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Homecoming 2013 Coming soon to a campus near you

William Syvonga
TECHNEWS WRITER

I'm going to be honest with you all. Our students are really confused about what homecoming is. And they have reason to be. Homecoming on our campus is not like it is on other campuses.

"When I think of Homecoming, I think of the kick-off to fall on a college campus. Schools will have a football game and a fancy dance associated with it," said Ryan Miller, the Director of Campus Life. Our school does not have a football team. And the dance that happens every year is more of a social get together than a formal, dress-up affair. This is just what students who have attended college in the United States of America think.

"I had no idea what homecoming was about until my third year here at IIT," is the sentiment of Sharbacha Edward, 4th year Physics student from St. Lucia, when asked about homecoming; she arrived in 2010. International students who arrive on IIT's campus may share Sharbacha's views on Homecoming. I find myself explaining to international students the meaning of homecoming and I would like to take this opportunity to explain to everyone what homecoming is like on our campus.

From my experience, homecoming is a celebration of our school. It is the tradition of welcoming back our school's alumni to celebrate the past and the present by offering activities for alumni and students alike. It is an opportunity to connect, network and socialize with alumni. They visit their alma mater, a place they may not have been to in a while and they want to know what life is like now and the current students get a chance to hear what life used to be like. Everyone gets a chance to talk about what it really means to be a student of Illinois Institute of Technology.

That is the formal explanation. Our campus has many activities that are geared toward our demographic. We don't have a formal dance, we have a Bog Bash. We don't have a football game, we have homecoming soccer games. We don't have spirit teams, we have students who plan activities that we hope other students will come to and show some IIT pride.

But I digress. What I'm trying to say is that IIT Homecoming is what we make of it and I hope that we can make something great of it this year. There is a whole week of activities planned starting 23 September 2013. The theme this year is 'Superheroes'. Check out the calendar at www.iit.edu/homecoming.

