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Homecoming Week activities aim to boost school spirit

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Besides the exciting fact that the Presidential Inauguration will be taking place this Friday, September 18 (and all afternoon classes are cancelled), this week is also Homecoming Week. Similar to last year, there will be Homecoming events throughout the week, culminating with the Homecoming Carnival on Saturday.

Student organization, Union Board (UB), plans many of the Homecoming activities each year. Maria Warren, a third-year undergraduate majoring in civil engineering, is also the Vice President of Traditions for UB. Thanks to her team, composed of Homecoming programmers Victoria Smith and Nirja

Shah, UB has planned a week of activities that is "all about school spirit and fun," according to Warren, since there is no specific theme for this year. Warren explained that Homecoming this year will be "basically what homecoming is about: school spirit and participation, and getting excited for the year."

One great way to get excited for the year is to attend the movie nights each night between Monday, September 14, and Friday, September 18. Beginning at 7 p.m. on the MTCC lawn, or in the MTCC auditorium if it rains, five popular movies will be shown, including Jurassic World on Friday night. Additionally, this week students can enjoy their lunch with free entertainment provided by IIT A Cappella, who will be performing in Center Court at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, September 16.

Also, the fun will be spurred on by the presence of a video game truck and arcade games in the MTCC from 12 to 3 p.m. on Thursday, September 17. The video game truck is literally a trailer full of video games that you can enter and play. Last year the video game truck was a lot of fun for many, so UB has brought it back for this year.

The men's and women's soccer teams, as well as the women's volleyball team, will be having games on Saturday morning, and then everyone is encouraged to attend the carnival planned by UB. The Homecoming Carnival on Saturday afternoon will again be held in the space between the MTCC and MSV, and many attractions will be present, including made-to-order barbecue, a rock wall, photo booth, carnival games, a caricature artist, car-

nival rides, and an obstacle course. Besides it being the second year of the Talon Challenge, Union Board has added a concert to follow the carnival on Saturday. A DJ and drummer pair, conveniently named Scratch and Bang, will be performing during the concert.

So, before and after the inauguration of President Alan Cramb (which will be "a part of IIT history that not everyone gets to experience while going here," according to Maria Warren), attend and see what the rest of the Homecoming Week activities have to offer. As Warren said, "support athletics, support your school, and have a great time."

BMES prepares 2015 Pumpkin Launch

Kori Bowns
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Illinois Institute of Technology's Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) student organization has been hard at work so far this semester planning one of the university's most popular events, the annual Pumpkin Launch competition.

The 11th-annual Pumpkin Launch will be taking place on Saturday, October 17 on IIT's Ed Glancy Baseball Field. BMES currently plans for launches to begin at 1 p.m. and last until 3 p.m. During the event, student teams will be showcasing handmade launching devices and competing for titles in distance and accuracy. This year's Pumpkin Launch is also being included on the university's 125th anniversary celebration calendar. Nilkanth Patel, the president of IIT's BMES chapter, is one

of the students working to plan the event and had much to share regarding the organization's progress.

Like in previous years, student teams will need to register with BMES prior to the event and have their work and designs inspected prior to being launched on the field. According to Patel, BMES would like all team applications to be submitted by the evening of September 27.

Patel also adds that Pumpkin Launch gets a good amount of support from various people on campus. "Office of Campus Life personnel play a very important role in the planning of the event," said Patel. A few faculty members also help ensure that the contraptions built by students can be operated safely. "We have faculty from the BME and physics department volunteering to be inspectors. This event would not run smoothly without

the support of these people," said Patel, "They are the ones who make sure the launchers are safe and operable on the day of the event and also before the event. They also help us set the guidelines and rules."

Though BMES has secured some continual support they've had in previous years, the organization is struggling with other portions of planning the event. In previous competitions, each student team was reimbursed the cost of their building materials up to a certain amount. This year, however, the organization has not received enough funding from the Student Activity Fund (SAF) and Finance Board to run the event similarly.

Patel says that the funding for the event from the SAF allocated by Finance Board was cut by almost 50 percent, forcing the organization to make budget cuts as well as likely affecting the amount of reimbursement stu-

dent teams receive. The organization is trying to find alternative sources of funding so that the quality of the event is not affected. "This is a student organization event and not something that is run by IIT, so most of the funds come out of the BMES budget. We are looking to see if other departments can help us financially," said Patel.

Patel also says that BMES hopes to bring back fun activities from previous years like food trucks and pumpkin carving, as well as inviting local high school groups to view and learn about the launchers. Whether for impressive feats of distance or catastrophic failures, Pumpkin Launch is a much-beloved event on IIT's campus and this year's competition will be another fun opportunity for students to make some memories while at IIT.



Photos by Kori Bowns