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# TechNews

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## Math Club visits Wolfram HQ

By **Pranava Teja Surukuchi**  
IT MANAGER

IIT Math Club has been quite active the past semester. Last week, we had a club sponsored trip to the Wolfram Technology conference in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.

The idea was conceived out of event planning this semester; we were planning on attending a conference and Wolfram Technology Conference seemed like a great idea. We appreciate that we are lucky enough to be at a university that invests in a site license so we can have free use of Mathematica on their personal computers!

We were not sure if we would be able to go to the conference, due to budget constraints and expensive attending fees, but we were determined to make it happen. It took a lot of planning, going through red tape, getting funding from financial board as well as the Applied Math Department and an extremely generous student concession from Wolfram Research. Finally, we were successfully able to take eight members including Dr. John Erickson, the co-advisor of the club, to the conference. To our pleasant surprise we discovered that Dr. Grant Bunker, professor of physics and associate dean of research in the CSL, was also attending the conference.

On Thursday, the Conference had talks by developers and users of Wolfram

products on new technologies developed by Wolfram Research. There were also a few workshops conducted to get attendees familiarized with their new technologies. We discovered the depths of Wolfram products and several fields of use that we did not realise were possible.

We had lunch with two IIT graduates who went on to become developers at Wolfram Research. We learned that the work culture at Wolfram Research is different from other companies. This lunch also turned out to be what can be called the 'Zeroth' meeting of IITMUG (IIT Mathematica User Group) with the founders of the group present. The lunch was followed by even more fascinating talks on Wolfram products, most importantly Wolfram Mathematica.

Thursday's dinner was followed by Stephen Wolfram presenting the second annual Wolfram Innovator Awards given to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to their fields, through the innovative use of Wolfram technologies. He then took questions from the audience about existing technologies and his future vision of the company. His perceptions on the future use of Wolfram technologies was quite diverse. His infectious fervor affected everybody in the hall.

Friday turned out to be more than we had hoped. After a few talks in the morning, thanks to Dr. Paritosh Mokashi, developer at



Photo courtesy of IIT Math Club

Wolfram research and IIT alum, we all had a tour of the Wolfram headquarters. The outside of the office was decorated with magnificent artwork, all made using Wolfram products by a dedicated art team. It was only after we went in and had an expedition of the entire office that we saw the uniqueness of the company, from a sand tracing pendulum in a senior developer's office to the Stephen Wolfram Avatar Robot made to have video conferences from anywhere in the world. We also had a visit with Wolfram Tech support which employees has Ph.D. holders. We learned that the employees have a unique chance of getting to talk with the many world renowned scientists that rely heavily on

Wolfram technologies.

After the tour of Wolfram headquarters, we stayed for a few more talks, had conversations with a few other attendees who are notable people in their respective fields, before bidding goodbye to the conference. In the end, we returned from the conference excited about several new Wolfram technologies that we cannot discuss, but we look forward to sharing our new-found knowledge of the use of the Manipulate and Dynamic commands, and the functional and rule based programming paradigms in general.

## Lewis College of Human Sciences sponsors student YouTube competition

### PRIZES

#### ROUND 1

1st Prize: \$1000  
2nd Prize: \$500  
3rd Prize: \$250

#### ROUND 2

1st Prize: \$2500  
2nd Prize: \$1000  
3rd Prize: \$500

### SUBMISSIONS

**DEADLINE:** 12:00 p.m. (CST)  
November 28, 2012

**SUBMIT TO:** Jack Spani, Life  
Science Building, 3105 South  
Dearborn, Suite 252, Chicago,  
Illinois 60616

*The 2012 Lewis College of Human Sciences Video Competition is designed to promote the study of the humanities, social sciences and psychology, and provide the opportunity to earn a monetary prize in recognition for such effort.*

### REQUIREMENTS

- Ø The video must be not more than 2 minutes in length.
- Ø A signed release form must be submitted for all persons shown in the video.
- Ø The video must contain an expressed mention of (i) the humanities, social science, or psychology, and (ii) Illinois Institute of Technology or IIT.
- Ø The video must not contain tasteless, offensive, or vulgar content.
- Ø The video files must not exceed 1 GB.

For a complete list of rules and regulations, visit [http://www.iit.edu/psych/events/youtube\\_competition](http://www.iit.edu/psych/events/youtube_competition) or email [psychology@iit.edu](mailto:psychology@iit.edu) with any questions.

## New IIT Mathematica user group available

By **Utsav Gandhi**  
CAMPUS EDITOR

A new feature is available for students who use Mathematica: an IIT User Group.

Are you interested in learning more about how to use Mathematica to do amazing and useful things, or want to share your own knowledge? Mathematica is a very powerful

integrated system for symbolic and numerical mathematics, graphics, data analysis, statistics, and simulation, with built-in data sources for exploring real-world (and real-time) data from many fields.

Like the parable of the blind men and the elephant, many people think they know what Mathematica is, but usually they only know a small part. IITMUG is a way to find

out more.

IIT is fortunate to have a site license that allows its use by students, faculty, and staff, and even installation on personal machines. We (John Erickson, Math, and Grant Bunker, Physics) want to assess your (the IIT community's) interest in having informal monthly meetings to share tips and techniques, give brief presentations, swap code, and

showcase amazing Mathematica concoctions from IIT and elsewhere.

If you may be interested in participating in IITMUG, please email [bunker@iit.edu](mailto:bunker@iit.edu) or [john.erickson@iit.edu](mailto:john.erickson@iit.edu) with the subject line "IITMUG". If you have a preference for (or aversion to) certain meeting times, please indicate that also.