

# TechNews

Student newspaper of the Illinois Institute of Technology since 1928

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## IIT Up To Us gaining momentum

**Utsav Gandhi**  
CAMPUS EDITOR

IIT students are participating in a nationwide campus campaign to raise awareness about the U.S. national debt, which, according to figures posted by the Treasury Department has jumped to over \$17 trillion.

“Our federal government is running a deficit, annually spending more than it receives in revenue. To make up for this, the U.S. borrows money, adding to the federal debt”, said George Batah, the leader of the Up to Us campaign which will run from January 21 to February 21.

Budget experts agree that if the gap between federal revenue and spending is not reduced over the next 25 years, there will be serious consequences for our long-run growth and economic stability. Rising interest payments on the debt alone would leave fewer resources to invest in areas like education, infrastructure, and research, seriously debilitating the nation’s ability to ensure a positive economic outlook for future generations.

“Deficits present fundamental problems of intergenerational fairness,” said Rani Shah, Student Government Association President and a member of the Up to Us campaign at IIT.

The core campaign group at IIT is composed of four members who have received training to execute their own campus campaigns. The goal is to educate and engage their peers on the federal debt in fun and impactful ways. The winning team will receive a \$10 thousand prize, and will be recognized at the 2014 Clinton Global Initiative University by former president, Bill Clinton. The campus-wide campaign will include speaker events, flash mobs and debt-themed interactive games.

Students enrolled in an Inter-professional Project (IPRO) class, a unique



Photo courtesy of IIT Up To Us

feature of IIT’s curriculum where students from different majors converge, will dedicate three weeks to discuss and add their insight to the debt debate.

Marcelle Hana of IIT’s Up to Us is planning a few fun events around campus to help students understand the issue of the debt. “We will have a heavy backpack relayed from student to student for the duration of the campaign,” said Hana. “And they will take photos with it and share personal stories related to the issues surrounding the debt”.

More information about the competition can be found at IIT’s Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/uptous> or the national campaign page: <https://www.facebook.com/itsuptous.org>.

“Thus far we’ve really been amazed

and motivated by the positive response the IIT community has given us,” said Shah. “From our exuberant ambassadors to the incredible help the IIT administration has offered to us, the support has been immense. The best part so far has been the Up To Us kickoff party in MSV middle lounge where our turnout came out to be nearly 100 people. We had a few small games set up and plenty of food for all our supporters. The journey has been difficult, no doubt, but our team also has an amazing chemistry which I believe makes us winners already. The competition ends on February 21, and from what we’ve already experienced I have no doubt that the future will only be more exciting.”

The campaign has gained significant momentum since its much publicized launch on campus, with IIT currently leading the

national competition—thanks to the enthusiastic participation of the core team, as well as the zealous programming and marketing of its campus ambassadors.

The launch kickoff event in MSV was incredibly well attended, and a lot of students have taken the initial online quiz available on the Facebook page. It is fantastic to see civic engagement and IIT pride among students revolving around the critical issue of rising debt which affects us all, even more so in this increasingly globalized world.

The IIT Up to Us team looks to maintain this initial momentum throughout the month of February and end the competition on a high, counting on the ultimate dream of getting to attend the prestigious Clinton Global Initiative Conference.

## ‘Road to Wall Street’ teaches students about current financial issues

**Kayla Portillo**  
TECHNEWS WRITER

IIT Stuart School of Business and the Options Industry Council hosted “The Road to Wall Street: Analyze Your Options” last semester on Friday, November 15, 2013. Back for its fourth year in a row, the event drew more than 75 IIT students, alumni, and industry affiliates at IIT’s Downtown Campus, as well as students from Loyola, Northwestern, and DePaul.

“I’m excited to see more of these events come to IIT. It’s hard to argue against the benefits of inviting industry professionals to share their experiences!” said Alex Uribe. “The Road to Wall Street offered a great dialogue, and I left with takeaways that make me more knowledgeable, and also allowed me to identify new goals for myself.”

