

## CAMPUS

Do you wish your professors used Blackboard more effectively?

Page 3

## CAMPUS

Read up on some recent Bog events.

Page 4

## SPORTS

Check out some photos from Illinois Tech's last track meet!

Page 7

**TUESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 2,  
2016**

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# TechNews

Student newspaper of Illinois Institute of Technology since 1928

CAMPUS 2-4  
SLIPSTICK 6  
SPORTS 6-7

## Illinois Tech remembers Jermiron 'Jay' Morris

**Soren Spicknall & Genevieve Hummel**  
TECHNEWS WRITERS

Late last week, many of us here at Illinois Tech lost a friend, collaborator, and inspiration. Jay Morris was killed by a fellow classmate outside Keating Sports Center in the early hours of Thursday morning, followed by a series of commemorative events demonstrating the impact he had on the student community. He was a dedicated student leader at the university, and will be missed. Here are some brief observations from many here at IIT who came in contact with him at one point or another:

**Angie Jarka**

"I had the pleasure of watching Jay progress through his education at Illinois Tech. He was one of the kindest, most dedicated, generous, respected, intelligent, and positive gentlemen that I've ever had the pleasure of knowing. I remember him bringing his adorable young daughter in the computer lab and they were both working on homework. He was an amazing father, diligent student and a true representation of a brilliant and hard working young man. He went out of his way to help other students and was the first one to volunteer and take on new projects. This senseless tragedy still seems like a bad dream. I can't imagine not seeing his smiling face on campus. He had so much left to offer this world and I'm heartbroken for his family and the world at what a loss! I miss you Jay and hope you are at peace. I will never forget you. Gone too soon my friend."

**Arlene Hayes**

"Jay was a man to be admired. His passion, drive and commitment inspired me every time we spoke. As a representative of the students he was always trying to find a better way to reach out to people and to provide the best for them. He would send me messages at 1 a.m. because he had just thought of a way around a problem we were having, or he just remembered something from a meeting he had attended and wanted to get my feedback as soon as possible. He was dependable and reliable but nothing came before his girls. The night before an event he would send me a quick text full of apology because something came up and he had to be with one of his daughters. "I gotta be there for my girls" or "My girls need me" was a common thing to hear him say. It always made me smile just to hear him talk about them because the dedication was palpable. There would always be a look of pure joy on his face, just knowing that he was doing everything he possibly could for them.

He had so many hopes and dreams. He often talked about his plans after graduation, the company he was aiming to work for, the life he wanted for himself and his family. He was a simple man with a heart that seemed too big even for his body. We would be carrying items from the RHA office to one place or another and he would see me organizing boxes and offer to take them all himself. "I'm just trying to make it easy for you," he would say, then he would still try to open the door for me with his arms full. There was no rejecting his help. A true gentleman in every sense of the word.

I could go on and on as more of our brief interactions come to mind but every single person who has come into contact with this man has firsthand knowledge of the impression he leaves with you. I can only hope

that Jay knew how loved he was, how much easier he made the lives of everyone around him and the smiles he still brings to our hearts as we remember him now and always... May his beautiful soul find comfort in a place beyond this world. Rest in peace Jay."

**Khadijah Muhammad**

"Jay was like a big brother to me. He always told me I was doing a good job even when I didn't think I was. He was a member of BSU that I am president of, but to be honest he really was a special part of the exec board. He really helped me push and talk about the topics that I was scared about and he introduced me to people I never would have thought to meet. He was such a fun person and was always the life of the party. I feel that he was doing what Jill Scott sang many years ago. He was living his life like it's golden with the people he loved."

remember thinking to myself that Jay was the kind of guy I wanted to get to know better. In the couple of hours we spent talking I already knew that Jay was the kind of person everyone wanted to have as a friend. When I found out what happened I was shocked and incredibly sad. The world has truly lost a great person and an amazing friend. My thoughts and condolences go out to everyone that knew Jay, may he rest in peace."

