

CAMPUS

What's IIT doing about greening its buildings?
Pg. 5

A&E

Zhou B: Find out why it's a local hotspot.
Pg. 8

SPORTS

Can it be true? Is Dennis Hamlett leaving IIT?
Pg. 11

TUESDAY

January 25, 2011
Volume 170 | Issue 2

technewsit.com

TechNews

Student newspaper of Illinois Institute of Technology since 1928

Opinion 2-3

Campus 4-6

A&E 7-9

The Slipstick 10

Sports 11

IPRO 335 in Haiti: Arrival

By Simon Brauer
TECHNEWS WRITER

Photo courtesy of Simon Brauer



On the morning of January 3, just as the sun began to rise, six individuals boarded a plane leaving Chicago which would ultimately land—with one lay-over, of course—in the tropical island of Haiti. For those of you who have been reading TechNews, you may recognize that this trip was for IPRO 335, a project initiated by Dr. Laura Hosman of IIT's social science department which aims to design a solar solution to power laptops distributed through the One Laptop Per Child program (OLPC).

The end goal of the project is to design a solar array that would provide enough electricity to charge each laptop in a given school each day and, once our pilot school gets up and running, provide the plans to others in Haiti so that it can be replicated in schools across the country. No, we didn't walk onto the plane with solar panels under our shoulders or with electrical equipment stowed in our carry-ons; instead our aim for this trip was to scout out four prospective schools in the small city of Lascahobas, assess their structural integrity, and discuss our plans with principals and other school officials there.

We landed in Port-au-Prince and as we stepped out of Customs into the warm Caribbean air we were greeted by the sounds of the street, escorts calling out for their passengers, the rumble as cars sped by on the bumpy roads, and the penetrating conversations in French creole. After a worrisome bout of cell-phone trouble, we were finally led to our local drivers, a couple of men who were helping with the OLPC organization in Haiti. As we headed through the streets, I couldn't help but

think, as we passed the brown concrete walls and rubble, that this was like the pictures we often see of Iraq. But as I looked up into the hills upon which thousands of small homes were built, I couldn't help but recognize the Rio in Haiti. Posters littered the streets and walls, each promoting a different candidate for president. As we sped up and over hills, around curves and past monuments, we saw so many aspects of the people in Haiti.

We finally arrived at the Prince Hotel where we would be staying for several nights of our trip. Even through the destruction of last January's earthquake there were these little alcoves of beauty in Port-au-Prince which we discovered along the way. The hotel lobby was filled with artwork—carvings, murals, and paintings—and the architecture was practically foreign to the rest of the city.

Though we did not attempt any intensive official business that night—we were all too tired from the early flight and travel in general—we did meet up with our local contact in Haiti, Guy Serge Pompilus, along with several local university students who were assisting us in our solar implementation. They drove us out into the night and brought us to an excellent restaurant with great local dishes. Some indulged in the fresh seafood while others stepped out a bit more and tried Haitian treats such as goat; still others—i.e. me—decided to take it easy that night and stick with some American favorites.

After the early morning commute to O'Hare, the subsequent flight across vast waters and darted islands, the sensation of being in a foreign land and being introduced to new

experiences, and our first indulgence in Haitian culture, we were ready to retire for the night so that we might be prepared for our travel the next morning: a scenic trip over a mountain (or two) and through dusty little villages. The next day we would start assessing schools, and that was when our work really started.

Check out an overview of the trip and project at <http://www.inventingthefuture.iit.edu/journal/2011/1/14/ipro-335-visits-haiti-to-help-transform-the-quality-of-educ.html>, and for more information on IPRO 335, please visit <http://iitempoweringhaiti.org/> for updates, information, and pictures of our work.

TechNews

wants
YOU!
(to tell us
what you
think)



<http://tinyurl.com/tn-survey>
Take the survey. Win prizes. Feel good.

Sustainability is Fun!

Harshita Iyer
TECHNEWS WRITER

We hear about green buildings, recycling bins and alternative energy resources. But for the majority of us, that is about as far as it goes. Although most people do care a lot about the environment and sustainability, they do not have either the knowledge or the time to do something to help create change. Or they simply believe that one person's actions will not save the planet. This may be true, but I believe otherwise. As said by Confucius, "A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step".

And that is where the Office of Campus Energy and Sustainability at IIT started off a few years ago. Now the office has a Director, a Sustainability Plan and recently received the Princeton Review's "Best Green Rating" in Illinois, tied with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Office organizes all sorts of fun events throughout the year, such as the Earth Week in April, around Earth Day (April 22), and creates awareness about Recycle Mania, an annual recycling competition every February among U.S. and Canadian colleges. They also organize events a few times every semester, called Campus Sustainability Forums, which are open to all IIT students, faculty, and even the community. These forums discuss various concerns about sustainability, and attempt to make people aware of what is going on at both IIT and in the community. Each forum covers a new topic, as well as topics that continue to be a concern, like recycling which is covered once very semester.

The first Sustainability Forum of the semester was on the 21st of January, about transportation, and the two speakers at the event were Bob Anderson from Hybrid Electric Vehicle Technologies, and Adolfo Hernandez from Active Transportation Alliance. They spoke about how important it is that we depend less on gasoline and how easy it is to make the world move towards healthier and more sustainable modes of transport, like biking and walking (if distance permits). Bike parking, having separate bike and walking trails on roads, and bike renting systems are easy to implement and manage as well. The forums, initially just speaker sessions have been converted into Speaker Panels, so that the floor can be opened to a question and answer session. These forums make people more aware about developments in the arena of sustainability, so that the community as a whole can move towards a more sustainable and healthy way of life.

The forums are normally held between 12 noon and 1.30 pm at the MTCC Ballroom, and lunch is served. Attendance is preferably by RSVP, as otherwise, there is not enough space to accommodate everyone. So anyone interested in going is strongly recommended to RSVP, unless they want to risk having to watch the entire event standing up. The list of topics for this semester and their dates is on the Campus Sustainability website (<http://www.iit.edu/sustainability/>).