

TechNews

Student newspaper of the Illinois Institute of Technology since 1928

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HawkTalk, Toastmasters collaboration develops student leadership traits

Khaleela Zaman
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

The past two weeks have made November an eventful month for HawkTalk, IIT's student organization that specializes in fostering public speaking and communication skills. During this time, HawkTalk hosted a workshop series in collaboration with Toastmasters International, the global organization that inspired the inception of HawkTalk in the Spring of 2014.

The first Toastmasters workshop was held on Thursday, November 13, focusing on the characteristics of an effective leader. Rachel Muhammad, coming to IIT from a Blue Cross Blue Shield Toastmasters club, led the workshop. Upbeat and engaging, Muhammad

interacted with the nearly 30-member audience in a way that made becoming an effective leader seem more achievable. The attendees came up with a list of personality traits of an effective leader and participated in an active discussion analyzing each characteristic. Vision, grit, effective communication, and resilience were a few of the discussed traits. In addition, they learned that effective leaders also need certain mental capabilities, including, but not limited to open-mindedness and quick, knowledgeable thinking.

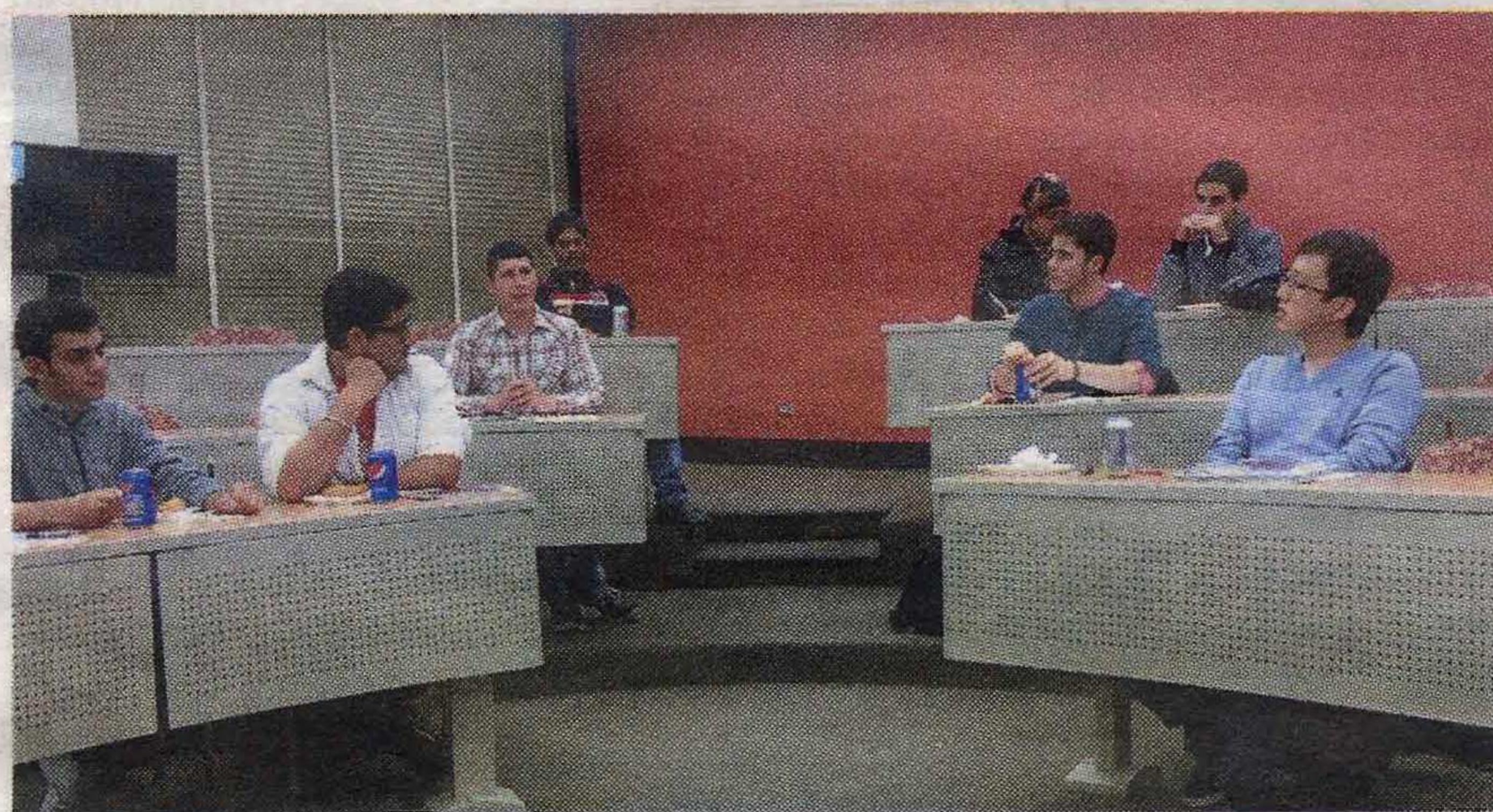
Lynorque Robinson, another Blue Cross Blue Shield Toastmaster facilitated the second workshop on the craft of communicating on Thursday, November 20. Titled "Speechcraft: The Success Communication Series," this workshop was extremely interac-

tive, bringing every participant up to the floor to speak. Every student was able to evaluate themselves on their current comfort levels as speakers, gaining insight into their abilities and learning ways to improve on those that were lacking. Several students were selected to participate in a "Table Topics" session, where each was given a topic on the spot and expected to speak impromptu for one to two minutes. Participants were able to directly address their fears of being in front of an audience and for some international students, face the language barrier.

On both occasions, attendees were provided workbooks and other materials to aid in their journey toward becoming more effective leaders and communicators. Another exciting aspect of the workshop series was

that each participant was presented an official Toastmasters International certificate of completion following each workshop. The series filled not only their brains, but also their stomachs. On each of the two occasions, delicious food from Chinese Kitchen was served, making for a delightfully wholesome experience.

For those who have not attended HawkTalk's workshops this semester, or have attended and are looking for more, stay on the lookout for further Toastmasters collaborations in the upcoming spring semester. To stay updated, join HawkTalk on HawkLink and like the "HawkTalk IIT" page on Facebook. Do not hesitate to forward any questions, concerns, or suggestions to the organization at hawktalk@iit.edu.



Photos by Anooa Sundararajan

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Advice, lessons in positivity

Shireen Gul
COPY EDITOR

Have you ever had a moment in your life when you felt like giving up but just couldn't because you thought it's not worth it? Or maybe one of those Kodak moments where something just clicks for you? Or something you've been struggling with for a long time and it was finally coming to an end but suddenly everything changed? Whatever the source of our insight, it's these moments that bring us to a deeper understanding of our world. The better understanding we have of life, the more we live in the truth.

