## TechNews

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF **TECHNOLOGY SINCE 1928** 

McCormick Tribune Campus Center Room 221

3201 South State Street Chicago, Illinois 60616

editor@technewsiit.com Website: http://www.technewsiit.com

#### **TECHNEWS STAFF**

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Adin Goings Ryan Kamphuis Pranava Teja Surukuchi

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### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of TechNews 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.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

TechNews is written, managed, and edited by the students of, and funded in part by, Illinois Institute of Technology. The material herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Illinois Institute of Technology or the editors, staff, and advisor of TechNews. There will be no censorship of TechNews publication by the faculty or staff of IIT. Sole authority and responsibility for publication and adherence to the values set forth in this policy rests with the Tech News staff. This paper seeks to bring together the various segments of the Illinois Tech community and strives through balance and content to achieve a position of respect and excellence. Tech News strives for professionalism with due respect to the intellectual values of the university and its community. All material submitted becomes the property of TechNews, and is subject to any editorial decisions deemed necessary.

## SUBMISSIONS

TechNews is published on the Tuesday of each week of the academic year. Deadline for all submissions and announcements is 11:59 PM on the Friday prior to publication. Articles, photos, and illustrations must be submitted electronically to the TechNews website at technews iit.com.

## **EDITORIAL POLICY**

The editors reserve the right to determine if submitted material meets TechNews' policy and standards.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor may be submitted by anyone, but are subject to review by the editor-in-chief. All lettersto-the-editor become the property of TechNews upon submission. TechNews does not accept or publish anonymous letters.

## **ADVERTISING**

Legitimate paid advertisements, from within or outside the IIT community, which serve to produce income for the paper, are accommodated. TechNews holds the right to deny any advertisement unsuitable for publication. Media Kits are available upon request. Ad space is limited and is taken on a first-come, first-serve basis. Contact the Business Manager at business@technewsiit. com for more information.

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## Balancing responsibilities, freedoms nutures success

#### By Mike Purdy

OPINION EDITOR & DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

MIKE PURDY opinion@technewsiit.com

Work Hard. Play Hard.

You've heard it a thousand times before, but in many cases the latter is difficult to achieve for students attending a technical university such as IIT. With a rigorous course schedule, demanding professors, and consistent late-night study sessions, a student at Illinois Tech is conditioned to hard work and considerable mental stress. Sure, frantic studying and anxiety over every diminutive assignment may pay off with a solid, visually appealing transcript, but I can guarantee you that this is not what you will remember most upon gazing back at your college experience many years from now as you look out of your office window, wondering where the time went or why your cholesterol levels are so high after years of inactivity. Alright, perhaps that was a bit extreme, but nevertheless, I believe that being a well-rounded student is vital to one's present and future success, especially at an institution as educationally laborious as ours. And the key to it all is balance. Achieving a fundamental balance - that is mental, physical, and emotional wellness, is a core element to any student's triumph throughout his or her college years, and here are some necessary steps you can take to ensure a proper balance as a full-time student.

Hit the Gym:

A recent New York Times article covering a study from researchers at Saginaw Valley State University reported that students who participated in regular vigorous physical activity appeared to have better GPA's than those students who remained physically inactive. This study can be applied to every institution of higher education around the country, as there is an obvious correlation between student success, contentment, and regular exercise. What do I mean by regular exercise? At least an hour a day is ideal; and whether this is primarily cardiovascular (walking, running, etc.), athletic, or anaerobic (weightlifting), getting up and producing a sweat is one of the best things you can do for your overall health. So next time, instead of attempting to grind out those last few pages of your lab report, head over to Keating or take a jog down the lakeshore and return to your work later with a fresh perspective; it works every time. Along with a sufficient amount of sleep, physical activity will help anyone reverse their sedentary ways.

