

Tech Traditions Committee focusing on student engagement, school spirit

Katie Peters

COPY EDITOR & LAYOUT EDITOR

Most upperclassmen on campus have heard of IPRO day. Most gamers have heard of the Robotics Dance 'n' LAN parties. Most Greeks have heard of Greek Week. Most sophomores have heard of Sophomore Leadership Retreat. Most students might have seen the IIT Bucket List posters that are currently circulating through campus.

Most students have not, however, heard of the committee that meets once a month to work on keeping these traditions alive, as well as create new traditions. The name of this committee is Tech Traditions, a campus-wide effort to promote pride, awareness and gratitude among IIT's student body so that they have a powerful student experience and transition into

active and engaged alumni. Started in 2009, the committee works hard to find campus traditions that will enrich students' educational experiences, and inspire new campus traditions.

One of the new traditions they are looking to publicize is a reorganization and unification of the Pi Day activities on campus. Yes, we are a tech school, and so yes, we should celebrate one of the nerdiest days of the year as much as possible. Past Pi Day activities have included learning the IIT Engineering Fight Song to earn a piece of pie from the Office of Campus Life or running a 3.14 mile race with Residence and Greek Life.

The Tech Traditions committee's goal for this event is to "bring awareness to Pi Day and be able to market these events in a cohesive manner," says committee chair Katie Stango, Assistant Director of Alumni

Relations. If you are a student who would like to be involved in the committee and help refresh school spirit or if you have a Pi Day event you would like to be included, please email Katie at kstango@iit.edu. Students to move out into fraternity houses for the first semester, making mentoring harder for the most critical semester for an IIT student.

Greek life is continually scrutinized by the IIT administration, and has been victim in the past few years of several changes in policy that influence the Greek community to believe they are under attack by the school.

Greek life is not something the administration should be attacking, but encouraging and helping and not stifling. The administration and Greek community should be looking for ways that they can work together to make the IIT experience better and the mission more attainable.

TEDx talks return to IIT

Chanese Smith

TECHNEWS WRITER

Have you watched any TED Talks? It's a global phenomenon with over a billion clicks. TED is a nonprofit organization that is devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. It started in 1984 as a conference, bringing together people from three worlds: Technology, Entertainment, Design. Today, TED.com brings together the world's leading thinkers and doers in all areas and fields presenting a suite of short, carefully prepared talks, demonstrations and performances that foster learning, inspiration and wonder.

Its goal is to provoke conversations that matter.

Go to TED.com and watch a few ideas worth sharing.

Now you can be part of the planning team and bring TED to IIT with TEDx, a program designed to allow TED talks in local communities.

TEDxIIT is a student organization with the purpose of hosting TED-like events on campus for the global community, under the leadership of IIT alumna Amy Lee Segami.

Segami is a former TEDx Speaker, the founder and champion of TEDxIIT in 2009.

She will serve as the co-organizer of the event once again.

TEDxIIT welcomes everyone from the IIT community: alumni, faculty members, staff, and students at any level, with any major.

TEDxIIT 2013 will be held on April 13, 2013 at the Tower Auditorium on main campus. The theme this year is Exponential.

The planning meeting is held every Friday from 9:30 to 10:30 am at the SW Conference Room located on the 16th floor of the IIT Tower.

The mission of TEDxIIT is to create an amazing event, virtually and live, that is innovative, mind-opening, and attention-grabbing, featuring inspirational and energizing speakers from the IIT community.

The inaugural TEDxIIT 2011 Break Through <http://ted.com/tedx/events/4971> was a great success, as well as TEDxIIT 2012 Gaining Momentum <http://www.ted.com/tedx/events/1749>.

During TEDxIIT 2012, IIT Provost Alan Cramb, Vice Provost Jerry Doyle, and Stuart Executive Director Nick Rokop all made appearances.

The event took place at the Tower Auditorium. It was sold out, with more than 1,000 global viewers live streaming. Sign up on the mailing list at TEDxIIT.com to be a part of TEDxIIT 2013. Come to the weekly Friday meeting and make this an exponential event. Contact: 2013@TEDxIIT.com, @TEDxIIT Chanese Smith is the President of TEDxIIT 2013. You can reach her at Chanese@TEDxIIT.com

Students attend undergrad physics conference geared towards women

Emily Hommerding

TECHNEWS WRITER

Many IIT students are familiar with our institution's gender ratio; those who can't quote the exact numbers are likely to know the gist of it. There are more men than women at IIT.

The prevalence of men in some fields is much greater than others, but one of the most male-dominated fields is physics.

