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Lights, Camera, Action!:
IIT gets piled higher, deeper with PHD movie
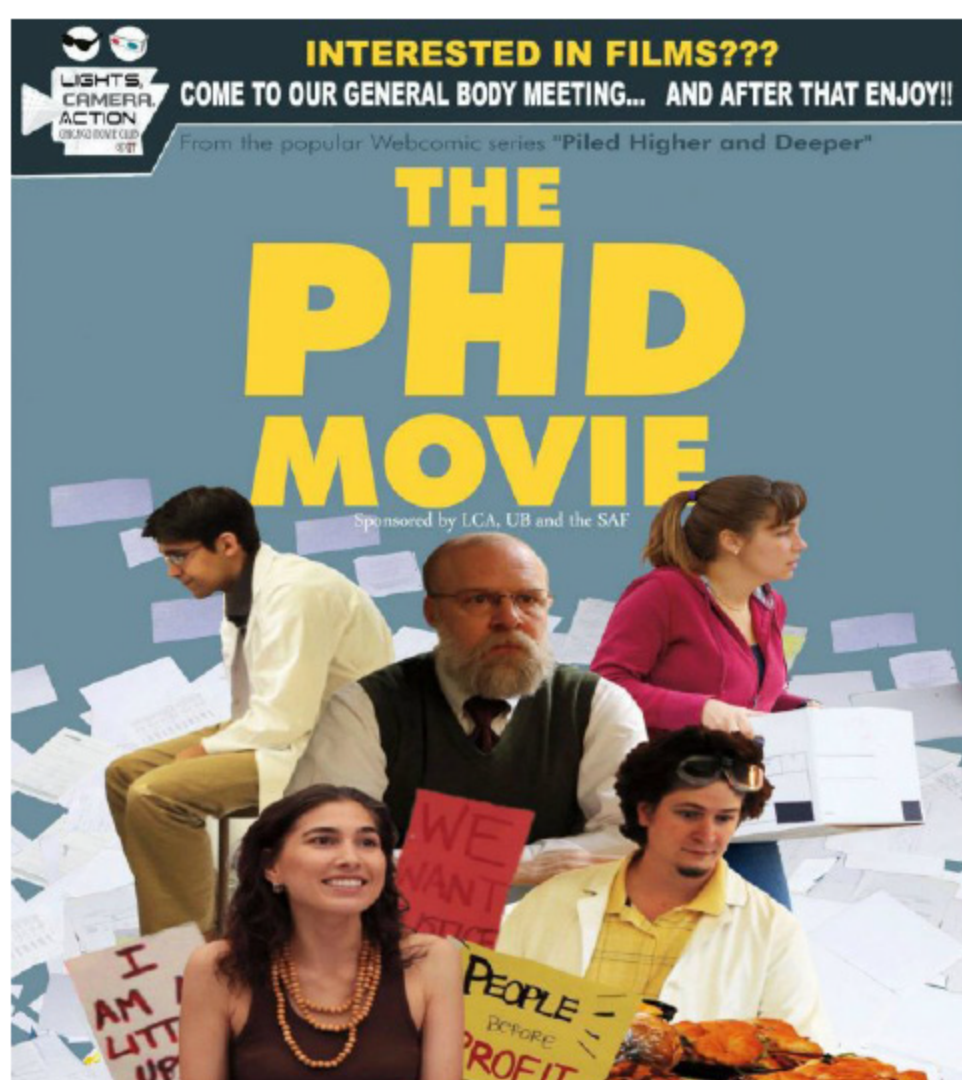
By Fernando Mier
TECHNEWS WRITER

Lights, Camera, Action! (LCA), IIT's movie club, is going to hold a pre-premiere of the comedy "Piled Higher and Deeper: The Movie," aka 'The PHD Movie,' which will premier soon in some cinemas, so IIT students will be able to watch it before it hits the box office.

Based on the comic strip by Jorge Cham, "Piled Higher and Deeper" tells the story of a graduate student, and how that constant feeling of being overwhelmed by TAs and research is always followed by the question 'What am I doing here?'

The movie follows a couple of PhD students and their academic life in the most comical way. It was a perfect adaptation of the comic strips, and the typical jokes like the student who always knows where the free food is or the people doing their work at the very last moment merge in a brilliant piece of comedy that is entertaining and true to life.