**J. Echols**

"I had the opportunity to assist Jay during the admission process to IIT and saw a tremendous amount of potential from the start! He has truly been an asset to IIT and his legacy is a strong motivation for many who want to do better. I count it as an honor to have known him and hope his journey serves a positive example for all especially for the

in all people. He worked tirelessly without falter during the entirety of his career at our university for the best of the university. He was a completely selfless man and had a level of strength and resolve that was rare to find. The trials he had to face were very challenging, but you would never know as it never showed. He had the strength to remain at peace with himself and maintain the love of everyone he met. All you'd see is a happy face and peaceful spirit when you talked to him. His humility was so present. Nothing weighed him down, and that is something I personally have been motivated to aspire to because of him. But it's not only me, the characteristics of this man were something everyone who has met and known him aspire to. He inspired me as the community service chair to grow in that position. His vision for me and everyone was always huge. His ambition just showed his strength and he always had a game plan for large scale greatness. He never expressed any deterrents, and encouraged everyone he's met of their capacity and potential. He knew everyone had the ability for greatness and was always there to remind and encourage them of it. He was fearless in his pursuit for large scale improvement. His vision for the future and our future set numerous milestones for our community. For me, he always told me the importance of establishing relationships and I believe there is so much wisdom in that. That, I believe, is so overlooked. The gifts of knowledge that he had and worked for were always given and used to the best of its ability. The insight that he had was very powerful and I have to always thank him for giving me a piece of it. He told me that companies and top employers were actively looking for those underrepresented, he knew this from experience and the relationships that he established. He didn't just talk the talk, he walked the walk, he was a man of his word and always lived by what he said. He had established relationships with numerous people and leaders and always made an effort to share what he could to those who needed it, the younger generation. He also told me his desire to have us reach out to other schools and form a coalition, and connection of BSUs and businesses in our neighborhood. We can have such a big impact on things outside of our university too and he saw and expressed that on a regular basis. He had a vision for the capacity of the students here, a very large vision, one that would intimidate most, but he always believed in it and believed in us without fear, but with only desire and drive. But because of his humility he never forced on us, he would always say that it was just what he believed, and that we should do what we thought was best. But we all knew that we should follow his words, his ideas were incredibly beneficial to everyone, so we made it a point to force it on ourselves and continue to do so today and for the future. The groundwork he has laid will never be forgotten and will be used to help us grow for the end of time."

**Antoinette Wright**

"On the behalf of his family, we really appreciate all the kind words and the time taken out to acknowledge the good deeds that he accomplished in his life. He was truly a blessing to us and we see that he was a blessing to others also. His legacy will continue to live on through all of the good that he has done."