This Ramadan, I started a 30 day lesson Facebook update challenge, where every day I shared something positive about my life and any positive lesson I had learned in my life. Most of my friends loved it, so I thought to put them all together in shape of article and share it with rest of you.

I remember once there was a time in my life where I thought nothing good will ever happen; that is when my mom told me, "Nothing is impossible in this world. Faith is the only thing that matters and will make a difference," and, trust me, it did make a difference. There will come a time in your life when making an important decision in your life will be difficult, but you've got to do what's right for you, even if it hurts. When you are going through such times, stop focusing on how stressed you are and remember how blessed you are. It could be so much worse. No matter how long it takes, it will get better. Tough situations build strong people in the end. Look for something positive about this moment. Even if you have to look a little harder than usual, it still exists.

There is a very famous saying by Victor Hugo, saying, "The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved," and you will never understand this thing until you learn to love yourself. Learn to love yourself

first, instead of loving the idea of other people loving you. My favorite poet Rumi said in one of his verses that, "Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it," and in his support he said, "Do not be satisfied with the stories that come before you. Unfold your own myth." If you will just read between the lines of his both verses you will live a very peaceful life because life is all about love and the best thing one can do is to love himself. There is another good verse by Rumi which resonates with these verses: "Ignore those that make you fearful and sad, that degrade you back towards disease and death."

Everyone has been made for some particular work, and the desire for that work has been put in every heart. All you have to do is look for that desire and fight for it. When you will start your journey, there will be many people who will try to put you down. Just remember: "When setting out on a journey do not seek advice from someone who never left home" - Rumi

There will come a time in your life when everything will go against you and you might stop believing in yourself, but just remember what Alice Walker said: "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." Everyone is born with powers; you only have to polish them with time. There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you. Speak up before it's too late. Let the world know about your power and show them that you are the one who will make his story a better one, in fact an inspirational one. As Aristotle said, "Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, and determines your destiny." So make your choices, put in your sincere efforts and keep your good intention; nothing can then stop you from being successful. The most

reliable way to predict the future is to create it. Participate in life instead of just watching it pass you by.

Everyone likes to complain-I do as well-but next time when you complain, remember this saying by our prophet Muhammad, "When you see a person who has been given more than you in money and beauty, look to those, who have been given less." Remember, social comparison is the thief of happiness. You could spend a lifetime worrying about what others have, but it wouldn't get you anything. But also remember that this doesn't mean that you have the complete right to make fun of other people. Saying someone is ugly doesn't make you any prettier. So why hurt someone's feelings? Plus nothing is ugly in this world, it's just the way we see it. Someone who appears to be ugly for you could be someone's reason for living. When you choose to see the good in others, you end up finding the good in yourself. So think before you speak and if you commit any mistakes just accept them and move ahead. You can learn great things from your mistakes when you aren't busy denying them. There isn't anything noble about being superior to another person. True nobility is in being superior to the person you once were. It's absolutely okay to be wrong at times and someone else doesn't have to be wrong for you to be right either.

One of the most important lessons you will ever learn in your life is to not listen to what people say, watch what they do. And I would like to end my article with another powerful verse by my most favorite Sufi mystic Rumi, "This being human is a guest house. Every morning is a new arrival. A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor... Welcome and entertain them all. Treat each guest honorably. The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in. Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond."

Don't miss the memo

Anndriene Bell
TECHNEWS WRITER

We are IIT! It is at this wonderful institution that we promote diversity, unity, and solidarity; yet, it is at this very institution that microaggressions, racist comments, racial profiling, sexist comments, unfair treatment, and segregation are commonplace. No, this is not a statement of hate toward the institution, as this is an environment that has a foundation deeply rooted in giving, education, and life-changing experiences. However, this is a call to action and attention for those who have, by circumstance or choice, missed the memo.

The goodness of so many college experiences is tainted with the unpleasant, derogatory filth that is spread with hate and ignorance on mediums such as Facebook, IIT Confessions, and in various social circles on campus. It is time to pause small-minded points of views. Instead, use technology to educate yourself. Better yet, have a decent

conversation to form an understanding of what is not understood. We are a direct wealth of knowledge to one another, so it is a pain to know that there are fellow Hawks who walk around as victims of such hurtful acts. If you have participated in such acts, then you, my friend, have missed the memo.

Stereotypes and generalizations in regard to race, sexual orientation, religion, culture, and so much more are also commonplace here on campus. It does not matter how many Taste of IITs, ISO events, and cultural organizations we form when there are hate crimes taking place and less support for some cultural groups than there are for others. Honestly, how many other cultural organizations are you a member of outside of your own? How often does your cultural organization initiate collaboration with that of others? Are you truly welcoming to those outside of your culture that wish to take part?

The only way that this institution is at fault, is if hate crimes and those who commit them are swept under the rug and left to fester

and resurface as vicious cycles that again, taint this very campus. This goes to state that not one minority group, race, religion, sexual orientation is at the forefront of this message, but it's fair to say that those who have been victimized stand in solidarity for what is right and just, and will take proper action against any opposition.

The university can make as many efforts to solve these issues as it likes, but the students are what make this place. Whether you are domestic, international, undocumented, male, female, Christian, Muslim, African American, Chinese, white, purple, green, student, faculty, or staff, don't miss this memo. It is time to stop ignoring such blatant ignorance and miseducation that builds the unspoken cultural divides that exist at IIT. Why even attend such a rich place of diversity if only to make a mockery of it instead of embracing it? Try taking advantage. Try becoming a well-rounded Hawk and consider changing your ways.

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Five things I learned by being Greek at IIT

Miriam Schmid

B.S. BIOCHEMISTRY / MATH AND SCIENCE EDUCATION '14

When I arrived at IIT, my 18-year old self was offered a bid to join the Greek community. More than five years later, my 23-year old self wishes I could thank that overwhelmed but excited young girl for making a decision that has shaped every day of my future since then. She thought she was finding some women who would be her friends during college, but had no idea she would find and learn so much more. I would like to share five life lessons that I learned as a member of the Greek community.

Choosing the people you surround yourself with will shape your future.

While many people do not realize the importance of the people they surround themselves with until much later in life, this lesson is very real for the Greeks. Each year, in order to make sure our chapter survives and thrives in the future we must meet, recruit, and bid new members. Contrary to popular belief, Greeks do not bid as many people as possible in order to collect dues or have a large chapter; instead, we need to find women (or men) who share our beliefs, will be dedicated, and to whom we can entrust the future of our chapter. As I became a senior and super-senior, this became more real; I was leaving and needed to find amazing women who could care for the chapter and make it better.