Let Loose on the Weekends and Enjoy

Chicago:

Let's face it; the weekend is a time

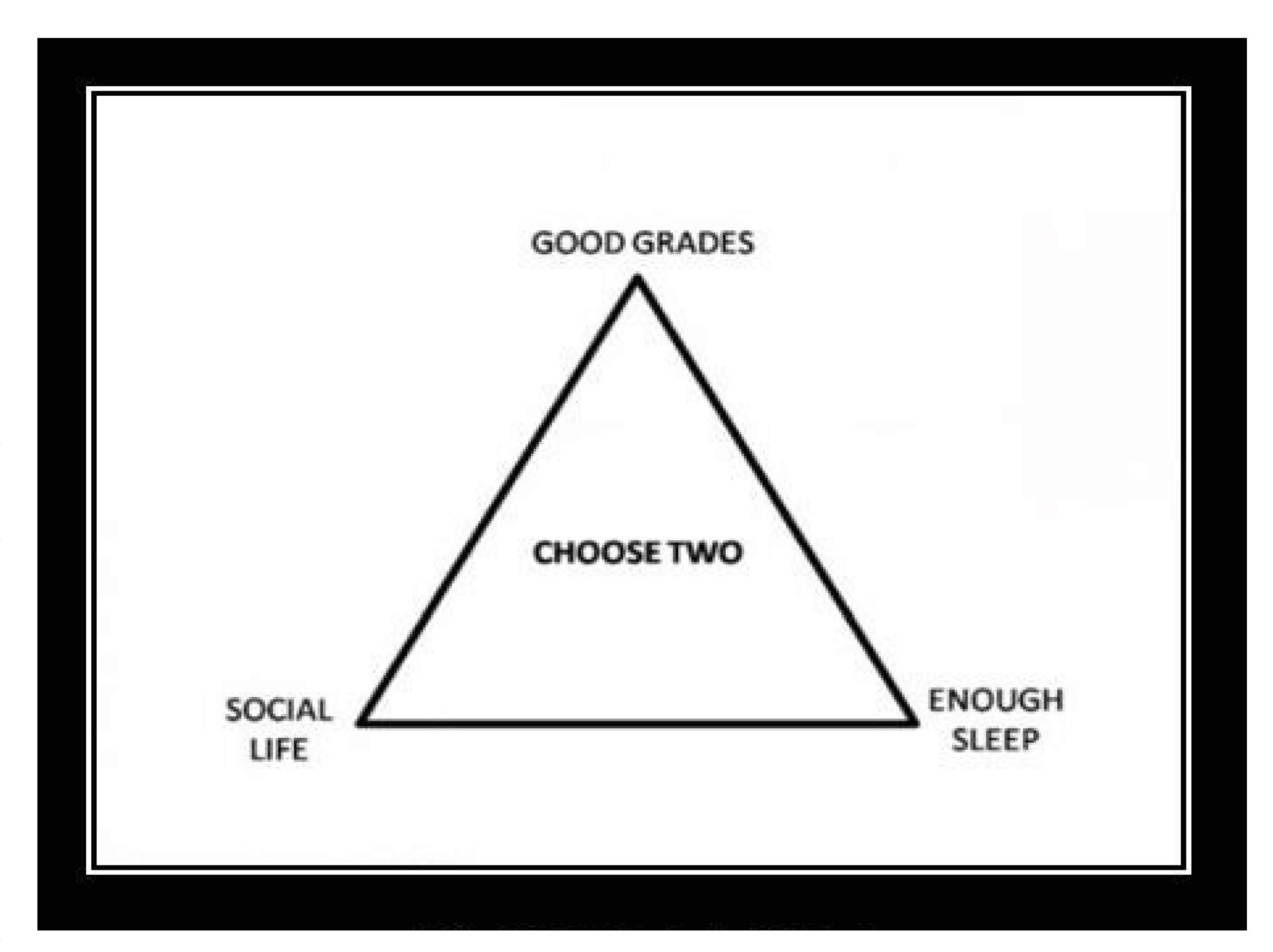


Image courtesy of verdemotivational.com

for relaxation and personal pursuits (except for Sunday night of course...). Without having some fun during the weekends, school here can become a bit suffocating. From personal experience, some of my fondest memories of Chicago and IIT have come from spontaneous adventures over the weekends. Use this two or three day period as a time to unwind, prepare yourself for the coming week, and take advantage of opportunities to explore the city and engage in new experiences outside of your daily routine. The U-Pass is an awesome tool that is in our possession as IIT students, so use it! It is easy to become entrenched in academics and commitments and not have the time to hop on the CTA, and it is even easier to take this great city we live in and all of its vast cultural, social, and educational activities for granted. Chicago is the hub of the Midwest, so get out there and enjoy it.