And for all of you undergrads that don't know if the film is for you. Let me tell you that, as an undergrad student, I was able to understand the jokes, thanks to what I see in the lives of my friends and my experience with LCA and UB. I invite anyone on this campus to come and have a great time.

It took a lot of effort to bring this movie to campus, but the PHD movie is here

Image courtesy of Lights, Camera, Action!

and premiers in the Perlstein Auditorium on Friday February 17 at 6:30 p.m.

The movie club is expecting a full house, so come way ahead of time and remember that if you want to see a specific movie on campus, email the movie club at movies@iit.edu.

EWB second general body meeting

By Swasti Khuntia
TECHNEWS WRITER

The second general body meeting of Engineers Without Borders (EWB-USA) at IIT witnessed an inspiring and motivational speech by guest lecturer Frank Bergh. Bergh, an electrical engineer for grid interconnection at Nordex-USA, delivered a talk on the topic of community development.

As the grid interconnection specialist for Nordex-USA, he is involved in power systems analysis, project development, turbine sales, and electrical engineering design for wind farms in North America.

Over the past five years, Frank has been involved in Engineers Without Borders projects at the university and professional level. In 2009, he traveled to Haiti to install a 48-panel, roof-mounted photovoltaic array on top of a rural maternal health clinic. His multidisciplinary project experience includes engineering/construction projects in Haiti, Guatemala, Malawi, El Salvador, and Mexico.

At the meeting he discussed specific points of actions of EWB including collecting donations, raising awareness within and outside of the IIT community, and establishing long term goals. An overwhelming positive response came from the meeting. The exciting and inspiring lecture was the a jump start for the semester and to get people involved with the projects that the EWB is currently working on. It was attended by students of all majors and backgrounds.

Support ASB's fundraisers, make a difference

By Utsav Gandhi
TECHNEWS WRITER

With midterms looming, many students have already started thinking about spring break, about a month and a half away—especially with the memories of a relaxing winter break still on their minds. For about 20 highly industrious IIT students and a few staff members, this means the eagerly awaited, annual IIT Alternative Spring Break (ASB).

This year, ASB has transformed into a student organization, and, continuing its affiliation with Habitat for Humanity, will be spending a week at a site near Valdosta State University, located in southern Georgia.

Past trips have included Foley, Alabama, and Oakland, California. Habitat for Humanity is an international nonprofit organization which provides sites for volunteers to build safe and affordable housing for families in need.

A major part of the trips' costs are funded with creative fundraisers, which serve as part of the team building experience. Fliers will be spread around campus detailing the numerous fundraisers planned for the upcoming weeks.

Pie in the Face: Do you secretly desire to see someone on campus get pied in the face? ASB can make that dream come true. For a certain price, you get to pie someone! So if you have any people in mind, nominate them. Email asb.iit@gmail.com with their contact information and we'll take care of the rest. If you prefer to remain incognito, don't worry about that—you don't need to be the one pie-ing. Students, faculty and staff can all be nominated. Pie-ing events will take place Feb 15, 16, and 17 on the MTCC Bridge during lunch hour.

Singing Valentines: After last year's success,

Illinois Tech A Capella returns again to personally deliver singing valentines to your chosen ones! For $3 you can choose one of a handful of selected Valentine songs and on Valentine's Day, the A Capella group will call your special person and sing your song for them. Singing Valentines will be sold on the MTCC Bridge from 12-2 p.m. and from 5-7 p.m. on February 13. You can even donate online for this fundraiser, at tiny.cc/asb12valentine

Guest Bartender at The BOG: On February 16 (tentative), Emma Titus, Greek Life Coordinator at Residence and Greek Life, will don the role of a guest bartender at The BOG. This is a fabulous way for the Greek Community to get to know her, while supporting ASB at the same time! All proceeds from tips will go towards ASB. Watch out for fliers for the confirmed date!

Jamba Juice on campus: The popular beverage station will be on campus from 12-2pm on February 15, in MSV, with a small percentage of their sale going to ASB. You don't need to be a resident to get some—just stop by and support ASB while getting some of your favorite drinks!

The Return of Penny Wars: After a highly successful and tightly contested Penny Wars last year, look out for (appropriately) house shaped change jars around the residence halls, and this time showcasing the superiority of your residence hall has an added incentive—supporting ASB!