A theme throughout the event was the industry’s response to the market’s evolving “need for speed,” as well as the panelists’ own unique, unexpected pathways into the

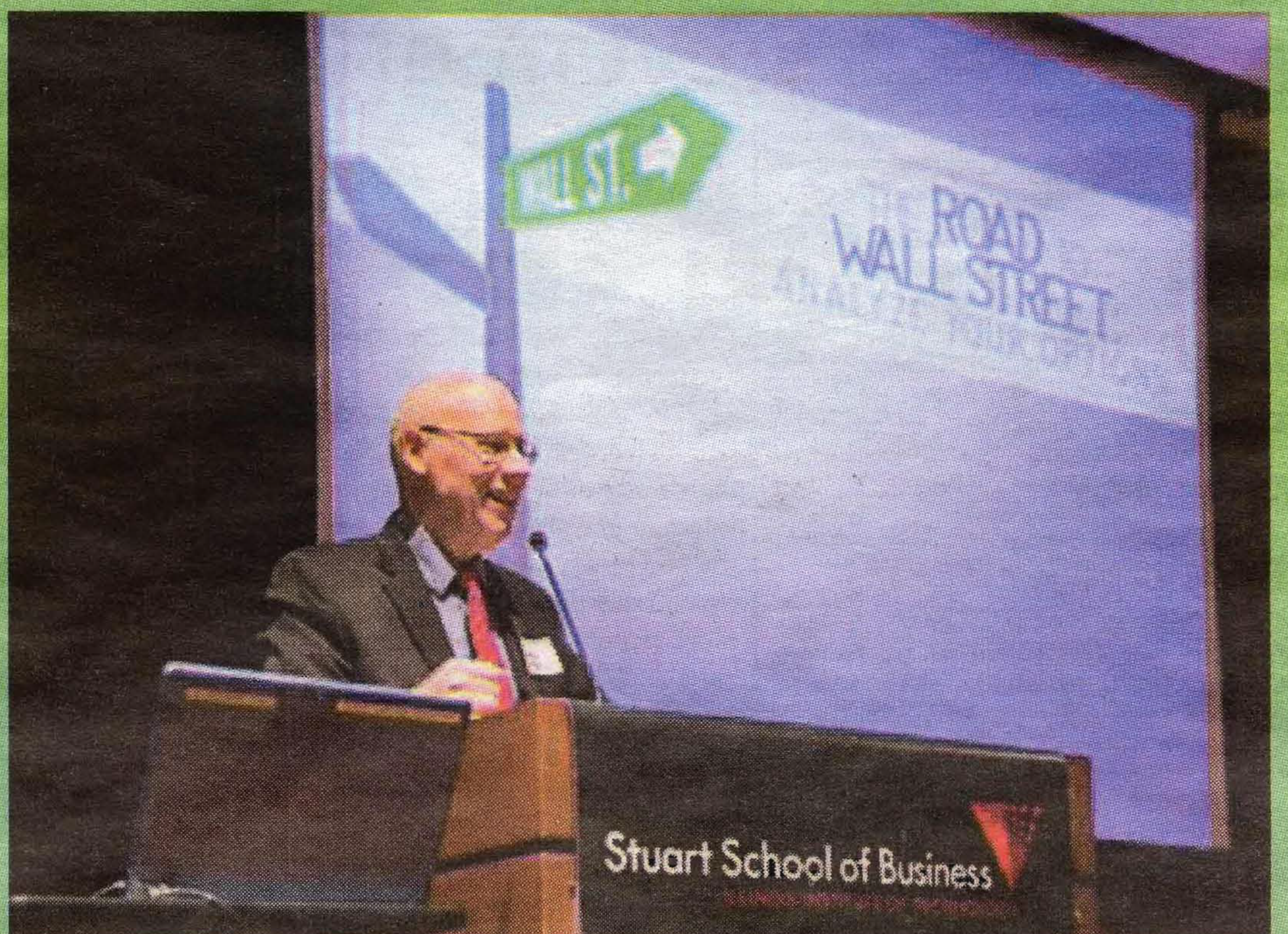
industry.

Uribe also noted that the panelists’ comments about the value of paper trading, or simulated trading where you can practice investing without committing real money, motivated him to create an account and recruit his classmates and peers to do the same.

The keynote address, “Experiences from the Field,” was delivered by Veda Kaufman Levin, Senior Managing Director at Mesirow Financial. Siyu Song found her remarks to be helpful. “The keynote speaker was most impressive,” said Song. “She told us practical information, and shared a lot of meaningful and useful advice that will help me meet my career goals.”

IIT Professor Mike Gorham emceed the event, and two panels of industry experts including IIT alumni Hazem Dawani and Mike Madigan also spoke throughout the morning.

Video of the event is available through IIT Today’s YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/user/IITToday](http://www.youtube.com/user/IITToday).



Photos courtesy of Stuart School of Business