## Get Involved on Campus:

Becoming involved in any sort of extracurricular, professional, or athletic organization while in college is absolutely critical to one's personal development and balanced lifestyle. From my observations, IIT students are for the most part very involved on campus, but there are still many among us who will simply float through this experience without much of a connection to the IIT community we are all a part of. Being committed to a club or organization will not only allow you

to manage your time better and expand your horizons through networking and leadership opportunities, but will also endow you with a great sense of reciprocity; the inclination to give back in the same way you have received. IIT is currently host to over 100 different student organizations, and is especially unique in that it gives students the ability to create their own official clubs and groups in no time at all. Greek life presents an amazing opportunity to enhance your experiences while at Illinois Tech, and should definitely not be overlooked on your pursuit of a balanced and rewarding collegiate career.

The philosopher John Locke once stated, "A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world." This simple yet significant quote has resonated throughout the world for centuries, finding true meaning in the minds and hearts of those who have dedicated their lives to achieving a wholesome, well-rounded, and balanced existence. At this point in our young adult lives, attaining this balance is essential to the roles we play, especially as students at a tech school who work hard in the classroom and often times neglect our physical and emotional well-being in the interest of good grades.

The moral of the story: make the conscious effort to play just as hard as you work, and make the most of this experience which you will not have the luxury of repeating.

# American justice system pros, cons

## By Ryan Hynes

A&E EDITOR

The American brand of justice is something that all citizens ought be proud of. We established our own tripartite system of government that has served as a model for countless other nations. The source from which this power is distilled, The Constitution, is exceptionally thorough in mapping out the executive and legislative branches of government, but leaves the judicial question rather open-ended.

All that the Constitution provides for in fact, is a Supreme Court. The subsequent federal courts were created through acts of Congress. The current judiciary however, is a far cry from what the founders originally intended, and has led to what many would argue is an imperfect, and unjust system.

America is the most litigious country in the world. There are approximately 1.1 million lawyers in the United States, working out to around one lawyer for every 250 Americans. As a people, we are often criticized by our propensity to sue, especially for matters deemed frivolous or unreasonable. This may in part be attributable to the number of attorneys currently practicing, but a more likely culprit is the punitive damages awarded in many civil suits.

Punitive damages, or exemplary damages, are monetary awards granted to the plaintiff as punishment of the defendant. Opposed to compensatory damages, which are intended to compensate the plaintiff for their loss, punitive damages are meant to further admonish the defendant and deter them from further violations. Most cases that deal with these types of damages are referred to as torts.

Now this all may seem very convoluted, but tort law is one of the most profitable fields for practicing attorneys, ranging from "ambulance chasers" to big time tobacco lawyers. The settlements and decisions from tort cases are also very large, and can in some cases constitute an unbearable economic burden.

Many Americans are familiar with the details of Libeck v. McDonald's Restaurants, in which the plaintiff received damages of \$3 million for spilling coffee on herself. What many people fail to realize however, is that the defendants in cases like this are more often than not individuals and small business, not corporate America.

A settlement of \$3 million is a drop in a very large bucket for McDonald's, but could close a smaller business, and drive an individual into financial ruin. This is the hidden cost of our justice system, the destruction of wealth and productivity, all due to a narcissistic sense of entitlement and a complete lack of personal culpability.

Our judiciary has some very serious flaws; there can be no denying that. But it is important to remember the success and

## Letter to the Editor: Sodexo's service

I'd like to publicly thank Sodexo for their amazing work and spread of food presented at the OCES Sustainability Forum on January 27.

They really stepped up their game for this event, providing healthy food that incorporated vegan and gluten free needs without taking away from quality and taste. Needing to follow a strict gluten free diet myself, I was beside myself when I found that

I was able to eat an entire meal, including desert at this event. Too often, dietary needs are often forgotten by event programmers around campus; I hope that this quality of food and focus on dietary need can serve as a model for other organizations as they plan future events through Sodexo.

Thanks again! Christina Noonan, 4th year architecture major

Something you'd like to get off your chest? Email opinion@technewsiit.com to submit a Letter to the Editor or an opinion piece.

triumphs of the courts. And perhaps the fault lies not with the courts but with the deviation of our own society from the mores to which we once subscribed. Whichever it may be, it is important that we make note of the current trend, as well as its social and economic costs.