Supporters can also donate directly to a link.: tiny.cc/asb12

Find ASB on Facebook to hear more what they're up to: http://www.facebook.com/asbiit. Email us at asb.iit@gmail.com if you have any questions regarding a specific fundraiser.

Financial Aid tax tips

By IIT Office of Financial Aid

Your eligibility for federal financial aid is determined by the information that you report when you (and your parents) file your taxes every year.

While the Office of Financial Aid encourages students to fill out the FAFSA early, even with a tax estimate, eventually a finalized tax return will need to be completed.

To help students with this process, the Office of Financial Aid would like to provide a few tips and tricks for mastering the art of taxes!

First, determine if you need to file a return. You can find out by answering a few simple questions on www.irs.gov. You can determine your taxable income through your W2, sent to you by January 31 from your employers in 2011.

Additionally, if you've had any payouts of money from IRAs or other accounts, these may be taxable. Check with a tax expert to confirm what is taxable and what type of tax return you should file.

Collect the necessary documents to complete your return. If you have been paying student loan interest, your lenders will provide you with a 1098-E listing the amount of interest you paid in 2011. Up to $2,500 can be deducted

on your federal tax return.

Please note that many lenders will provide this information to you electronically, meaning you will have to log into your online account with that lender to view this information.

You or your parents may be eligible for an educational tax credit. To determine this, you will need to obtain a 1098-T form and read IRS publication 970, "Tax Benefits for Education." The 1098-T form can be found by logging onto http://www.ecsi.net/myacct.

You will need a PIN to log in at this site so you may need to view the directions under "View Login Credentials" or call ECSI (IIT's loan servicer) at 1-866-428-1098.

If the amount of your scholarships and/or grants is greater than or equal to the amount of tuition, a 1098-T will not be issued on your behalf. Again, to confirm your eligibility please consult a tax professional and complete IRS form 8863.

If you have questions about your student account, please contact the Office of Financial Aid by emailing us at finaid@iit.edu.

Please know that our office will assist you with tax information to the best of our ability, but a tax expert will have more information and will be able to assist you in more detail regarding both federal and state tax requirements.

Happy Filing!

SGA opens VoteBox to suggestions

By Matt Otten
TECHNEWS WRITER

Communication is key to any elected official who wants to represent the opinion of a large group. SGA knows this and has a committee dedicated to it. Recently, Senator Dorian Karter, of the College of Science and Letters, proposed a website that would provide an efficient way to communicate with the student body. From this, VoteBox was born.

VoteBox is a website where anyone can submit their issues to SGA, administrators, and other students. Then, other users of VoteBox can vote on each issue, up to a maximum of 10 votes per user, which can be shifted between ideas at any time. This allows SGA to quickly see how many people care for each issue.

Below is a sampling of some the issues currently on VoteBox and how SGA is responding to them. To vote, comment, or even submit your own idea, visit VoteBox at sga.uservoice.com.

There are currently several ways, to get cheaper food on campus. At all dining locations, the 'Get $5' card gives $5 towards a purchase after 8 purchases of $5 or more. Center Court and 10West now accept the Student Discount card, giving 10% off any purchase. Dining services is also planning to give Bonus Points

at cheaper rates. For example, a student could spend $50 to receive $70, though the numbers have yet to be finalized.

SGA is currently discussing issues of 'red tape' with the Office of Campus Life. We are also investigating how each branch of SGA (Senate, Finance Board, and Judicial Board) contributes to this issue. One specific comment suggested bringing in students from other campuses to IIT events. Ticketed events are only open to IIT students, but non-ticketed events are open to non-IIT students. A representative from Campus Life also suggested working with academic departments to increase student attendance at speaker events.

SGA is currently reviewing a proposal by the IIT Rock Climbing Club and coordinating a plan of action with said club to implement this idea.

10 bike racks were purchased in November and are currently being installed around campus. The Parking Office will also be putting a couple of motorcycle parking spaces in lots D1, D2, and A3 in April.

Housing and Residential Services has merged with Greek Life, becoming the new Residence and Greek Life office. Emma Titus has joined IIT as the new Greek Life Coordinator. She can be contacted at etitus1@iit.edu or at 312.567.3740.