This ability to find and recruit people of similar values and dedication proves an invaluable skill later in life. This not only applies for finding a good significant other and friends, but also in the workplace. Greeks make great recruiters and interviewers because we have spent years talking to new people, starting specific conversations and asking the right questions to learn about a person's values, and getting a feel for when people are being real and when they are putting on a front. As I meet coworkers, I can very quickly determine what values we share and how committed they are because I have practiced recruiting, and when I am in a position to hire new people to trust with my company or organization, I already have years of experience on reading people and finding talent and leadership they may not even recognize yet.

Stepping out of your comfort zone is the only way to grow.

According to the current President of ASA, Nicolette Lewis, "Part of stepping out of your comfort zone is being surrounded by

people who you know will support you no matter what. You can never get that in the residence halls because you do not choose to be with those people and you do not necessarily share the same values." Greek chapters provide this support when members step up and hold their first leadership position, join a new athletic team, run a marathon, start a new job, etc. We not only support each other as we step out of our comfort zones, we challenge each other to do so. Several years ago, ASA hosted a yoga event for our physical aim. I was so uncomfortable doing yoga, but all of my sisters were there and we made fools of ourselves as we tried to do yoga. Even though I was way out of my comfort zone and could in no way do a "downward dog", I loved how I felt afterwards and immediately bought myself a yoga workout video. In any other setting, I would not have attempted yoga because I didn't think I would enjoy it and I would make a fool of myself, but because my sisters were doing it with me, I would have tried almost anything.

Accountability is key to being successful.

When you commit to being in a Greek chapter, you also agree to live up to the agreed-upon standards and be held accountable when you do not. While standards reflect your treatment of others, violation of house standing rules, and academics, I would like to focus on academic accountability.

The role of the scholarship chair is to provide encouragement, accountability, and resources to members who are struggling. Because the relationships in a fraternity or sorority are life-long dedication to one another, members are more receptive to this help and accountability than they would be otherwise. RAs at IIT have for many years done "early-warning" check-ins to students who are missing excessive classes or failing—basically, the same function that the scholarship chair serves. However, the scholarship system in Greek chapters is everything that RGL hopes that the RAs or RHDs could provide in terms of academic support. Unfortunately, they will never have the effectiveness that a family of brothers and sisters can have. At a Bible study at ASA last year (yes, we have those in many chapters), over half of our group agreed that they would have left IIT for academic reasons had they not had a sisterhood like ASA. The fact is that Greek life increases the probability of retaining our members more than IIT could ever do. If our organizations did not exist, many students would not find a place to belong or people to provide academic accountability

and support.

A title is nice, but true leadership is about people looking up to and following you.

One of my favorite times of year as an ASA was always the beginning of November—chapter elections. This was the time of year when members think about what impact they want to have and what positions they could run for. As an upperclassman, I loved talking to younger members and challenging them to step up, embrace their strengths, and increase their confidence to lead and serve our chapter. However, I also enjoyed the week after the elections because I could reach out to members who had not been elected. What I could share with them is that being a leader is not about actually having a title; it's about serving others and having others look up to you. As a new member, my goal was to be President of ASA. However, I had the opportunity to be an RA, and I needed the financial stability this would bring. Because I was not living in the house, I never did get to serve on the executive board. However, I found other ways to serve, and I always felt like a leader in the house even though I only held positions of Parliamentary and Sports Chair.

Greek leadership is seen throughout campus in nearly EVERY organization. There is a reason why the Leadership Academy has always been around 50 percent Greek even though only 10 to 15 percent of the undergraduate population is Greek. We attract those who are leaders or would like to become leaders, and we give people the opportunity and support to grow into the leader they may not even have known they could be.

What other people think of you doesn't matter; what your family does can change your life.

Each year during recruitment, there is at least one young woman who we meet who we decide that not only does she need the social aspect of our chapter, but we recognize her potential to grow into a strong leader if she has a group of women who believe in her. Many times during recruitment meetings, we'll say, "I loved meeting so-and so. She had so many qualities that I think are going to make her a great VP Recruitment or Sunshine Chair or Scholarship Chair." Before these members even join our chapter we see the potential in them to become something more than they see in themselves. While others may have told them they cannot, we know that with our support, they can, because all of us were once that young man or woman who just needed some-

one to believe in us.

So what does all of this mean? There are mountains of evidence on the benefits of Greek Life on an undergraduate education. Retention and graduation rates are higher; job placement increases because of networking; connection to your alma mater increases; and success in a future career is increased immensely. Other efforts to do this like the RAs in the residence halls can only attempt to do half the job that the Greek system can do. Your RA will not follow you for four years and continuously challenge you to grow; your Greek family will.

Because of this, I have been, and continue to be baffled why much of the administration, especially the Dean of Students and Provost, continue to pursue agendas that adversely affect our Greek community, which is continuously recognized as one of the best in the country, instead of supporting us. Chapters are struggling to keep chapter houses full because freshmen are no longer allowed to move in, and the sororities are trying to negotiate housing contracts that are going to make it difficult for our chapters to survive. Administrators are quick to jump to conclusions when something goes wrong because "what else could you expect from the Greeks?" instead of helping us learn from those mistakes and helping us grow. When one person makes a mistake in one of our chapters, it reflects on all of us; when a non-Greek student makes a mistake it only reflects on them. We put on hundreds of philanthropy, sports, leadership, intellectual, and social events a year, but administrators only focus on the one or two where something goes wrong. I challenge the Greek community to be continually better socially, academically, and in leadership. Greeks should be held to a higher standard because we strive to be just that, but we need administrators to understand that we will still make mistakes because we are still young adults trying to find out who we are and who we can be.

When the Greek community sees support from the school, IIT will see the full impact of what this community can be to the retention, student leadership, and reputation of the school. We are vocal about the chapters we love because they have shaped us and continue to support us. The question now becomes: What could IIT be if all Greeks were vocal about how much IIT has supported our community in our efforts to shape men and women of leadership, courage, siblinghood, philanthropy, and academics?

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Spanish Courses offered by Humanities Department

Sijia Wu
LAYOUT EDITOR

IIT has offered Spanish language and culture courses over the past two and a half years and will continue to offer them in the spring semester. This is an achievement of a completed project initiated by the Student Government Association (SGA), consisting of four sequential Spanish courses offered by the Department of Humanities. The second and last course in the series, offered under the COM (Communication) 126 and 226 designations respectively, will be available to register for in the spring 2015 term.

The second course, Spanish Language and Culture 2 (COM 126) is suitable for students with approximately one year of Spanish study or those who have taken COM 125. It covers basic grammar structures and helps build vocabulary. This course counts as a humanities or social science general education course. However, for those intermediate level Spanish speakers (students with two years of high school Spanish or equivalent), Spanish 4 (COM 226) would be the best choice, as it fo-

cuses on description and narration in multiple Spanish tenses and involves watching short Spanish videos and reading Spanish journalistic texts. This course counts towards the 300+ level humanities requirement.

