

TEDxIIT aims to excite campus with 'exponential' event

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Ever got those goose bumps when you hear someone influential speak? Even though you're sitting in the audience, the speaker makes you feel special and capable. That's the power of communication. Personally, I think that if there were just one thing that could change the world it, would be communication. Through communication, we create awareness and TEDx talks do exactly that. Most problems occur not because of negligence, but because of ignorance. We think of the number of problems we have, not the number of solutions to solve it. TED talks teach you how to think, not what to think.

How popular are these TEDx events? Last month, 162 TEDx events took place in 50 countries! Each event has its own name and its own special identity. From TEDxBroadway to TEDxYouth, they cover a vast sphere of audiences from all around the world. These talks are more than talks. They are where inspiration meets communication.

What's so important about TEDxIIT? Our event is one of the very few events that are organized by faculty, alumni and the students. There also aren't many Illinois colleges that host TEDx events either.

Who is the mastermind behind all of this; it's Amy Lee Segami. After giving a TEDx talk, Ms. Segami, IIT alumni, was on her plane back from Peachtree, Georgia, when an idea

sparked. Why can't we have a TEDx event in IIT? Located in one of best cities in the world and considering the assets of technology, diversity and networking, IIT would be a great place to start this event. Last year's event went live with over 1,000 global viewers!

TEDxIIT 2012 was also sold out. Moreover, the amazing response from the IIT alumnus was unexpected. Years after graduating from IIT, most of them came back to attend this event and were "blown away". Thinking it was like any other student organization; they were shocked that the talks had so much depth and quality.

This year's theme is Exponential. Do you know what we want to make this event phenomenal? We need you. Yes, you heard

it right. We need volunteers who will help us create this. By helping us, you not only build immense leadership skills, but also build solid relationships with the alumni, students, faculty and staff.

All you have to do is sign up on the TEDxIIT 2013 mailing list on TEDxIIT.com and attend our weekly meetings on Friday from 9:30-10:30 at the SW conference Room on the 16th Floor, IIT Tower. The more people we have, the better.

If there is any speaker that you want to see at IIT, nominate them by submitting a nomination form at <http://tinyurl.com/av2n8yx> by February 18 at 11:59 p.m. Don't you want everyone to feel the goose bumps with you?

Commons lunch celebrates St. Lucia, Grenada's independence

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On Friday, February 15, 2013, IIT students were served a meal resembling a Caribbean meal for lunch at the Commons. This special lunch was hosted by Caribbean Visionaries to celebrate St. Lucia's and Grenada's Independence.

Grenada, a 133 square mile Caribbean island known as the 'Spice Island', celebrated 39 years of independence from the United Kingdom on February 7, 2013. Grenada is called the 'Spice Island' as it is one of the largest exporters of nutmeg in the world. Although notorious for other spices, nutmeg is a significant contributor to the country's economy along with cocoa and other spices. The country is known for its political history and was referred to as the "island of conflict" during the revolution. It is the only Carib-

bean island to have had a revolution against its elected government after its independence. The revolution, which occurred over a span the span of 4 years (1979-1983), was intervened by the US under the leadership of President Ronald Reagan. After the revolution he visited the island on February 19, 1986.

The tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique is a volcanic island with two main volcanic peaks and two crater lakes of dormant or extinct volcanoes. It is also home to the national dove known as the leptotila wellsi, the mona monkey and armadillos often referred to as "tattoo" by the natives. The highest peak is 840 km. The island's population is roughly 108,000 with the majority being of African as well as mixed ancestry (European, African, East Indian and Native Indian - Kalinagos).

