

# 'I hate religion' posters ignite confusion

**Nicole Niewenhuis**

TECHNEWS WRITER

You may have noticed that this past Thursday, March 28, there were a couple of displays set up by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship titled "I hate religion because..." I am writing to you, the IIT community, to clarify a little bit what the intention and idea of these displays were.

We put up these signs in order to get a feel for what students on our campus think and feel about religion by letting them add their own comments to the display. In no way were we trying to condemn religion or offend or inspire hate towards religious individuals. For the entire time the displays were up, we had members of our organization near them in order to start conversations about religion and

why people are opposed to it or have been hurt by it. And indeed, many people participated and wrote responses, great conversations occurred at these displays. We were there to just listen to what people had to say and not to tell them what to believe.

If you or any of your friends were offended by the displays that were up, please share the

above explanation of our event with them. If there are still concerns, please contact InterVarsity at [iv@iit.edu](mailto:iv@iit.edu) or Lynne Meyer, Director of the Office of Spiritual Life and Service Learning at [lmeyer2@iit.edu](mailto:lmeyer2@iit.edu). Thank you very much if you participated in the conversation yesterday, and please feel free to share this sentiment with your friends and organization members.

## ASB returns from another successful humanitarian trip

**Utsav Gandhi**

CAMPUS EDITOR

After the most successful fundraising season in the organization's short history on campus and months of planning by the executive board and staff members, Alternative Spring Break took off to Albany, GA the second day of spring break. Continuing to provide students some real service learning experience whilst giving them an opportunity to travel and spend a week bonding with fellow students, this trip was special in a way that students got the opportunity to interact extensively with the homeowner as well as the host community; and also had the unique opportunity to visit the Habitat for Humanity International Headquarters in Americus, GA. The success of the trip was visible in teary-eyed goodbyes and immediate plans for team reunions, with practically every team member walking off with a satisfactory, productive and fulfilling experience.

The team left on Saturday morning, choosing to drive 12-passenger vans with intermittent stops in Indianapolis, IN and Chattanooga, TN. Closer to the Habitat site itself the team had the opportunity to visit the famous World of Coca-Cola Museum;

which promised to reveal the secret Coke formula but instead left an awkward taste in our mouths with Beverly Italian soda in their giant tasting room with all the current Coca-Cola flavors. We were lucky to receive accommodation in a beautiful little campsite in rural Georgia along with two other collegiate challenge teams from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Emporia State University from Kansas. It definitely was a rare eye-opening experience to learn from peers about how their Habitat efforts are planned, among other things.

The work at the site itself was very physically involving and all the more satisfying. Our team had to finish putting together a roof, complete with waterproofing it; along with putting in windows and getting the house ready for dry walling. The team had the incredible experience of meeting the homeowner of the house we were helping build. Restricted to a wheelchair for the last eleven years due to multiple sclerosis, he still had a fantastic perspective on life and wanted to give his daughter a stable environment to grow as well as personally go back to school and earn a Mechanical Engineering degree. Habitat for Humanity's outreach efforts follow the strong philosophy of never "handing out" homes as

gifts; rather the homeowners have to work hard for them. They have to themselves put in five hundred of community hours in helping build their own or other Habitat houses, and even after that they have to go through a rigorous home management and finance program to make sure they are able to sustain the responsibility of the house.

Habitat also makes sure to engage volunteers with the communities in which they choose to spend their spring breaks – the IIT team had multiple opportunities to interact with kids from the local elementary magnet school, once when they came over to build their own little birdhouses and once when they hosted our team and performed a few songs for us.

Our team also had the fortune to learn from a few older volunteers on the site, two retired caravaner couples who tour the country six months of the year to work on Habitat projects. It really is an incredible learning experience to meet so many people and learn from their varied perspectives and life stories.

After reflection sessions on service learning and singing the Pi Song around a campfire on the final work day the team headed back to Chicago and the ride back was

equally memorable as the rest of the trip. We stopped by at the International headquarters of Habitat for Humanity, learning more about its global outreach efforts and getting a chance to see the variety of Habitat homes all around the country. The team also had the opportunity to stop by the famous Andersonville Prisoner of War Museum with a chilling Civil War historical component and vast stretches of empty land chronicling brutal stories of racist tensions. Finally the team also stopped by the Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky, taking a two hour tour to observe some miraculous cave structures and formations.