The instructor for these courses, Professor Kate Thompson, received her PhD in Latin American literature at the University of Maryland and has been teaching Spanish at the University of Chicago for 11 years.

"Learning another language helps us to communicate across cultural boundaries. It's also just plain fun to communicate in a different language—there is a thrill in being able to express yourself in a language that is not your own," said Thompson, stressing the significance and pleasure of learning a foreign language. She highly encourages IIT students to enroll in either COM 126 or COM 226 next semester, as they are helpful and well designed.

"Conversation, reading, writing and listening skills are all emphasized in these classes, along with a lot of cultural content including reading and videos that showcase some of the different aspects of various Hispanic cultures." The feedback from students

who have taken Spanish classes with Thompson has been excellent.

Cara Karter, a third year social and economic development policy major, has taken the full sequence (COM 125, COM 126, COM 225 and COM 226) and has found the courses to be very valuable to her during her time at IIT. "I came in with an interest in continuing language studies but was unaware that the opportunity existed. My brother, who is also at IIT, told me about the first course, COM 125, and we were both enrolled in the course during its inaugural semester," said Karter. She also mentions that the course has enabled her to vastly improve her Spanish skills, which she has utilized while travelling to Nicaragua (in March 2013 and May 2014) with IIT's student chapter of Engineers Without Borders.

Precious Eboh, a fourth year biomedical engineering student, has also benefited from Spanish classes offered on campus and has enjoyed Thompson's teaching style. "She employs a variety of methods to keep you interested in the class. She is a professor who expects a lot from you and in return she gives her all, to help you meet her expectation," said

Eboh.

He is not the only one who feels this way. Rohit Agarwal, a senior student majoring in electrical and computer engineering, has also provided a positive review regarding the instructor: "Professor Thompson is very open and inviting to questions during class and always engages in an informative classroom discussion. She is helpful to students who are struggling more than others and does her best to make sure no one is left behind." He further adds that from his perspective, the class itself is conducted in a fairly professional manner that creates a friendly and successful learning environment.

All registered students (except native speakers) at IIT with an interest in language studies are encouraged to enroll in either of the two Spanish classes offered in the spring semester based on different individual backgrounds. If you have any questions, please email Professor Kate Thompson at kthomps8@iit.edu.

Student Gift 2015 seeks input

Zaira Ortiz
TECHNEWS WRITER

Once a year, IIT students from all over the university gather with one common goal in mind – to give. Some would call this annual event a testament of true love for our university, others would call it a simple act of kindness, but I call it the IIT Student Gift. You may be wondering what the IIT Student Gift is, and in simple terms, it is the single most generous act students participate in every year.

In more descriptive terms, the Student Gift is a student-run effort to enhance both community and philanthropy at the

university. Through this endeavor, IIT students fund projects that enhance the campus community and build on a tradition of giving while they learn how generosity impacts the lives around them. Basically, the Student Gift is an opportunity for the students to present IIT with a gift that will make the experiences of current and future students better, enhance the university's uniqueness, and give back to the IIT community we all know and love.

A few examples of past Student Gifts are the refurbishment of the enclosure space in MTCC in 2010, the completion of the reserved textbook collection at Galvin Library in 2011, the installation of drinking fountains in seven

academic buildings in 2012, the modular furniture for Galvin Library in 2013, and the new bikes racks and two new bike repair stations for campus in 2014. All of these gifts enhance the lives and experiences of students at IIT today, could you imagine the university without them? I know I couldn't. The value behind the Student Gift is tremendous, and it offers students an opportunity to see what IIT is missing come to life. Students in the past thought Galvin didn't have enough furniture, and so the students chose to gift the university with modern, comfortable, spacious furniture, all of which we now benefit from. Now, as students, it's your turn to choose how you'll impact IIT

and leave your mark on your university for years to come.

The last question to ask is how will you be remembered after you graduate from IIT? A great first step is taking the survey at tinyurl.com/2015Gift, and voicing your opinion on what this year's Student Gift should be. The second step would be becoming even more involved with the Student Gift process, and joining the Student Gift Committee by contacting Sarah Zimmerman at her email szimmer1@iit.edu. The Student Gift is your chance to be the change remembered at IIT.

IEEE hosts final Fall 2014 meeting

Vijai Baskar
COPY EDITOR

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) at IIT held their last general body meeting for the semester on Wednesday, November 19, in the Perlstein Hall auditorium. This was their final interaction with students for the semester, and they had a lot to talk about: events that happened, laurels achieved, and tours organized.

The meeting began with an address by Rohit Agarwal, President of IEEE at IIT, who spoke about the events that have happened so far in the semester. Over the three general body meetings that were conducted, students saw guest speakers from Siemens and from the IEEE Chicago Section. The IEEE barbecue was a huge success, given the great turnout and the opportunity students were given to interact with fellow students and faculty as well.

Agarwal also mentioned that a team from IIT that participated in the IEEE Xtreme 24-hour programming competition stood second in the whole of Chicago only to be surpassed by a team from another local school. This earned IIT a good standing within the Region 4 IEEE section and also within the Chicago area.

In regards to tours, IEEE had organized a tour to a wind farm this semester. This provided students the opportunity to see for themselves what it is like to actually be at the site of a huge energy development installation. A lot of students took the initiative to participate in this tour and it turned out to be quite good; students got the opportunity to be exposed to the real engineering world.

The organization has been collecting resumes from students and sending them in batches to companies like Google and Epic. This is an effort made by the IEEE board to create job opportunities for students who are looking to work with these technological com-

panies, and for these companies who are looking to hire individuals from IIT.

A video on the progress of the Quadcopter project was shown to the attendees. It featured the working of the Quadcopter and its project members. Students are strongly encouraged to join projects funded by IEEE as they provide a great platform for engineers to showcase their skills and do something in addition to academics.

The guest speaker for the event was Vickie Peters, IEEE Chicago Section Chair. She spoke about various milestones achieved by IEEE and their section in particular. She encouraged students to step up and continue to excel in the field of engineering, keeping with the standard that has been set by the engineers of the past years.

Peters strongly asserted that if students are interested in attending any conferences or events that they think would help them professionally, and if the costs involved are high, the IEEE Chicago Section will definitely help compensate for their efforts. She also pointed out the benefits of being an IEEE National member and the networking opportunities it provides to aspiring engineers.

The IEEE Executive board has two open positions, namely, Publicity Chair, and Webmaster. Students who are interested in these positions can go to ieec.iit.edu and nominate themselves or anyone else they feel would be qualified for that position.