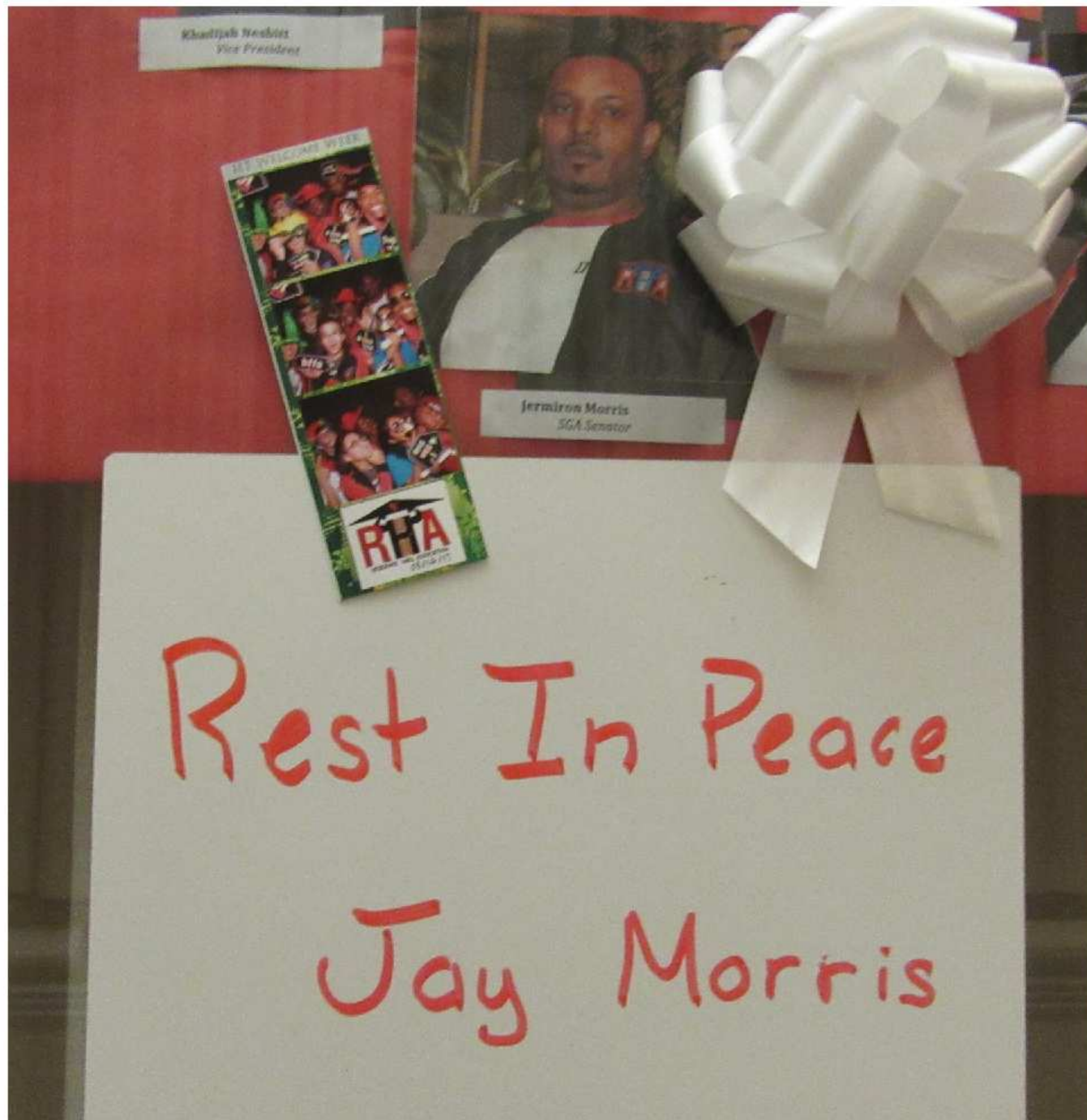


Photo by Soren Spicknall

**Soren Spicknall**

"Jay was one of those people who truly didn't care what other groups you were a part of or where you came from; if you were ever on a team with him, he was an immediate friend and resource. Though my interactions with him were mostly through organizations like RHA and SGA, it was clear that on a human level, he was a genuinely kind and determined person. Jay had the combination of high spirits and work ethic that we should all aspire to, and the world is certainly better off for him having been here."

**Genevieve Hummel**

"I only met Jay a couple weeks ago, at the student organization fair. We were at adjacent tables and we ended up talking about what we were involved in on campus. He had seen me around and had noticed me at the senate meetings. He told me that he appreciated that I covered the meetings for TechNews. We only talked for a couple of hours, but our conversation stayed with me. I

African American male, young and old."

**Katrina Matusak-Errant**

"I knew Jay as a gentleman, friend, and former classmate. I reflect on all the people's lives he could have changed if he was still with us. This was a senseless loss."

**Wallace Muhammad III**

"What I admired about Jay was his spirit, person, and impact on those around him. He was the embodiment of greatness and righteousness and one of the greatest and most inspiring people I have ever met in my life. Many people whose lives he's touched looked upon him as a mentor, not just for his wisdom, but for his humanity. His spirit was an inspiration to everyone that knew him, even for a short period. One conversation or interaction with him was all that was needed to appreciate this great man along with all his credentials. His involvement and leadership at Illinois Tech was unparalleled. He was a man purely devoted to the best and the good



# TechNews

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SINCE 1928

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Our mission is to promote student discussion and bolster the IIT community by providing a newspaper that is highly accessible, a stalwart of journalistic integrity, and a student forum. TechNews is a dedicated to the belief that a strong campus newspaper is essential to a strong campus community.

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# Illinois Tech Robotics volunteers at local youth robotics competition

**Kori Bowns**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In addition to building and maintaining several competitive robot projects each academic year, students who are part of Illinois Tech Robotics (ITR), an IIT student organization, volunteer hundreds of hours of their time toward STEM education outreach and youth robotics programs. Much of this outreach is through an international youth robotics nonprofit called FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). In the past, ITR has assisted as coordinators and volunteers at dozens of FIRST events both at the local, state, regional, and international level.

Last Saturday, members of ITR served as volunteers for a local FIRST Tech Challenge competition held at Horizon Science Academy in Chicago's McKinley Park neighborhood. FIRST Tech Challenge events generally involve up to 40 teams consisting of between five and 20 middle- and high-school age students. Each team brings a robot that they have constructed with the objective of completing specific tasks that change from year to year. The teams and their robots, which are usually the size of an 18-inch cube, are randomly paired up with another team at the event and play against another random pair of teams in a two versus two match. Each match played on the standard 12-foot square field

lasts two and a half minutes, during which each team of robots tries to complete tasks in order to score the most amount of points before time expires. In this season's challenge, students built robots to move around small balls and cubes and climb a mountain-like structure at each corner of the playing field.

