

Students volunteer for veterans at Remake the World Center

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There were many volunteer opportunities this last weekend including events hosted by The Museum of Science and Industry and a few of the Greek houses. Another one was a service event cosponsored by the Office of Spiritual Life and Service Learning and Camras Scholars Program. These two organizations teamed up to feed the veterans in need at the Remake the World (RTW) center.

Last week on the bridge, Camras students gave away free cookies and decorated hand turkeys to raise awareness for this volunteer opportunity. Just as many other organizations compete for participants, Camras

worked hard in enlisting volunteers, but giving away free cookies was surprisingly near impossible. However, the hard work did pay off, as there were enough volunteers to fill up a bus.

On Saturday morning, although sleepy, everyone was excited about volunteering, but it would not commence without introductions.

Arnetha Gholston, the Executive Director at RTW, explained the idea behind remaking the world. As a religious organization, they believed that when humans were sent to earth, they brought along with them ideas of conflict and killing, ideas that would break the world. Since humans caused all of this mess, it should be the duty of humans to fix or remake the world. She introduced us to "Doc" Daniel Habeel, the co-founder of this institution and a

veteran himself.

As Chicago has 4 of the top 20 neighborhoods in the U.S. suffering from high rates of ptomaine poisoning in the homeless, especially veterans, he noticed the need for a center like RTW in Chicago to provide good food to the veterans in Washington Park. They are not funded by the government, but by donations of time and money from local organizations like Illinois Tech.

After these inspiring speeches, the students got busy preparing food by peeling and chopping bins full of potatoes, apples, and pears. Others buttered bread slices and a brave few learned in the kitchen how to prepare amazing fried chicken. One of the more unfortunate jobs was cutting up a huge bin of onions. Not only did the students cutting them have a hard time

keeping the tears back, but the smell filled up the rest of the house, causing people in other rooms to tear up as well. Although it was hard work, everyone had a great time preparing the food and knowing that they were making the lives of veterans better. As one student said, "They served us and our country, now it's time for us to serve them."

Opportunities to interact with the organizations such as RTW are rewarding experiences. The Office of Spiritual Life and Service Learning is an integral part of Illinois Tech, helping the students reach out to the surrounding community and give back. Next time they have a big event like this, do sign up; it will be a great experience.

Dean of Engineering hosts E1 Transformation Forum

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After the work carried out on Perlstein Hall externally, the next planned large scale construction and redevelopment project on an academic building on campus is the proposed transformation of Engineering 1 (E1) to the John T. Rettaliata Center, named in honor of IIT's president from 1952-1973.

The project was made possible with support provided by his wife, Caryl Pucci Rettaliata. E1 is being renovated to reflect updates in both design and functionality. The vision is for the building to house unique, collaborative, interdisciplinary educational spaces for students' hand-on exploration and innovation. The architects (Lohan and Anderson, who also happens to be Mies Van der Rohe's grandson) who won the commission for this project are engaged in the creation of a comprehensive master plan for the entire building—and the design of the most critical

portions is currently underway.

The Dean of the Armour College of Engineering (ACE), Dr. Natasha dePaola, led a highly interactive and engaging forum, allowing students to ask any questions they had about the plans, vision, and execution of the project, as well as potential ways to provide input and feedback.

The plans were endorsed and well represented by the ACE Undergraduate Student Council, Student Government, AIAA as well as the Graduate Students Council in the MMAE Department, which is the main academic department housed in the building. The Dean made it clear that the goal is to make the transformation relevant to all engineering majors at IIT, more than just MMAE since the building classrooms and facilities are used by other departments as well. She pointed to the project website, e1transformation.com, which currently hosts a forum wherein students can provide feedback on any of the meeting minutes and plans posted, based on the meetings that

the university administration has had with students and architects. There have already been some comments about the external aesthetics of the planned transformation, however the Dean made it clear to the audience that the functionality of the space indoor took much greater precedence than how "ugly" the vines on the walls outside were being made out to be.

The Dean spoke about the specific plans for both the floors as well as the new planned atrium space, which is planned to have a coffee shop, collaborative learning tools, a dedicated space for student organizations, as well as a 'collaborator'. The first floor is expected to have new faculty offices with new doors, more lighting and ventilation. She even mentioned the possibility of a supercomputer and better Wi-Fi connectivity around the building. The Engineering Themes, the College's distinctive educational initiative, will have its own collaborative learning space, wherein some of the PURE research projects will be facilitated.

The entire floor plans and photographs of intended designs are all available for public viewing on the project website.

The best part about the forum was how prepared and engaged some of the attendees were - the Graduate Students' Council had already met the day before and their President came in with a written set of concerns and suggestions - for example: a printer in the building, OTS supported engineering software on the new computers in the atrium, a kitchenette area for graduate students to reheat food in, as well as a long standing concern about the general security of the building. The Dean was open, receptive, and very appreciative of all these suggestions and has asked students to submit any follow up comments via email to the project communication team at e1@iit.edu or on the project website directly.

It was extremely heartening to see top level administration work directly in consensus with students on high level changes affecting us all.



Images by Utsav Gandhi

Monthly Sustainability Forum focuses on gamification, technology

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This past Friday, November 15, the Office of Campus Energy and Sustainability (OCES) hosted one of their monthly forums addressing gamification to encourage sustainability.

The forum, held in the Hermann Hall ballroom, attracted over 90 students, staff, and guests of different fields who came out to learn about a different approach in encouraging environmental change.

Gamification is the use of game thinking and mechanics to engage individuals to solve problems. Three speakers led the

forum, each covering different ways to apply gamification to environmental sustainability. Shane M. Fay, the Vice President of Client Solutions, discussed Simple Energy, a tool that utilizes email, web, mobile, social, and print in tracking individual energy usage to motivate and engage customers to conserve resources and save money. More information can be found at utilities.simpleenergy.com.

The forum's second speaker, CEO of GreenPoint partners Dustin Gellman, discussed Green Per Square Foot, a digital marketplace that involved building owners and managers to profile their buildings, find savings opportunities, and connect to a network that lets them compare their performance to other buildings.

The network ranks companies all over Chicago by points each accumulates through accomplishing different sustainability goals, be it individual or office-wide initiatives. More information can be found on www.greenpsf.com.

Finally, Grant Willard introduced JouleBug, an app that helps cut out energy waste and save money by combining mobile gaming, social media and educational tools to encourage competition between users as they collect Badges and Pins by completing simple sustainability goals. For more information, visit www.joulebug.com.

OCES also announced their new water bottle giveaways. Get one by participating in upcoming OCES events, joining sustainability-

related student organizations, or volunteering for a sustainability-related event. Email the office at campussustainability@iit.edu for volunteer information and upcoming events, and like our Facebook page at "IIT Campus Sustainability." You can also follow the office's activity on twitter at @iitgreen.

The next OCES forum will host Tim Kasser, author of "The High Price of Materialism," and he will address the psychology of sustainability.

The forum, titled Human Identity and Environmental Challenges, will be held next semester, Friday, February 14, at 12:30 p.m. through 2 p.m. with a location to be announced. Sign up to attend at: tinyurl.com/IITmaterialism.