The next semester will see the organization planning a number of events such as company tours, general body meetings with new guest speakers, and the student branch as a whole will be given the opportunity to participate in conferences like the Region 4 Student Leadership Conference (SLC), and the 2015 Women in Engineering Conference. They hope to see more and more students be involved with IEEE and grow professionally and ethically as responsible engineers.

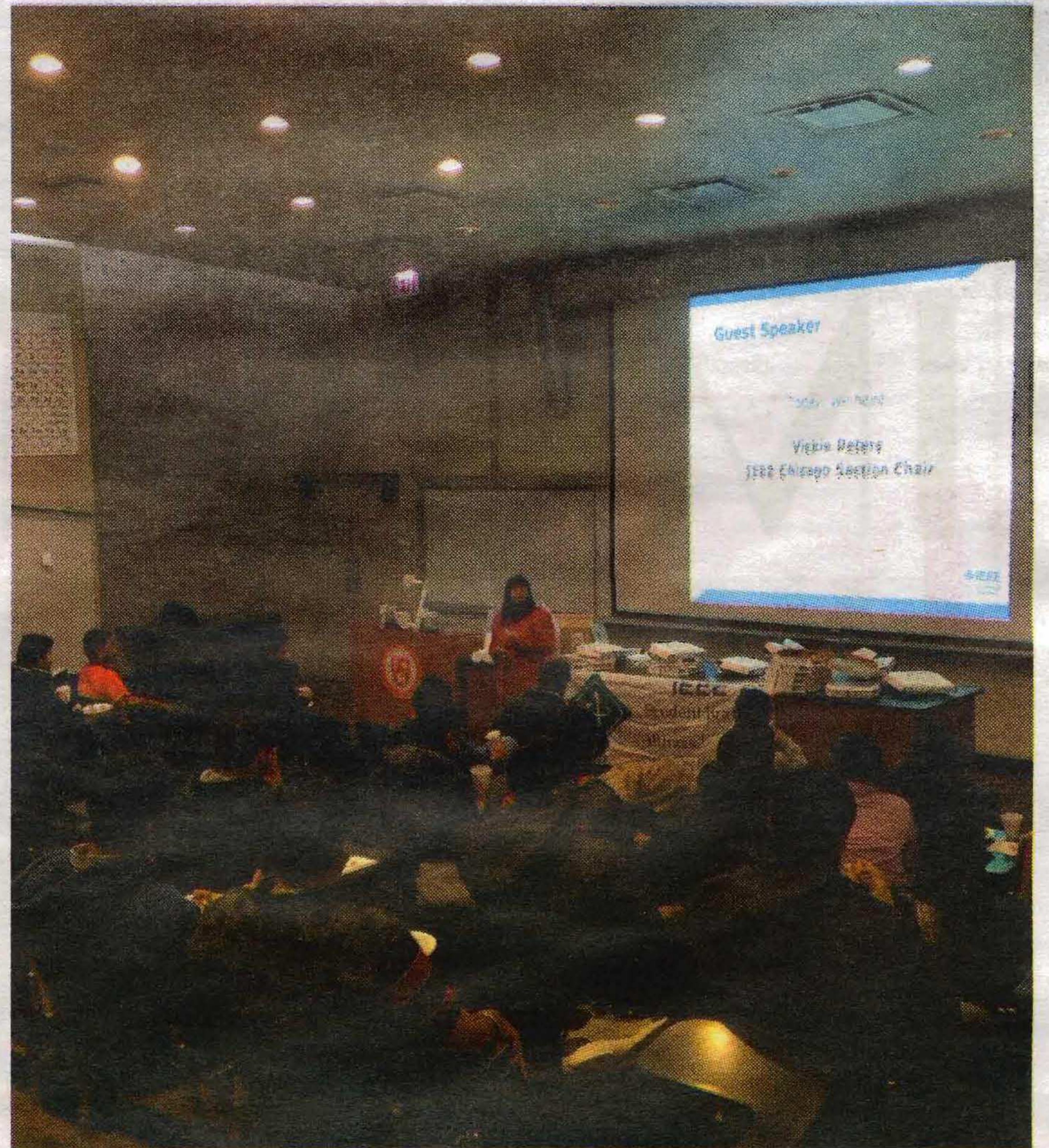


Photo by Vijai Baskar

TechNews corrections

Last week, in an article covering IEEE events, the photo accompanying the article was credited to Vijai Baskar. This information is incorrect.

The images were taken by and are accredited to Subarno Saha. We apologize for the confusion.

Campus Life Excellence Awards recognize student achievements

Kori Bowns
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

IIT's Office of Campus Life (OCL) unveiled the Campus Life Excellence Awards this semester as a way for the office to recognize student organizations and student leaders for their contributions to campus and the community. OCL opened nominations for a variety of organization and individual awards on HawkLink on October 1 of this semester. Nominations for the awards closed on November 4, and copies of the nominations were made available in the OCL office suite for students to read over the past few weeks. The Office of Campus Life and Division of Student Affairs assessed the award nominations, then prepared for the Campus Life Excellence Awards Ceremony, held on Tuesday, November 18 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the MTCC Ballroom.

When arriving at the awards ceremony, students were greeted by a dessert buffet featuring fruit, cupcakes, and a hot chocolate bar. The event began with some free time for students and OCL staff to mingle, and the awards presentation began at 5:30 p.m.

The Office of Campus Life first presented awards that the office was responsible for nominating. OCL presented awards for two categories, Excellence in Budgeting and Excellence in Programming. Twenty-two certificates were presented to student organizations for excellence in budgeting; twenty-three certificates were presented to student organizations for excellence in programming.