ITR students served in a variety of roles at Saturday's competition. Members of ITR assisted with inspecting robots to ensure they followed design guidelines, helping teams connect their robots to their control hardware, refereeing matches, announcing play-by-play commentary, and entering scores into the event's scoring software. In addition to several Illinois Tech students who volunteered, a few IIT alumni who participated in Illinois Tech Robotics also joined to help out the event.

The South Chicago meet that ITR assisted with last weekend is only one of several events Illinois Tech Robotics students participate in each semester. Several students with ITR who volunteer with FIRST programs participated in the youth robotics program when they were in middle and high school and want to give back some of their time to a program that interested them in postsecondary STEM education. Other students who volunteer with ITR simply want to give back to their local community and help get the next generation interested in science and technology. Volunteering with FIRST also

gives Illinois Tech students an opportunity to contribute their technical skills to a good cause.

Next on the agenda for ITR's volunteer force is the Chicago FIRST Tech Challenge Championship, which is being held at Benito Juarez Community Academy in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood on Saturday, February 13. The event is being managed primarily by Illinois Tech Robotics students and alumni and will bring together the top 24 teams in the city of Chicago to determine which teams will progress to the Illinois State Championship. Many volunteers are still needed for the event. Any member of the IIT community is highly encouraged to volunteer; no experience or specific skills are necessary in order to be a volunteer. Those who are interested in volunteering for the event can contact Michael Martinez at [mmarti42@hawk.iit.edu](mailto:mmarti42@hawk.iit.edu).

Students who are interested in the outreach activities that Illinois Tech Robotics has planned for this semester or who would like to join one of ITR's several active robot projects can join the organization on HawkLink to receive weekly emails regarding meeting and project times. No experience is necessary for any participation in ITR and all students are welcome.



Photo courtesy of Estlin Mendez

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# Students petition for increased academic progress reporting from university faculty

Annie Zorn  
LAYOUT EDITOR

With 170 out of 200 signatures currently, freshman Sarah Hamilton's ipetitions.com plea for more academic progress report accountability is gaining attention among Illinois Tech students. The petition, that went live on January 23, asks that professors routinely update student grades on online platforms such as Blackboard. The reason being that students should always have an accurate and up-to-date understanding of

their academic standing. According to Hamilton, the idea to have a policy change started when she kept hearing her friends complain about how they didn't know how to study for classes because they did not have a current understanding of their grade. The petition explains that if students know what grade they have earlier in the semester, then they will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of their study habits. Along with promptly entering grades, another important aspect of the policy is to make the grade shown on Blackboard

weighted so it reflects the correct percentage. If exams are weighted disproportionately to homework on the syllabus but weighted equally when entered into Blackboard, it might be hard to decipher the true grade. Before the petition went online, Hamilton contacted Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Christopher White, who advised her to create the online site to have a physical representation of the student support for this policy change. After there are two hundred signatures, the petition will be brought to the committee of academic advisors who will

ultimately decide whether the policy will be put into action. If professors don't feel comfortable using the program, they can attend Blackboard training classes to get them more comfortable using the interface. Hamilton points out that many people don't trust the efficacy of online petitions because often there is little follow-through, but she believes that with the backing of an administrator and large student support, it will be successful.

# Career Services shares tips for upcoming Career Fair

Kori Bowns  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With over 120 companies registered, this semester's career fair will offer students of all majors at Illinois Tech the opportunity to meet company representatives interested in hiring IIT students. The Winter 2016 Career Fair will be held this Thursday, February 4 in Illinois Tech's Hermann Hall. Hosted by Career Services, students and alumni who attend this semester's career fair will be met with a variety of internship and career opportunities. Career Services is offering several

ways that students can prepare early for the career fair. Students will have the option to register early for the career fair as well as borrow professional clothing to use on the day of the fair. Career Services staff have also been offering additional opportunities for students to have their resumes, cover letters, and LinkedIn profiles reviewed. Illinois Tech's Career Services office recommends that students do several things prior to attending a career fair, including reviewing the companies that will be in attendance, updating their resume, and practicing an elevator pitch. The office also

suggests that students practice responses to common interview questions such as "Tell me about yourself," "Why do you want to work for our organization?" and "Why do you want to work in this industry?" The office also recommends that, on the day of the fair, students review information about different employers before approaching them and ask for a business card from representatives they speak to. The office also notes that some employer's tables may become very crowded with other students and recommends moving on to another employer instead of standing in a long line.