St. Lucia, a 239 square mile Caribbean island, will be celebrating 34 years of

independence also from the United Kingdom on February 22, 2013. St. Lucia was inhabited by Tainos and Kalinagos also called Caribs and Arawaks or the Amerindians like most of the Caribbean islands. It was believed that Columbus discovered St. Lucia, but he has been discredited as evidence showed that he never sailed to St. Lucia. However, Juan de la Cosa, another discoverer, has been credited as the discoverer. St. Lucia was fought over by the French and British. The British won seven of these battles and likewise, the French, who influenced their Creole Patois dialect, won seven times. St. Lucia was known as one of the largest producers of bananas in the world until recently. This has changed due to the destruction caused by storms which are frequent in the Caribbean. 'Helen of the West', as the island is known, is famous for having a drive-in volcano, a sulphur spring which flows from the collapsed volcano and serves

as a hot mineral bath for locals and visitors, and for having a majestic historic twin peak-the Pitons.

The Caribbean is known as a vacation spot for tourists from many parts of the world. Each island has their unique national dishes, plants, trees, flowers, birds but they all share a similar culture although it may slightly vary from island to island. One can enjoy the beautiful tropical beaches as well as a variety of water sports such as snorkeling and scuba diving on these islands. Although most of these islands are heavily dependent on tourism, their livelihood also includes fishing and agriculture.

Although St. Lucian and Grenadian students at IIT were unable to participate in the parades and other festivities usually organized for their Independence celebration back home, they are proud to serve as ambassadors of their countries at IIT.

IIT entities offering more networking opportunities

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Between IIT's crowded calendar of networking workshops, professional events, and career related development, it becomes clear that IIT is dedicated to improving students' odds of getting a job during or immediately following graduation. There were two notable events in January, that both encouraged students to understand the reality of life after college that I would like to throw light upon.

First is the Architecture Alumni Panel presented by AIAS and the IIT Alumni Board that brought four IIT architecture graduates to the MTCC to speak about life after graduation and how IIT prepared them for working in architecture. This was enthusiastically presented and allowed students to hear about how IIT will truly prepare them for working in large architecture firms after graduating. The alumni, having graduated ten to thirty years ago, offered many valuable kernels of advice. Some of the key concepts to take away from the presentation were to persevere through the first few months even if you get rejected at first, that IIT teaches students the technical and aesthetic understanding of architecture that many firms desire, that IIT graduates are more likely to hire IIT graduates, that the decision to go to graduate school is completely up to the student, and of course "it's not always what you know, but who you know." This last concept is what reaffirms why IIT's networking events are so important, they are chances to meet people in your profession that you would not get the opportunity to meet otherwise.

Second is the SEA IIT (Structural Engineers Association of IIT) January presentation by Brian Dekker, the Director of the National Council of Structural Engineers Association and new President of Sound Structures, Inc. Mr. Dekker spent much of his presentation on the amazing benefits of a successful

professional student organization, but made it clear that in order to succeed today you need to network as much as possible. Dekker claims he did not have the best grades in college, but he achieved the Highest Scholastic Achievement from his department upon graduation, for knowing the content and for getting to know his professors.

From a quirky story about falling asleep in class, Dekker explained how he became known to all of the Structural Engineering Professors at UIUC and how this helped him start his network as well as land his first job. Immediately after graduation, he was in high demand among professional engineers who had heard about his achievements and personality from his professors in school. He explained that because of this network, it took him only 7 years to go from being a student to the president of a structural engineering firm and onto the board of the National Structural Engineers Association. He iterated and reiterated what made his success possible in more or less the same words as the Architecture Alumni Panel: "it's not always what you know, but who you know."

The IIT calendar continues to have networking opportunities on its calendar almost every week, and many times there are events that might not explicitly say they are for networking, but afterwards the esteemed guest or presenter is eager to be asked questions and share stories about his career, sparking a connection that would have otherwise not existed.

Notably in the near future are two important events: the Spring 2013 Career Fair is Thursday, February 21, and the Architecture Spring Career Day is Thursday, March 28; for more information visit cmc.iit.edu. For people interested in Structural Engineering and SEA IIT, there is a networking night at the BOG February 25, from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. where students can meet prominent Chicago professionals in person for questions and dinner. Contact seaoi.iit@iit.edu for more information.



Successful Careers Start Here



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