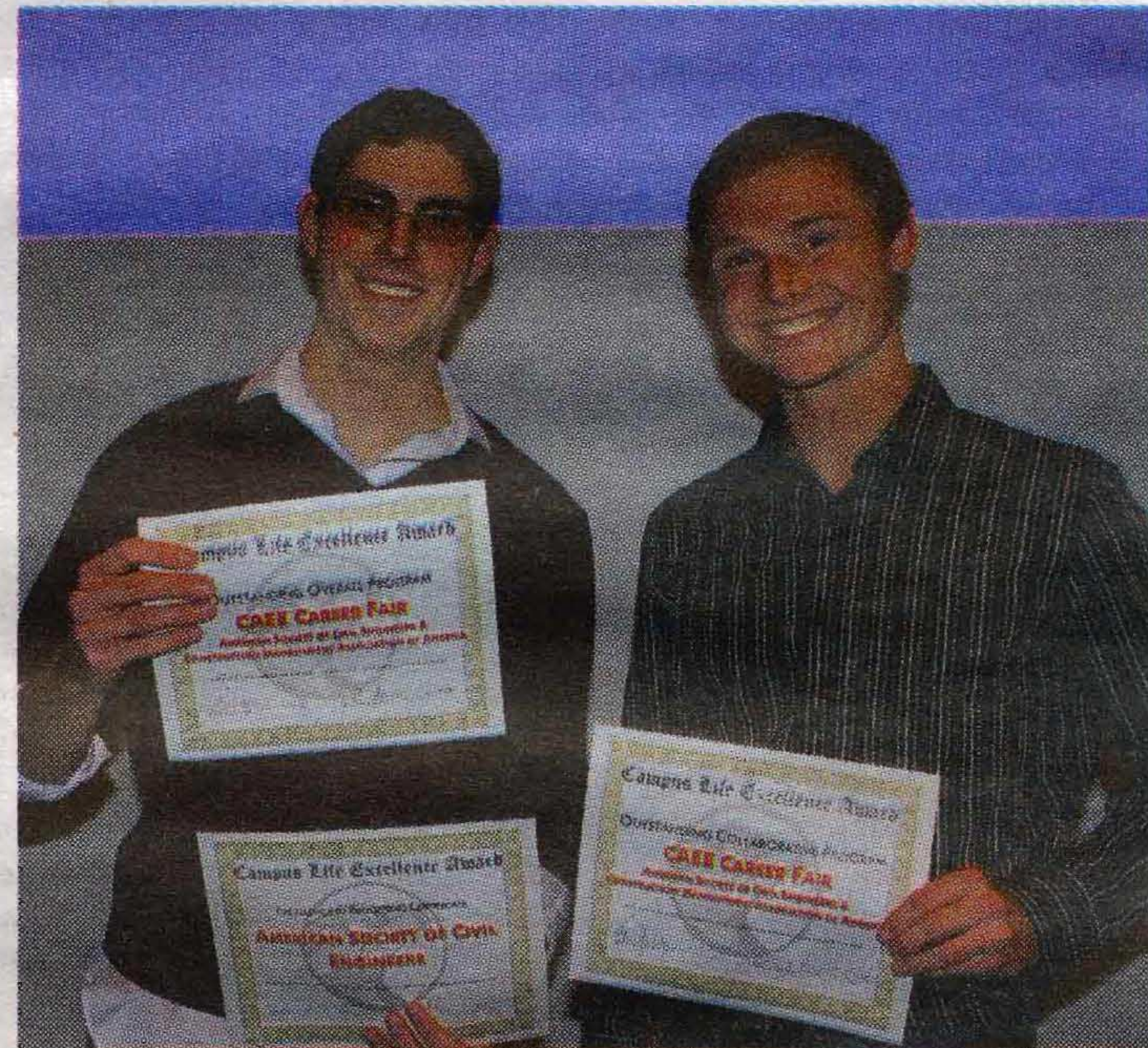
The ceremony then shifted to the individual awards. The Outstanding New Member award was presented to Ajay Johnson from Student Government Association. The Outstanding Senior Member award was given to Engineers Without Borders member Sara

Glade. The award for Outstanding Executive Board Member was presented to Erez Miller of American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Ricky Stevenson was presented the Outstanding Student Organization President award for his work in Greek Council. Finally, the Unsung Hero award was presented to Alpha Sigma Phi's Richard Stubing.

Next came the awards presented to student organizations as a whole. OCL presented their Outstanding New Student Organization Award to Circle K International. MEDLIFE was then presented the Outstanding Community Service Project award for their Medical Brigade project. African Student Organization received two awards for The Ennoblement of Africa event that was hosted by the organization in early October; they received the Outstanding Academic/Educational Program Award and the Outstanding Diversity/Multicultural Program.

A partnership of two organizations, American Society of Civil Engineers and Construction Management Association of America, also received two awards for the CAEE Career Fair they collaborated on; both organizations received the Outstanding Collaborative Program award as well as the Outstanding Overall Program award. The Outstanding Fundraising Program award was presented to Engineers Without Borders (EWB) for their EWB-IIT Gala. Latinos Involved in Further Education (LIFE) received the Outstanding Social and Entertainment Program award for their Latino Dance Night.

The awards ceremony concluded with a thanks to all of those in attendance as well as the students and organizations recognized as well as the opportunity for students to take photos with their awards.



Photos courtesy of IIT Office of Campus Life

TechNews

will return

JANUARY 27TH, 2015

Join the first **TechNews** Writer's Meeting of Spring 2015
 Sunday, January 25 @ 4PM
TechNews Office (MTCC 221, Office of Campus Life Suite)

Find us at the Spring Semester Student Involvement Festival on Thursday, January 22
 Email editor@technewsiit.com with any questions or article submissions

"Interstellar" an impressive sci-fi experience

Kyle Stanevich
BUSINESS MANAGER

Humanity is at risk and only one man can save them all. Sounds like a very simple plot overdone in seemingly most recent movies. While *Interstellar* does loosely follow this plot, it is nowhere near a simple movie. Once again, Christopher Nolan delivers another complex but fantastic movie.

Without giving too much plot away; Earth is growing uninhabitable. The solution is to travel through space to find a new planet to call home. However, this only serves for the backbone for the rest of the movie, and while this journey is going on, the focus is more on the path toward this goal, and all the mishaps and barriers in the way.

Visually this film is a success. Instead of trying to rip off the style of 2001: A Space Odyssey, a similar space voyage film, *Interstellar* sticks heavily to the dark theme seen in so many other Nolan films. While it does pull a few scenes directly from 2001, it doesn't attempt to copy the style scene for scene. Other

than the awe inspiring space shots that come along with a sci-fi space movie, the scenes on the ground are also great. Nolan does a good job providing each different location in the film an entirely new, but memorable environment, and each with its own set of relevant natural obstacles. On top of this, it was shot using 35mm film, making the experience even better for moviegoers who have the chance to see it in some select theatres.

The soundtrack is also exciting, and sometimes takes over the entire film. To some moviegoers, this might be displeasing. After the credits started rolling, I overheard many others in the theatre express their discomfort that the music was so loud that they could not hear what the characters were saying at certain points. At those points, it doesn't really matter what the characters had to say, so the music and actions were enough to get the point across in a more powerful way.

Delving beneath the surface of *Interstellar* reveals a set of complex themes. How are the characters driven to do what they do? How much do emotions play a role

in decision-making? This film brings up many physiology topics, and explores them all from different characters' points of view. There is no character that is entirely right, and no character that is entirely evil. Even the robots built to assist the humans on their journey are set to have less than 100% honesty.

