

CAMPUS

Read about issues discussed at the spring President, Provost Forum.

Page 1,3

OPINION

Student shares lessons in ethics and leadership from recent seminar.

Page 3

SPORTS

Check out the sports calendar for upcoming events.

Page 11

**TUESDAY,
MARCH 29,
2016**

Volume 184 | Issue 8

technewsiit.com

TechNews

Student newspaper of Illinois Institute of Technology since 1928

OPINION 2-3
CAMPUS 3-9
SLIPSTICK 10-11
SPORTS 11

President, Provost Forum brings core student concerns to forefront

Anoopa Sundararajan
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Once every semester, Student Government Association (SGA) hosts the President and Provost Forum to provide a platform for open speech and discussion between students, faculty, staff and the administration.

The Spring 2016 President and Provost Forum was held on Wednesday, March 9 during the lunch hour in the Hermann Hall Ballroom. This was the second President and Provost forum for both, university president, Alan Cramb, as well as provost, Frances Bronet in their current roles. SGA President, Rahul Wadhvani, led the opening remarks and outlined that each topic would be given seven minutes of discussion time, with the possibility of returning to a topic should the event end early, so as to allow for effective discussion on as many topics as possible. The forum began with a set of questions previously submitted by students through an online link.

The first question addressed the recent news about Main Building, asking the President and Provost for official updates on whether the building was sold or is being converted to student housing. President Cramb responded by saying that since the university is not in a position to renovate the building, they are looking into finding a suitable developer to renovate the building to fix its foundational hazards and then convert it into micro apartments for students or young professionals. With similar projects being done in Pittsburgh and other east coast cities, President Cramb said that this would be a phenomenal solution that will bring life and light back to the area, with several benefits for the community at large.

The next question was in regards to current and future renovations on campus, to which President Cramb said that the university

is currently looking for developers who would undertake complete renovations of Bailey and Cunningham Halls to convert them into new and modern apartments for undergraduate and graduate housing. Additionally, the university is also continuing fundraising for the Ed Kaplan Family Institute for Innovation and Tech Entrepreneurship, with 33 out of the 45 million dollar target reached. President Cramb highlighted that more than 50 percent of the space in the IIT Tower is now being used by and for the university, as opposed to only two floors a few years ago, showing continuing progress and development. He also added that additional renovations will be made to other buildings on campus as necessary when funds become available to do so.

The last of the questions submitted through the online form ahead of time raised the question of how Illinois Tech is interacting with the Bronzeville community and what we, as students, can do to aid that relationship. President Cramb started by pointing out that we currently have a very good relationship with Bronzeville and that we have a group that discusses potential improvements with the community and went on to say that the more involved we are, the more projects that will arise that can lead to increased partnership and collaboration between our university and the surrounding communities and neighborhoods. Provost Bronet added that Illinois Tech has a campus planning committee that is talking about how the university molds into its current location and how neighborhoods around it are impacted. One of the architecture studio classes at the university is currently studying this very relationship, taking into consideration feedback from the student community as well as the surrounding communities that are being studied. She then directed the floor to Bruce Watts, Vice President for Facilities and Public Safety, who talked in more detail about the planning process and the establishment of the

leadership team that oversees it, which includes perspectives from athletics, academics, student life as well as research and community affairs. Watts went on to say that student life needs to be a theme across campus and learning needs to take place across campus. A lot of potential changes to the Illinois Tech community are being investigated, for example, whether food service will always be as centralized as it is today or if other means are possible. An audience member posed a follow-up question asking how student voices were being represented on the campus planning committee to which Watts responded saying that the project is still in its very early stages and when a more concrete plan is in place, the student government and different academic departments will be contacted for student representatives and other stakeholders. Before turning the floor back to Wadhvani, Watts provided an update on the Rave Guardian app, a hitech tool that facilitates communication with those in our network and possibly with public safety too. The current status update is that another vendor needs to be contacted for price comparison before hopefully launching the app by the next fiscal year.

Wadhvani then opened the floor to questions from students in the audience. The first student to take the mic introduced himself as an ally of Undocumented Students and Allies (USA) at IIT, whose members occupied a section of the room with mouths taped to silence themselves and banners in hand that displayed negative or derogatory comments that have been directed towards their community by faculty and staff at the university. He restated the six demands that the student group delivered to President Cramb recently and then shared the experience of a fellow student who is a presidential scholar but cannot afford the difference in tuition with the latest 2.5 percent increase. Although not a question, he went on to say that there are

students, especially undocumented students and students from low income backgrounds, whose dreams may not come true because of the tuition increase and asked for the President's response to this issue. President Cramb started by saying that he appreciated the student sharing their viewpoint and continued by saying that there is a process in place at the university for every student to talk to the Office of Financial Aid at any given time to discuss their individual payment situation. "Issues of financial aid are issues of the person," he said and added that they could not be discussed in a group to come up with any one solution. The student ended with a follow-up comment about the unlikelihood of alumni continuing to donate to the university if students from big high schools are continually negatively impacted by tuition increases.