Career Services also recommends that students follow up after meeting company representatives at the fair and suggests that students organize records of the companies and contacts that were met. Students can pre-register for the Winter 2016 Career Fair through Wednesday on the MTCC bridge. Professional attire will be required for entry to Thursday's career fair. For more information, visit Career Services' website at [web.iit.edu/career-services](http://web.iit.edu/career-services)



Photos of Spring 2015 Career Fair by Katy Banks



# Architecture students win Detroit competition

**Neil Griffin**  
TECHNEWS WRITER

With Detroit in the process of redefining itself and incentivizing people to move back into the urban core of the city, Bedrock Development reached out to a few schools in the Midwest area to come up with innovative strategies for development. The relationships between the community, municipalities, companies, and startups are dynamic and evolving to creating a greater Detroit. The winning project, “The Hive” is “a new mixed-use typology built to meet the needs of today and for generations to come.” Collaborators Zhehang Li, Tyler Baldwin, and Neil Griffin took home first place for Illinois Tech in the competition with other IIT teams placing second and receiving honorable mentions. They realized, after visiting Detroit, that the city was made of “disconnected, vast open spaces that separated the unique things happening” I recalled. Their project was founded on the Miesian philosophy of flexibility over time, and that by “providing a



Image courtesy of Neil Griffin

framework that is a combination of concrete and wood, our strategy can be modified and added onto over time in a sustainable, practical

way” Tyler Baldwin explained. Two of the winning projects had a DIY theme, with all of the projects incorporating smaller living

spaces with a live-work component. The Brush Park Competition Jury said the proposals were “brave and brilliant” and “risky—helps change the conversation”, while including that “participants thought big and bold when it came to the new opportunities for residential and mixed use architecture in Detroit.”

Even though the final proposals won’t be built, the ideas presented will inform the other five local architecture firms that are working on the larger site of possible directions to pursue. With \$70 million being invested into this neighborhood, there will be some interesting projects in the near future to exemplify Detroit being named the City of Design. Back on campus, eight of the students from this Detroit Studio will be working with administration, community organizations, and the Illinois Tech community to redesign the campus master plan. Be on the lookout for surveys and events to get student feedback towards what the future of Illinois Tech could be. If you would like to see all the competition submissions in full, please visit <http://www.brushparkdetroit.com/student-competition/>.

# WIIT brings nerdcore to The Bog

**Reno Waswil**  
TECHNEWS WRITER

To the untrained ear, the genre popularly referred to as nerdcore may sound indistinguishable from typical hip-hop music. There is oftentimes not very much tonally different between the two. Sometimes nerdcore is tracked with characteristically 8-bit and chiptune music, or using samples or sounds reminiscent of nerd culture, but more frequently the sources for the musicality of hip-hop are the same as the vast majority of non-nerdcore hip-hop artists. The definitional distinction can be found in the lyrics and often the lifestyles of the performers, which is that of a nerdy quality.

Though there are no hard and fast rules about what themes are focused on in the genre as the characteristics defining nerd culture are often up for debate, nerdcore rappers’ lyrics tend to focus heavily on topics of video games, technology, science, science fiction, fantasy, and being awkward or uncool. Many rappers throughout the history of hip-hop have incorporated these ideas, MF Doom being a notable example, but only nerdcore

rappers such as MC Frontalot, YTCracker, and the ones that will be discussed further in this article define themselves by it.

Due to the uniqueness of the genre, as well as the cult following that it held at Illinois Tech and the interest it would incur at what is considered an exceptionally nerdy school, Illinois Tech’s student run radio station, WIIT 88.9 FM decided to bring a couple of nerdcore artists to The Bog the night of January 23, in an event called Nerdcore @ The Bog.

The acts brought in were South Bend, Indiana-based duo Soup or Villianz, consisting of Remi-son and Viet Vu, and Dallas, Texas-based 1-UP Creative Mind Frame who, despite being a solo performer, brought with him a dedicated posse that played, a great deal into his show.