What would a sci-fi movie be without some basis in science. Unlike other Nolan films (the *Dark Knight* series, *Inception*, etc) the science of *Interstellar* is much closer to reality that some dreamt up gadgets. Relativity, black holes, higher dimensions, and genetics are all called into action. From a combination of these topics, many questions are brought up, such as re-population with clones, time running at different speeds for different people, interactions with other higher order life forms, and ideas sent back through time.

Often when movies bring up modern science, critiques latch onto any slight differences between the science of the movie and how it would really work. However, *Interstellar* has not had this sort of critical science complaints. Neil deGrasse Tyson has many

times pointed out inaccuracies of movies, but for *Interstellar* he has not been so harsh, even complimenting the movie saying, "These are fascinating questions that make great fodder for science fiction stories. And we don't know what's in a black hole so take it and run with it."

And if you are turned away from this movie because of its seemingly heavy hitting and complex topics brought up, don't worry. You don't need to be a physicist or psychologist to enjoy this movie. The actors are all well placed, especially Matthew McConaughey as the composed engineer and pilot turned corn farmer. Plus the interactions between humans and robots slip in some witty lines to break up the serious parts.

As a film, it is an exploration of emotions and what drives people to do what they do, disguised as an intense sci-fi movie. If you can get over the extremely loud music by Hans Zimmer, everyone should find it enjoyable. Plus it is one of those films that lead to long discussions on the way out of the theatre.



Image courtesy of interstellarmovie.net

Holiday Season in Chicago offers much to do

Shireen Gul
COPY EDITOR

Winter is here, finally. Yes, I know I might sound insane, because no one likes Chicago's winter, but as far as it doesn't hurt my face, I just love it. The semester is almost over, freedom is on its way, but have you thought what you're going to do during the winter? I know many of you might be thinking that Chicago's winter is best enjoyed if spent in hibernation: hunkering down indoors, basking in the glow of a full-spectrum lamp, ordering pizza, streaming Netflix. But what if I just give you enough reasons to go out and enjoy the winter this time? I know no one will trust me on this, but when I came across this list I really wished that I was around for the winter break to enjoy these activities.

This season, make a resolution to get out and about. I was reading an article which said that Paul Simon, The Breeders, Justin Timberlake, and Jay Z are just a few of the artists coming to town. Buying an early bird ticket is always a good option. Going downhill skiing or even snow-boarding without leaving the Midwest sounds perfect to me. Spend some time with your loved ones by cuddling up by a fireplace in a public space, or hit the salt caves, or a spa.

Let's start with the Thanksgiving Parade, which is taking place on November 27.

I know you might think that you can watch it on TV, but going all the way downtown with a bunch of friends and witnessing this Thanksgiving tradition in person is definitely worth it. Chicago's annual Thanksgiving Parade takes

always good.

I am not sure how many of you might have been to Zoolight at Lincoln Park Zoo, but while scrolling through the pictures it seemed to be fun. For photo fanatics like me

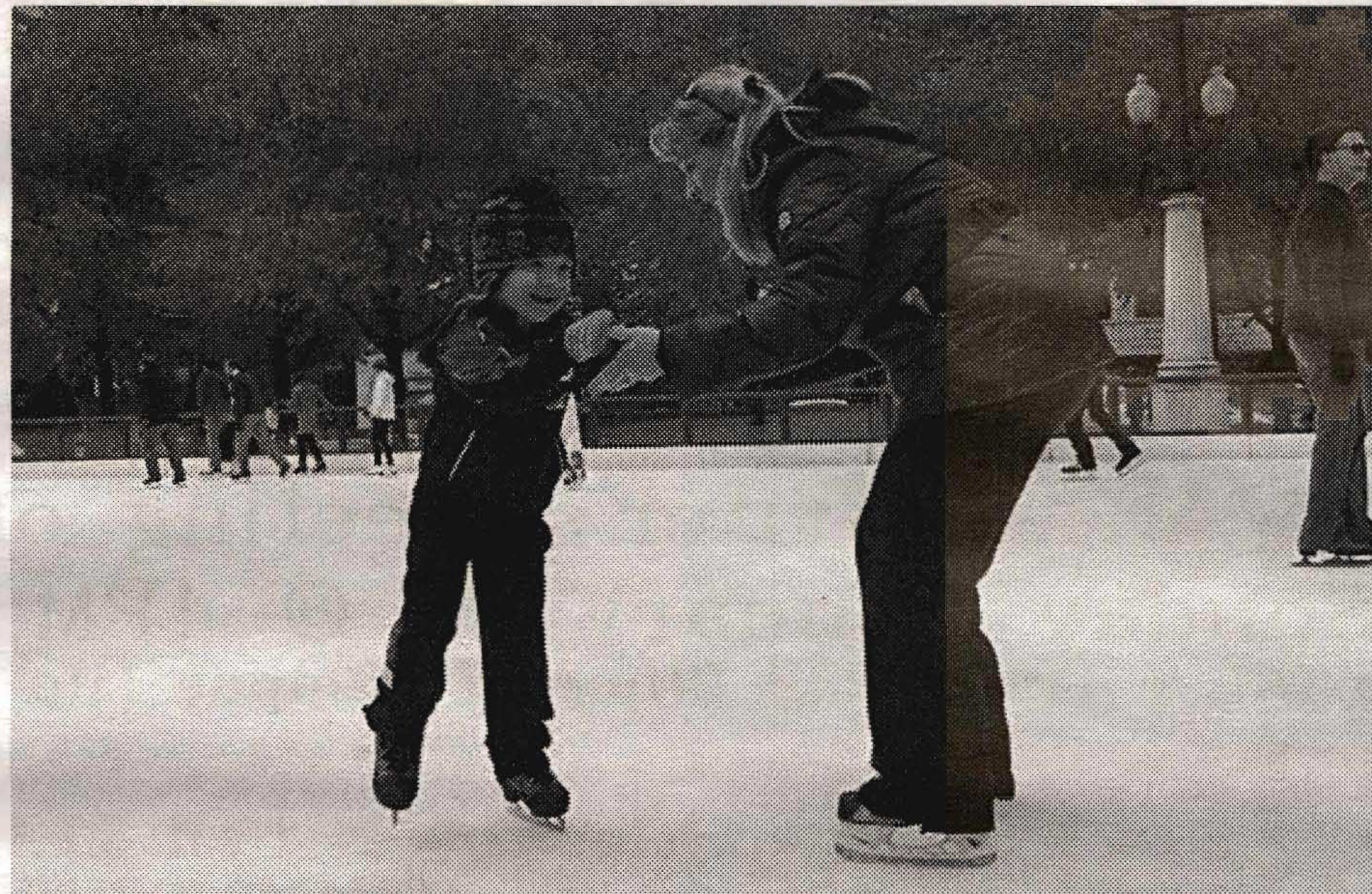


Image courtesy of cityofchicago.org

over State Street (between Congress Parkway and Randolph State) with a procession of floats, marching bands and local celebrities. Also don't forget that it's free, and free stuff is

this is a perfect place to be because lights always look good in photos. The first 1,000 people through the gates each night receive special glasses to view the lights with, and everyone

can enjoy nightly ice carving demonstrations, hot beverages and ice skating on the zoo's rink. Here's the link to the event <http://www.lpzoo.org/events/calendar/zoolights>

Another interesting thing to do would be ice-skating at the Millennium Park. The McCormick Tribune Ice Rink is open until March 9, and skate rental is \$10. Plus, come an hour before the rink opens for free skating lessons on Thursday to Sundays.