In order to understand the complex reasons behind the lack of women in physics and to build community, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) hosted the 6th annual Midwest Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (MWCWIP) from January 18-20th. The conference was attended by three IIT female physics majors, along with students from many Chicago universities,

and universities from surrounding states.

The conference was informative and fun, and provided a great opportunity for networking. Many highly successful female scientists were invited to speak, providing conference attendees with valuable information and insight. Speakers gave an overview of their research, their path to physics and their careers, and their personal lives.

All of the women invited to speak had incredible careers, yet spoke of the challenges of balancing career and personal life. Women who aspire to be brilliant scientists must abandon some stereotypical female roles as they build their career. All of the speakers at MWCWIP admitted some difficulty in achieving a satisfying work/life balance, though most of the women also recognized supportive spouses and families as being imperative to their success.

Some people may wonder why it is important to

gather female physics undergraduates at such a conference. Monica Plisch spoke about the lack of women with advanced physics degrees, and the stunningly low percentage of women who have tenured positions in physics departments. As the degree becomes more advanced, women are less easily found.

Although women have been proven to be as competent as men at science and math, somewhere along the way women lose confidence or interest in the field and pursue other things. Fermilab scientist Sam Zeller (who, by the way, is beautiful, tall, and blonde) spoke about how an advisor at Northwestern thought she would be better suited to ballet than a career in science. She now studies neutrinos and races cars in her free time.

MWCWIP plays an important role in giving young female physicists the confidence and resources to advance in the field. While many of us have likely never directly experi-

enced discrimination based on our gender, few of us have any female physicist role-models or mentors. MWCWIP gave us a place to feel comfortable, and to network with women who had similar experiences to our own. Speakers assured us we were talented scientists, and to not give up on lofty career goals despite the lack of confidence many of us have.

In addition to invited speakers, the conference hosted panel discussions on the topics of undergraduate research, graduate school, and careers in physics.

Conference attendees were able to tour a variety of UIUC physics labs, and we enjoyed an evening of networking and fine dining at a formal banquet.

Next year's MWCWIP is slated to be held at the University of Chicago, and I would encourage any IIT women who are interested in physics to attend.

Relay for Life speeding to campus

Katie Peters

COPY EDITOR & LAYOUT EDITOR

Twenty-seven years ago, one man, Dr. Gordy Klatt, started to make a difference just by walking and running around a track for 24 hours. Later this year in April, we will be able to make the same difference and walk to fight cancer. The committee planning the second-ever Relay for Life on IIT's campus has a lot to look forward to and a lot to work for.

Relay for Life is an event that is held across the country to raise money and awareness for the fight against cancer, and was held on campus for the first time last year.

The coordinators this year, including Nicolette Lewis, Richard Stevenson, Andi Piper, Tracy Pfeffer, and Brandyn Osborne have greater goals for the event this year, including having at least 150 participants and raising over \$10,000.

They all hope to make Relay a tradition at IIT, but they need the help of the IIT community to succeed and make a difference

in the fight against cancer.

It is easy to volunteer for the event, too! You can register for the April 20 event by signing up at tinyurl.com/iitrelayforlife.

You can start a new team with your friends, or ask to join an existing team. Participants are asked to raise at least \$100, which will also earn you an official Relay for Life t-shirt.

Although Dr. Klatt sacrificed 24 hours for the cure, the event happening on our campus will only last 12 hours, but will be a night full of food, fun, and people fighting for the same cause.

The event will take place the night of the Big Event, and is being kicked off with a show by IIT's own on-campus dance club, New Velocity.

Relay for Life will be held on the Quad, so teams can hangout or camp out in the field while members take turns walking around the Quad.

Further details as to what activities and food will be at Relay for Life will be updated as it gets closer, so be sure to look out for

posters! Key parts of the event include the Survivor's Walk, the Luminaria Ceremony, and the Fight Back Ceremony.

In each, cancer survivors or victims are honored: their lives, their stories, their fights, and sometimes their loss. It is a time to celebrate and mourn the people

who had to enter a fight with cancer, because there is not yet a cure. However, as Osborne puts it on his participant page, we are the ones who can fight for them:

"I fight, so that others do not have to see their loved ones struggle.

I fight, so that one day there is a solid cure.

I fight, for a world without cancer."

Help make the fight against cancer your fight, and fight for a world without the pain and loss that comes from cancer, but instead a world with more birthdays.

For more information on how to volunteer or participate, or if you have any other questions, please contact Nicolette Lewis at nlewis1@hawk.iit.edu.



Image courtesy of TEDxIIT