The event that evening was preceded by the first installment of Union Board’s weekly dance performance and class “All The Riite Moves,” that week featuring an epic and belly dancing performance given by three dancers. In the course of the show, the dancers invited some of the audience members up to the stage, one of them being none other than Remison, who—being a showman himself—

was a natural.

Another novelty of the night was the group of people who arrived about a half an hour or so before the actual beginning of the show, 20 to 30 minutes after 9 p.m., with their own set of sound and recording equipment for, what we later found out, was for a sort of reality show or documentary about Soup or Villianz. The duo also left the venue several times throughout the night when they were not on stage, seemingly to shoot more and with the crew, including what seemed to be a false exit.

Nerdcore @ The Bog saw a large crowd turnout and some great performances, and was deemed by WIIT and those in attendance as success and a fun night all-around. After some trouble finding the first act when it was time for them to go up, Soup or Villianz went up first with a wild and fantastic show. Some memorable songs of their set included “Why You Akin’ So Cray Cray” and “Keyz,” the later of which, may it be noted, became an instant favorite due to its repeated use of the phrase, “Where my keys at?” and the line “I promise when I get home I’ll give you orgasm.” Although there was a blatant and

unattractive semicircle at the front of the stage towards the beginning of the show, the less timid of the bunch succeeded in bringing the crowd closer as the night grew longer.

The crowd, having dispersed after the first act had finished, was lighter for 1-UP’s show, but those who stuck in found an equality great, and evidently much nerdier show than the prior. Sadly, 1-UP’s relationship with the projector put him at a disadvantage because the videos and pictures were so tied into his set. Still, 1-UP was able to get the crowd on their feet and dancing with songs like “Corny Pickup Lines” and “8-Bit Hero.” Let Nerdcore @ The Bog be the first of demonstration of 2016 of WIIT’s continual goal to host events in and out of The Bog to establish IIT as a hub of great, novel, and interesting music and art based shows, as well as of the station’s commitment to representing all genres and forms of expression. For those interested in hearing more nerdcore, WIIT’s weekly show “Nerdy Nonsense: Remixed,” broadcast every Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., gives you a weekly dose of both nerdcore and chiptune music, listen to it on [radio.iit.edu](http://radio.iit.edu).



Photos by Soren Spicknall



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# TechNews Writer's Meeting

*to learn about working as a reporter for  
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Sunday, February 7

4 p.m.

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# SUDOKU

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## 数独

The word Sudoku, above, is actually the abbreviation of "Suuji wa dokushin ni kagiru," meaning "the digits must be single" or "the digits are limited to one occurrence."



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[sports@technewsit.com](mailto:sports@technewsit.com)

## SPORTS



**Tuesday, February 2**  
Men's Basketball  
vs. Saint Mary's  
7 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 3**  
Women's Basketball  
@ Lake Forest  
7 p.m.

**Thursday, February 4**  
Men's Volleyball  
@ Siena Heights  
7 p.m.

**Men's Basketball**  
@ Maranatha Baptist  
8 p.m.

**Friday, February 5**  
Men's Volleyball  
@ Penn St. Behrend  
6 p.m.

**Saturday, February 6**  
Women's Track and Field  
@ Illinois Tech  
11:30 a.m.

**Saturday, February 6**  
Men's Track and Field  
@ Illinois Tech  
11:30 a.m.

**Men's Basketball**  
@ Monmouth  
TBA

**Tuesday, February 9**  
Women's Basketball  
@ Mount Mary  
6 p.m.



# Illinois Tech Track & Field competes in UW-Parkside Invitational



Photos by Genevieve Hummel



THE WEATHER  
City and State—Rain,  
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(Details in Daily Almanac)

VOLUME 97 — No. 161

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DIA 9425.28 ▲ 305.45 3.3% NASDAQ 1700.12 ▲ 3.1% MKOII 9214.60 ▲ 6.2% DJ STOCK 99 2496.01 ▲ 4.1% 10-YR TREAS ▲ 1.5/32, yield 3.765% OIL \$70.52 ▲ \$6.62 GOLD \$756.00 ▲ \$10.60 EURO \$1.3501 YEN 99.78

Obama Sweeps to Historic Victory

Nation Elects Its First African-American President Amid Record Turnout; Turmoil in Economy Dominates Voters' Concerns

By JONATHAN WEISMAN AND LAURA MECKLER

WASHINGTON—Sen. Barack Obama