Staff Spotlight: Ken Chatman, Post Office

Khaleela Zaman
TECHNEWS WRITER

If you stopped by the post office in MTCC at all in the past year, you surely saw him. But you probably don't know much about him. His name is Ken Chatman, a fourth year computer engineering student at Illinois Tech. Last year, one week before school began, he was searching for job opportunities on campus in Jobs4Hawks and sent in his resume for a job at the post office. To his surprise, he got a call just one hour later. They were looking for someone immediately, and he got an interview on the Monday of the first day of classes; and we all know the outcome of that interview.

Chatman's job entails giving out packages and running errands of mail to various offices on campus. However, his favorite part about the job is interacting with the people who come to the post office window. He has met so many interesting, new people at that counter. If you have interacted with Chatman, then you know how friendly he is. He may be a little soft-spoken, but that ever-smiling face is always able to brighten a

Photo by Khaleela Zaman

day.

Rude customers are "probably the one thing [he does] not like." Those line skippers—the ones who just walk right up to the window while all the other people are waiting in a long, long line—those are the ones he is referring to. Other than those people, his favorite part about Illinois Tech is definitely the "friendly environment." The people are willing to help; "it's like a shielded world from the real world." Chatman has truly "enjoyed the time [he has] been here."

Ken Chatman is an exemplary member of the friendly community of Illinois Tech, always willing to help anyone who might walk up to the post office, whether they are just picking up a package or they have a more involved question. Next time you are passing by, consider saying more than just spitting out your mailbox number, because more might come out of a simple conversation than just the transfer of your package. If anything, Chatman's smile will leave you smiling.

Technology improvements for the new school year

Office of Technology Services

Welcome Back! The Office of Technology Services (OTS) has been hard at work over the summer to make your academic experience at Illinois Tech even better in the 2016-2017 school year.

Before shining a light on some of those improvements, though, OTS wants you to know about HAWKi, Illinois Tech's free mobile app for both Apple and Android devices, which debuted in March of this year. From August 15-25 alone, HAWKi was downloaded over 1000 times with more than 17,000 visits. HAWKi enables students to access their grades, class discussions, class schedules (which can be synced with their devices' calendars), class rosters, Illinois Tech news, holds, events, and more. HAWKi is the first student mobile app at the university that combines the services of both Banner and Blackboard in one app. Best of all, OTS partnered with the Student

Government Association (SGA) in the design, content selection, and naming of the app.

As for work done on behalf of students over the summer, OTS once again teamed up with the SGA to explore the look, feel, and content that Illinois Tech students wished to see on the myIIT portal. As a result of this collaboration, many new services/links are accessible via the portal, specifically: MyRoom, handling the management of room assignments, board plans, and housing updates; MyParking, handling the management of parking accounts; HawkLink, connecting students with activities and events happening on campus; Sprintax, providing free federal tax preparation services to international students; and Cbord, providing students with a dashboard on their current balances for Board, TechCash, and Bonus Points.

All OTS-managed PC labs have been upgraded to Windows 10. Additional PC kiosks and printing release stations were introduced at the Downtown Campus, together

with a full refreshment of the PC's in computer labs in Alumni Memorial and Crown Hall on the Mies Campus.

OTS deployed yet another useful Blackboard application, Blackboard Community, which allows professors to target information for students on a specific subject or field of study. Blackboard Community allows for the sharing of data/content without the need for shared drives or emails.

In response to students' complaints, OTS focused on two process enhancements: it streamlined the university's billing practices for housing and meal plans and the student Jobs4Hawks hiring process.

Ophir Trigalo, Vice Provost and Chief Information Officer for OTS, comments, "I am pleased OTS was able to bring so many technology improvements to our Illinois Tech community. OTS prides itself on being a service division of the university, and our staff works hard to continuously make processes smoother and transactions easier for our

students, faculty, and staff."

Finally, there are two important tips to keep in mind. First, Illinois Tech and OTS will never send you an email or call to ask you for your username or password. Occasionally, members of the Illinois Tech community will receive deceptive emails claiming, for example, that their password is required to ensure that they will be able to continue to send and receive emails. This is a scam. Report such fraudulent emails to the OTS Support Desk.

Second, speaking of the OTS Support Desk, which is located on the second floor of the Galvin Library, please remember that Support Desk staff are available to help you with your technology-related concerns, 24-hours a day, Monday through Friday, and over 20 hours on the weekend. If you have any questions or need assistance, either stop by the library, go to http://support.iit.edu, call 312.567.3375 (on campus x7DESK), or email supportdesk@iit.edu.

Carving right through campus, the 31st Street bus is back

Photos courtesy of The Bridgeport Alliance

Illinois Tech MSI summer interns inspire thousands of guests

Kori Bowns
TECHNEWS WRITER

Well over one million guests visit Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry (MSI) in the city's Hyde Park neighborhood each year. While many Illinois Tech students are aware of the museum, fewer know the unique opportunity they have to get involved with the museum's mission to "inspire the inventive genius in everyone."