Last but not the least, one of my most favorite places to hang out during the holiday season is Navy Pier. It hosts an annual indoor winter carnival, but this time it has a selection of new activities, including a toboggan tunnel, winter mini-golf and a 15-foot "snow tubing" hill. The most famous attractions include the Blackhawks ice-skating rink, a Ferris wheel (trust me, its better in cold) and various carnival rides. You can also snap a picture with Santa or maybe just decorate a cookie and Snapchat it to your friends.

You can also find out about more activities on timeout.com. I got most of the information from there, so if you want to know about things happening around, just sign up for their updates and they will send you email. Until then, people who are staying here, enjoy your break and stay warm. And lucky people like me, who are getting to go back home, enjoy your homemade food and unlimited family love.

SLIPSTICK

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sports@technewsit.com

NATHAN MCMAHON

SPORTS



Tuesday, November 25
Men's Basketball
 @ Anderson
 4 p.m.

Friday, November 28
Women's Basketball
 vs. Cornell College
 3 p.m.

Saturday, November 29
Men's Basketball
 @ Blackburn
 3 p.m.

Women's Basketball
 vs. Principia
 1 p.m.

Saturday, December 6
Swimming and Diving
 @ Lincoln College
 1 p.m. CST

Men's Basketball
 @ Trine
 2 p.m.

Sunday, December 7
Men's Basketball
 @ Roosevelt University
 3 p.m.

Monday, December 8
Women's Basketball
 vs. North Park
 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 13
Women's Basketball
 vs. Wheaton
 1 p.m.

Student Life Leader Selection 2015

#Filltheseshoes



Be sure to attend one of the mandatory information sessions at 1:00 pm in the MTCC Auditorium!

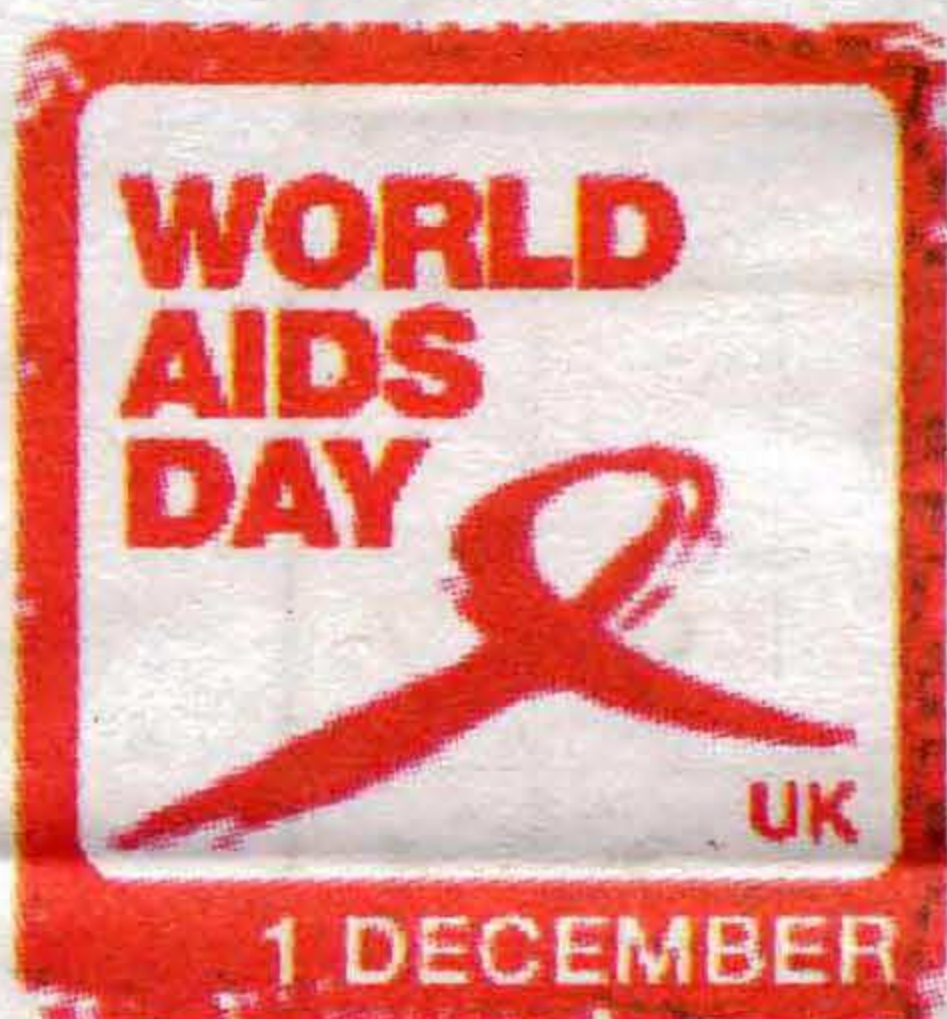
Applications now available!

Thursday, November 20

Tuesday, November 25

Wednesday, January 14

Friday, January 16



Stop by the MTCC Bridge on December 1st on World AIDS day for information on FREE testing on campus and how to protect yourself from HIV and AIDS.

Stress Free Zone- relax during finals!

Monday, December 8

11am – 2pm Bowling with Campus Life in The Bog

Teavana Bar; Sponsored by Union Board

Tuesday, December 9

Noon-3pm, Relaxation Zone in the MTCC Welcome Center

8pm-10pm, LCA Movie

10pm- Midnight, Late Night Breakfast in The Commons

Wednesday, December 10

Wall-E Movie Screening in MTCC Auditorium;:

Sponsored by ESW

Noon-1pm Solly the Therapy Dog will be at Student Health and Wellness Center

1:15-2:15pm Solly the Therapy Dog will be at Galvin Library

Noon-2pm Chocolate Bar on the MTCC Bridge: Sponsored by Union Board

CONGRATS to all the winners of the Campus Life Excellence Awards!



Attention Student Organizations:

The Last Day to submit a Purchase Request for the FALL 2014 Semester is Sunday, December 14. Please be sure that all paperwork is turned into the Office of Campus Life by this date!

DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE!