growing field called human-computer interaction (HCI). And I really like the field's name — because it puts humans first. We'll always get the most value out of interacting with each other. We're social beings, not machinery. And, the UW is at the forefront of research that allows technology to help us lead healthier lives and to increase our environmental awareness.

HCI is a unique field that requires different skill sets and a lot of collaboration. Lucky for me, there's a tremendous culture of support for this type of work here. And with partners like Microsoft Research and Intel Research that share HCI's vision, we've got access to resources — not only funding for research, but incredible people with creative ideas. This kind of support from donors is why HCI is growing here; in a short time, we've quickly become one of the top programs in the country.

Personally, the UW was always a dream school of mine. And how can you not love this part of the country: the water, the mountains, and people who are passionate about using technology to make us healthier and improve our environment. Throw in the University's faculty and facilities — we have so much going for us.

Thank you,

A–

The UW was one of only 14 schools in the nation to receive an A-minus — the highest grade given — on the 2009 College Sustainability Report Card.