The next student to take to the mic raised questions about the discrepancies in the information advisors and deans of colleges have about undergraduate research and federal work study. He asked what the current status of federal work study funds being used for undergraduate research is and was directed to Mike Gosz, Vice President for Enrollment, for a response. Gosz explained that every year there is a block of money sent to the university from the federal government. Funding is distributed based on students' financial need and eligibility, with the idea being that students who participate in this program get educationally trained and equipped with skills that will help them in the work environment. The issue that arises is how the money is allocated, with distribution through career services being a plausible solution to drive focus on academics.

Continued on Page 3

Illinois Tech Robotics wins third Midwestern Robotics Design Competition title

Story on Page 5

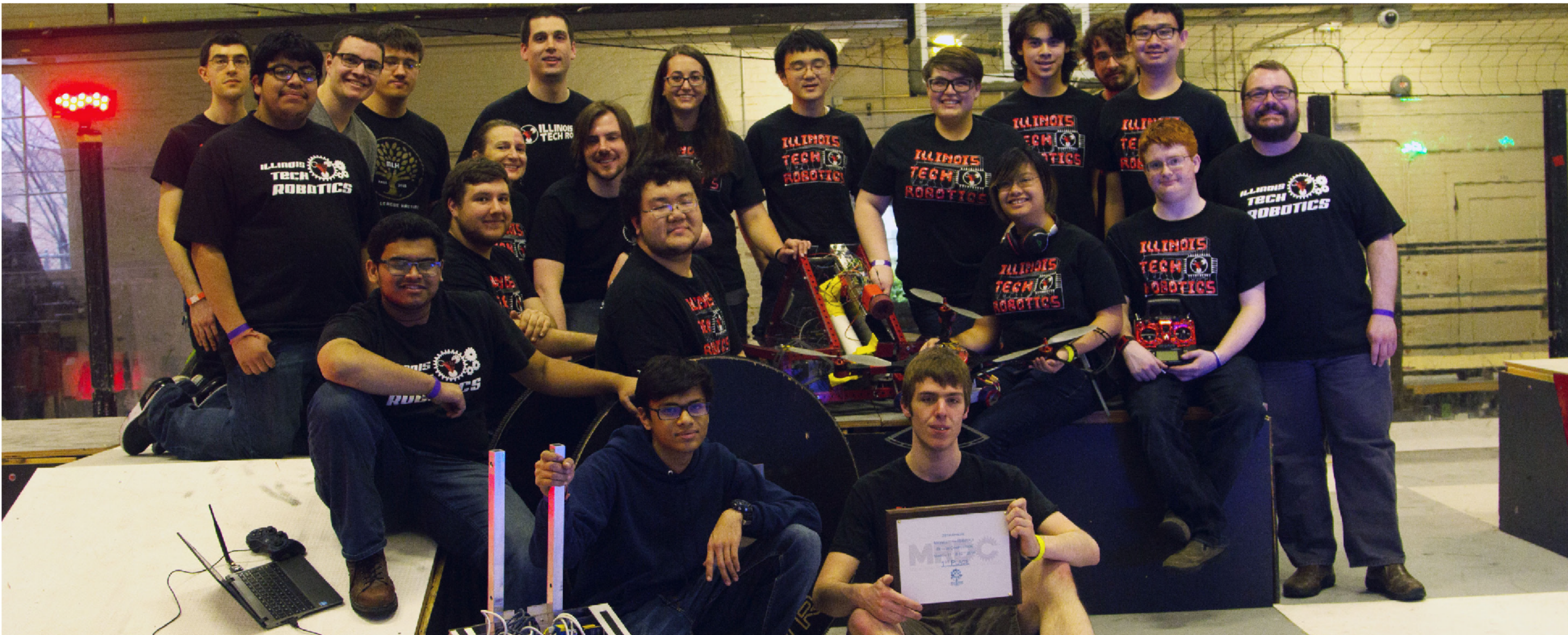


Photo courtesy of Kevin Zheng

Correction:

An article published in our last issue, titled "Undocumented Students and Allies, with media in tow, deliver six demands to President Cramb", mistakenly implied that

the President Alan Cramb, had referred to undocumented students as "alien" during the Fall 2015 President and Provost Forum. While President Cramb did use the term "alien"

during that event, it was only in reference to his own legal status during his immigration process when relocating to the United States. That phrase was never directed by President

Cramb toward any students or student group, and TechNews would like to apologize for our lapse in phrasing when quoting President Cramb's remarks.