Each semester, undergraduate students from IIT have a service learning opportunity at the Museum of Science and Industry through the MSI Internship Program. Students apply to spend a few days during the semester volunteering at the museum, leading science demonstrations to the museum's general audience. Volunteers who complete a required minimum number of volunteer hours at the museum also qualify to apply for a paid internship at MSI over the summer.

While the majority of Illinois

Tech students were on summer break, seven undergraduates joined MSI as paid full-time interns where their responsibilities primarily included presenting science demonstrations to over 20 thousand guests. Each day, the interns could be seen on the main museum floor interacting with MSI's wide audience, including families, tourists, school groups, and other guests of all ages and backgrounds. The "live science experiences" shows, presented by interns, vary every year. This year, the interns' experiences included guiding guests through dissecting a cow eyeball, a live chemistry demonstration, a play about digestion, and more!

For nearly a decade, Illinois Tech students have reported incredible increases in their confidence and public speaking skills as a result of participating in the MSI internship program. Wildaline Serin, 3rd year engineering management major, worked as an intern at MSI this summer. "I feel more comfortable talking to people about science

concepts, which I wasn't very comfortable with before," she said. "I think it will be very important for me to be able to explain science and engineering concepts to other people; to be able to not just do engineering but to be able to speak about it." Participants in the volunteer and internship program continually say that their work at MSI empowered them to be better communicators and leaders in their science and engineering fields; they have found the practice in communicating their knowledge to be a boost to them academically and professionally.
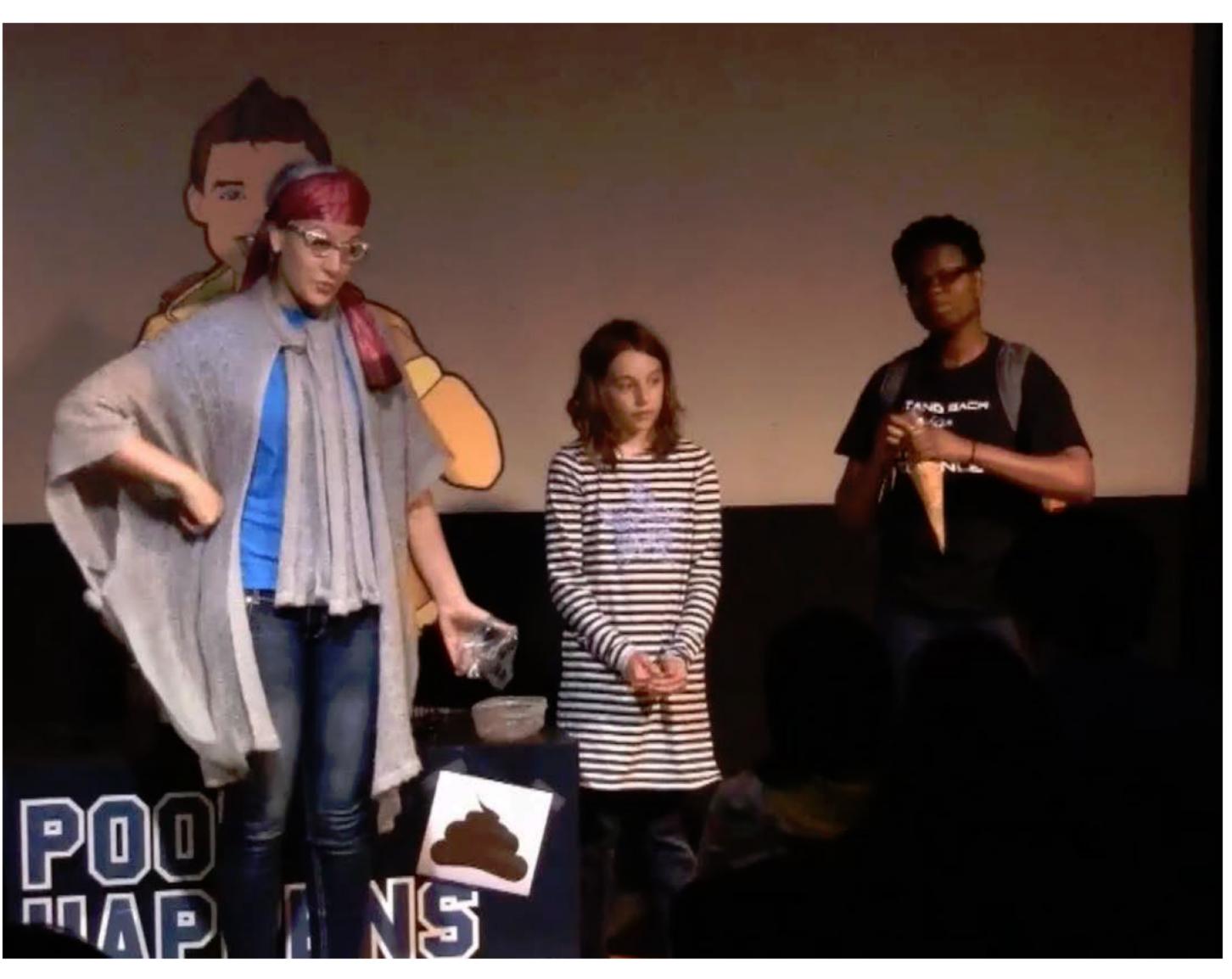
Participants have also enjoyed having the opportunity to share their passion for science and engineering with others in a hope to inspire them to pursue a technical career. Liza McQueney, 2nd year mechanical engineering major, said, "My favorite part of working at MSI is getting to inspire young kids. I was inspired to go into engineering by a museum exhibit, so it's really important for me to be able to pass that on."

