

Happy New Year!

Chicago's Vietnamese celebration



Photos by Ton Trieu

Illinois spring Map Grant disbursement arriving soon

By
The Office of Financial Aid

Federal funds were disbursed after the add/drop date, but the Office of Financial Aid is still processing the Map Grant for the Spring term. For students awarded the Map Grant, these funds have not yet disbursed to your financial aid account.

The Office of Financial Aid requests these funds from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) each semester. Currently, ISAC is not accepting requests for Map Grant funds for the Spring 2011 academic term. We anticipate ISAC to accept new requests this week. Providing we can request the Spring 2011 funds, we anticipate Map Grant disbursements will occur mid-February.

Until the Map Grant disburses to your ac-

count, you may receive an outstanding balance notification from the Bursar's Office. The Office of Financial Aid notified the Bursar's Office of the delay, so you should not be penalized for these funds not disbursing yet. Please note: If you have an additional balance on your account after the IL Map Grant disburses, you need to pay that balance now. The Bursar's Office will not remove late fees for students who neglect to pay their bill on time. Please be proactive and check your bill today on the MyIIT portal.

The Office of Financial Aid will notify you when the IL Map Grant funds are disbursed. If you have any questions, please contact us directly at finaid@iit.edu or at 312-567-7219. If you have a question about your bill, please contact the Bursar's Office directly at bursar@iit.edu.

Engineering futures session bettering prospects

By Young Hong Ip
TECHNEWS WRITER

This semester, Tau Beta Pi was excited to continue the Engineering Futures Workshops. This program enables students to actively engage and practice soft skills such as team chartering and problem analyzing. Students came out once again for the continuing series of soft skills. On Saturday, Tau Beta Pi hosted the Effective Presentation Skills workshop. Students turned out to develop and hone their public speaking and presentation skills. Many students took away valuable lessons and were also able to lend their experiences to peers new to

public speaking.

As some of you may know, Tau Beta Pi is an exclusive national honors engineering society reserved for only those who have shown exemplary character and achieved the highest of grades (Top eighth of the junior class and top fifth of the senior class). As part of the initiation process, student are required to earn three credits to become qualified for initiation. Participation in Engineering Futures is one of those ways candidates can earn a credit.

Be on the look-out for the awesome events Tau Beta Pi has planned this semester. Email us at tbp@iit.edu for more information or to join our mailing list!



Protecting an idea

An interplay of science and patents

By Sumana Sundaramurthy
TECHNEWS WRITER

An intellectual property attorney from Wood Philips, Mr. Adam Wolek spoke about the ways of protecting an idea using IPRs and patents. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) refers to distinct types of creations of the mind for which rights are recognized, as well as their corresponding fields of law. This gives their owners the rights to a variety of intangible assets like artistic works, inventions, discoveries, etc. There are various classes of IPRs that include patents, trademarks, copy rights and trade secrets. Patents are given for an invention or discovery; trademarks for products like Coca-cola; copyrights for materials like books, music, etc and trade secrets for certain formulas or other components like the recipe for KFC chicken and so on.

IPRs are considered to be very important because today, they contribute much more to the market value of the product. Also, about 89% of the biotech companies license patents that are considered the most effective means of capturing competitive advantage.

Patents give the owner the right to exclude others from using item but, at the same, time they doesn't give the right to the owner to use it too. A patent is valid for 20 years from the date of filing the patent. The components that can be patented include compositions of matter, processes, methods and apparatus. A pat-

ent includes an abstract, specifications and claims. The prerequisites for a patent are that it should be useful, novel, sufficiently described and non-obvious. Disclosure in the form of an article or other form is called prior art. Publishing, collaborating, maintaining records, time and finance are the issues that are faced by the publishers. Patents cannot be filed after they are being published, but in the United States a grace period of one year is given for filing the patent. Next come the issues related to joint inventorship.

There are certain requirements in order to become an inventor, and it is very important as incorrect inventorship may invalidate the patent. Another important concept to claim the ownership of a patent that has already been filed would be the maintenance of a lab notebook that has been attested from time to time and should also have a witness sign. During the filing of patents there are two kinds of applications: the provisional and non-provisional, with separate procedures for each country. Acquiring a patent is a time-consuming and costly process, so different ways to cut down costs, searching for prior art and discussion with a patent lawyer would help in maintaining the patent. The role of IPRs and especially patents were thus considered to be very important in Biotech industry.