Alternative Spring Break has to be lived to be believed. Fundraising efforts and team building sessions prior to the trip are just the icing on the cake, it is the six days itself you spend with colleagues that create lifelong memories and leads to an immensely satisfying spring break experience.

The challenge of stepping out of your comfort zone and making best friends out of relative strangers while participating in an immensely rewarding satisfying service learning experience is one of the few irreplaceable memories I will take from my time at IIT.

## AIAA Student Conference next weekend

**Nishanth Samala**

TECHNEWS WRITER

Founded in 1963, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) was created as a professional society to further developments in the aeronautics and aerospace fields by providing grants, resources, and spaces to professionals and students in the field.

However, the mission has since

changed. Prompted by an aging workforce, a lot of AIAA's efforts have shifted to getting more students actively involved in aerospace engineering.

This effort is visible at IIT as well. In fact, IIT's chapter of AIAA is one of the oldest student organizations still on campus. Today, they work on a wide variety of projects designed to get students hands-on experience with aerospace. In fact, they are actively involved in a joint project with NASA to conduct

experiments in near space.

They are also working on an unmanned aerial vehicle capable of flying autonomously and tracking targets on the ground.

Being held this weekend (April 5th and 6th), the AIAA Region III Student Conference is an annual event where students from universities in the Midwest come together to share the latest research and developments in the aerospace and aeronautics fields. To add a bit of competitive spirit, individuals and teams

present their findings to a panel of judges and compete for cash prizes.

The conference provides students an opportunity to network with experts in the field and peers as well as practice their public speaking skills.

If you're interested in attending to learn about the latest developments in aerospace, be sure to sign up at <https://region3.aiaastudentconference.org/>.

## EnPro303: Wishmap supports the Chicago Lighthouse

**Liam Barrett**

STAFF WRITER

The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired has reached out to IIT's very own EnPRO303: WishMap in order to help them keep their radio show on air.

The Chicago Lighthouse is a non-for-profit agency that provides many services for people that are blind or visually impaired within the Chicagoland area. One of their most successful and popular services is the CRIS radio show, which provides daily readings of newspapers and periodicals for listeners with a wide range of disabilities.

CRIS regularly airs to over 40,000 listeners, however, without much-needed funding it is under serious threat of being

shut down. In order to save this valued service, the host of CRIS—Bill Jurek—recently posted a wish on the WishMap website asking for \$5,000 of funding to help keep the show in operation.

In response to this plea, WishMap collaborating with IIT Dining Services, has created a fundraising event with the goal of not only aiding The Chicago Lighthouse, but also introducing a new Center Court Specialty Burrito. The three new specialties that can be voted on are:

- Ground beef burrito with French fries and cheese sauce
- Grilled chicken burrito with beans, Fritos and cheese
- Tofu burritos with grilled vegetables and sweet chili sauce

We ask for your participation in voting on one of these choices by submit-

ting a monetary contribution either at one of the links below or at one of our fundraising tables in Center Court. WishMap tables will be set up from April 1-5 during the lunch hour where you can stop by, donate and vote.

The choice with the highest monetary value contributed will be featured on the menu at Center Court. All proceeds will go to Chicago Lighthouse to fulfill their wish of keeping their radio show on the air!

Please get involved in this rewarding initiative and help make someone's wish become a reality.

- Ground Beef - <http://www.wishmap.net/wish.php?wishid=124>
- Grilled Chicken - <http://www.wishmap.net/wish.php?wishid=125>
- Tofu - <http://www.wishmap.net/wish.php?wishid=126>

To make your pledge, click "Con-

tribute". You will not be charged when making the pledge.

You can pledge as much money as you'd like to as many options as you'd like, and you will receive an email notice to process your payment when the fundraising effort concludes.

Make sure to check us out at WishMap.net.

**WHAT:** Fundraising event hosted by ENPRO303: WishMap and IIT Dining Services

**WHEN:** April 1 to April 5

**WHERE:** Center Court and online at WishMap.net

**WHY:** Fulfill wishes and add a new specialty burrito to the Center Court menu

**HOW:** Vote or donate during one of the above dates or log on to WishMap.net.