After being selected through an application process, Illinois Tech students who volunteer at MSI choose several days in the semester to volunteer. On these days, they are trained at the museum to present small-scale live science experiences and practice their presentation skills. After improving over the course of the semester and presenting a variety of demonstrations alongside other volunteers, they become eligible for a full-time paid summer internship.

The MSI-IIT internship program is only open to IIT undergraduate students. In order to apply, interested students must attend information sessions, which will be held this week on Tuesday, September 13; Wednesday, S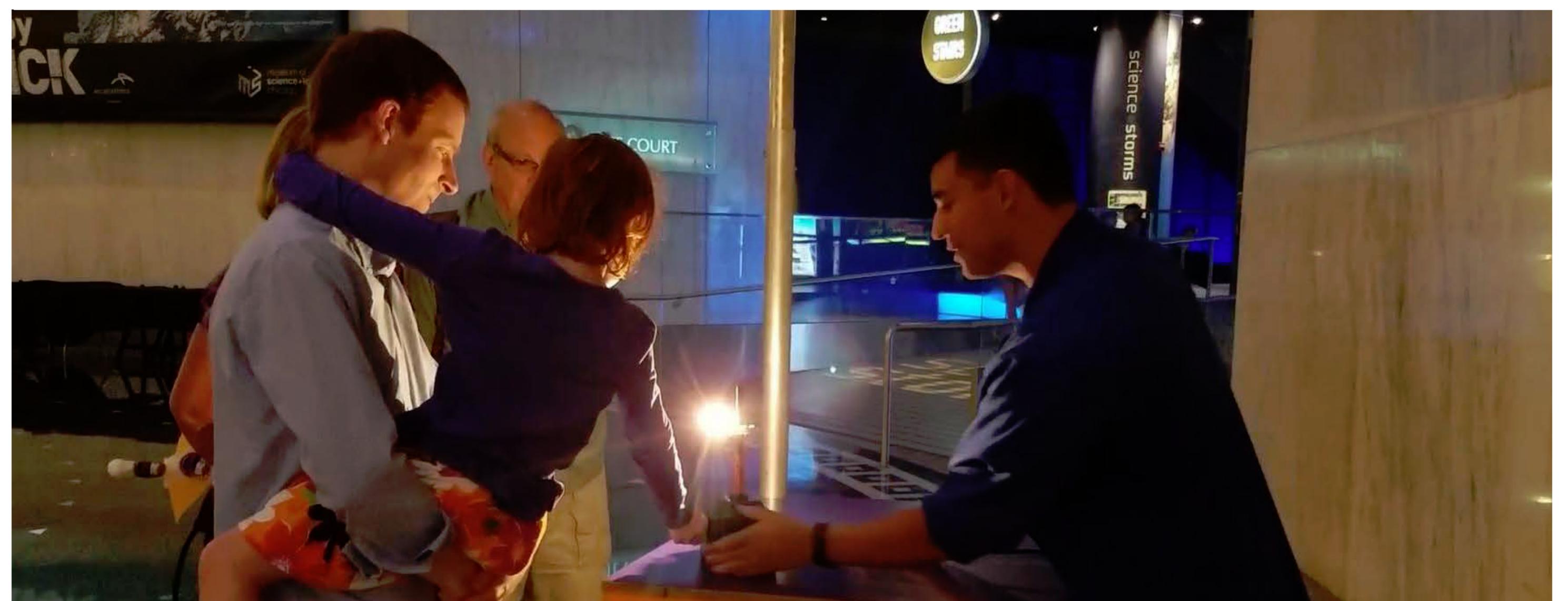eptember 14; and Thursday, September 15. All of the information sessions will take place at 12:45 p.m. in Rettaliata Engineering Center room 102. Contact Patrick Fina, Coordinator of Campus Life, at pfina@iit.edu with any additional questions.

Photo by Kori Bowns