Twitter, Google visit Illinois Tech

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Twitter visited IIT on Tuesday, February 10, in the Siegel Hall auditorium. They were touring various schools and organizations on their campaign: #twitterdrive. The campaign, as they claimed, was meant to meet developers and hear about their stories, helping them in any way they want. The Mobile App Development club (MAD) at IIT managed to sign them up as part of this tour to give a Tech Talk at IIT and converse with fellow developers. The main goal of this talk was to speak about their products and the various development opportunities that it provides to fellow developers. One couldn't argue about

the energy and enthusiasm levels of the Twitter employees as they came on to the podium and enthralled the audience with their witty remarks to the questions asked by the IIT students. They made a humorous impression with their easygoing attitude and comments about not having Chicago deep-dish pizza in the room.

Questions were asked about what new Software Development Kits (SDKs) were in store for release and how the release process of one is at Twitter. The Twitter team spoke of two of their products in detail: Fabric and Digits. While one is a modular mobile app development suite, the other is an innovative way for companies to have users signed up just by using their phone number. When a student

asked about their stand on the information security topic, referencing the Egypt scenario, a Twitter employee said, "We believe that people can tweet whatever they want and countries can do whatever they want. Also we have an awesome legal team which does a fantastic job." For more updates on this please follow #twitterdrive.

The Google team was at IIT this week, first on Thursday, February 11, at the MTCC auditorium for a presentation and a Tech Talk, followed by a recruitment session over at the Hermann Hall auditorium. It was no surprise to see a lot of aspiring IIT students, both graduate and undergraduate thronging the venues, but the surprising element was the fact that the recruiters/presenters were

IIT alumni, with one of them having graduated just six months ago. The hiring process and presentation, as expected, was inclined to computer science majors, specifically software engineers.

The Google team spoke about how Google docs are used to aid users with disabilities and why it is critical in today's world, how the company develops a software and engineers it from start to end. It was intriguing and inspiring to watch IIT students be Google recruiters, although one could argue that the Tech Talk was a bit too detailed, and an exclusive career fair with the company would have been better for obvious reasons.

IEEE Attends Student Leadership Conference

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The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) held their Region 4 Student Leadership Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from Friday, February 6 to Sunday, February 8. Eight members from the IEEE student chapter at IIT, as well as students from other institutions in the region attended the conference. IEEE Region 4 covers student and professional members in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin, within the United States, and also the Windsor area in Canada. Of these regions, the attendees comprised of student branches from 17 universities.

The attendees were taken on a company tour to Epic systems, a health care software company headquartered in Verona,

Wisconsin, where they were shown how the company works and their culture and ethics. This was followed by a session on the Student Transition and Elevation Program (STEP) by Diana Vasquez.

Vasquez mentioned that the STEP program is a platform for students to get access to the opportunities and benefits of an IEEE membership to transform into a professional. Russell T. Harrison, IEEE-USA Director of Government Relations gave the keynote address to begin the second day with information about the conference and the efforts that were taken to make it possible. This was followed by two breakout sessions with two speakers each.

The speakers of the first session spoke about robotics and its use in drones and demonstrated the quadcopter that students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison built. The second breakout session was on two topics, one on 3-D printing and the other on

Angular Java Script. Steven James, Engineering Manager at UTC Aerospace Systems, conducted the following session on leadership training. He focused on how being a member at IEEE brings out the leader in each person by involving them in and exposing them to the changing scenarios in the engineering industry. He encouraged students to participate in future conferences and also technical events hosted by IEEE as it is a great platform for students to communicate with the industry and its pioneers.

In addition to the seminars and speaking sessions, there were a number of competitions that took place as part of this conference. These competitions included Maze solving (a popular robotics competition), Brown Bag (circuit design competition), ethics competition, and project showcase competition. The team participating in the Maze solving competition won the second place. The

team comprised of Sharath Ramesh and Kecheng Liu, electrical and computer engineering (ECE) graduate students. Sankesh Jain, Vijai Baskar, and Ambika Abinav participated in the ethics competition where they had to arrive at a solution for an ethical dilemma situation. The evening dinner featured keynote speaker, Joe Kann. He is the Vice President of Global Business Development for Rockwell Automation, a global market leader in industrial automation products and solutions. He leads the company's strategy development processes and is responsible for managing strategic partnering programs and supporting acquisitions. Kann has over 30 years of experience in industrial automation and manufacturing technologies. This session was followed by an awards function where students who won prizes, as well as the organizers of the event were felicitated. The conference was a great learning experience for all participants.