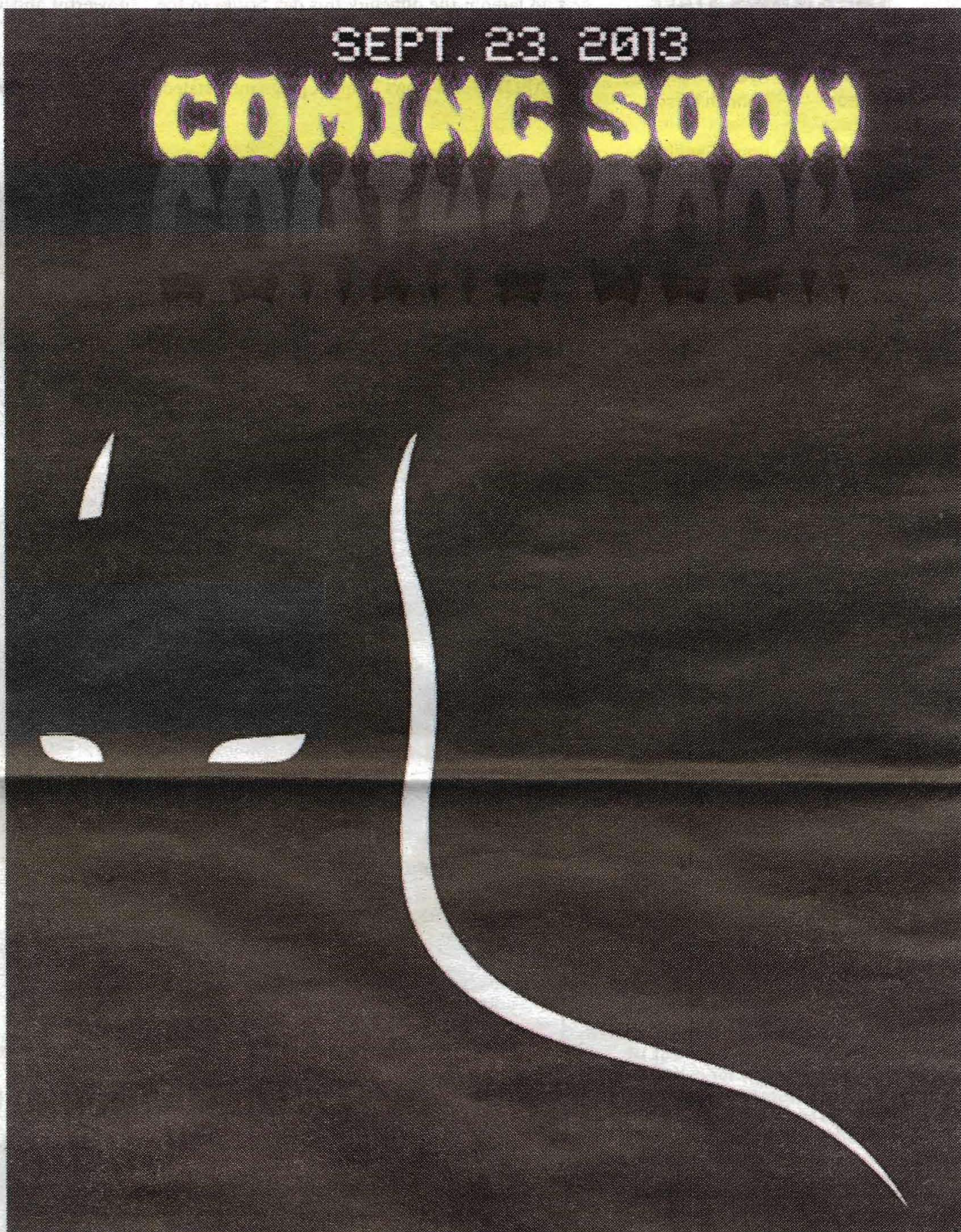


Image courtesy of Union Board

1871 hosts C2ST event with strong IIT presence

Utsav Gandhi
CAMPUS EDITOR

One of the many perks of being a student is to be able to attend networking events in our backyard of Chicago's thriving entrepreneurial scene; on a deeply discounted or free basis.

One of these many opportunities is the Chicago Council on Science and Technology's periodic programs, seminar and discussion series. Established in 2007 to "educate, engage and advocate an increased public understanding of science and technology's impact on society", the Council brings together some of the most dynamic communities in the Chicagoland area; including universities, research and development centers as well as industry experts to talk about scientific developments.

On September 10, the entrepreneurship hub of 1871 in Merchandise

Mart hosted "The Landscape of Techpark Innovation;" an interactive discussion on incubators – and how these entrepreneurial idea factories could prove to be keys to America's economic progress. The panel consisted of Kapila Vigas, Director of EnterpriseWorks Chicago at the University of Illinois; David Baker, Vice President for External Affairs at IIT; Steve Collens, Senior Vice President at The Pritzker Group and one of the premier thinkers behind 1871; and John Flavin, Executive Director at Chicago Innovation Mentors. The moderator was Jim O'Connor Jr., Managing Director MVC Capital and Co-Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center.

Collens spoke briefly about the history of 1871 – an entrepreneurship hub for over 220 companies, with mostly web-based startups using the space to collaborate and grow. Baker spoke about a university's mission to support economic development in the surrounding com-

munity, and how IIT has essentially transformed the Bronzeville landscape with the establishment of IITRI (the IIT Research Institute in Tech Park, which hosts 26 companies and over 300 employees engaged in some profoundly interesting research) and the Idea Shop, among other things.

Flavin spoke about the Chicago Innovation Mentors, a team-based mentoring system based off MIT's support groups, and how UIC, Northwestern University, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and Abbott Industries, among other partners, have come together to connect entrepreneurs to funding, partners, talent and mentorship – playing a firm role in establishing Chicago as one of the "Top 10 cities to start a digital tech business."

The panel fielded some tough questions from the audience about the future of technology based entrepreneurship in Chicago – only 10 percent of startups succeed within five years; so univer-

sities and R&D labs play a major role in providing mentorship to faculty, students and other invested members.

1871 has valuable office space available to IIT students wishing to start a business of their own and connect with like-minded peers from other Chicagoland universities as well as mentoring from Chicago's most dynamic brains. Students wishing to learn more about this should contact Nik Rokop, Director of the Knapp Entrepreneurship Center at the Stuart School of Business, at nrokop@stuart.iit.edu.

Becoming a student member has valuable perks – besides a more informed perspective on scientific and technological innovations happening around the world as we speak, attending these events also gives you a chance to network with established stalwarts in academia and industry.

Visit c2st.org/membership for more information.