

IIT Hunger Banquet back for seconds

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Hunger is more than just famine and is more than just a lack of access to food and nutrition.

This is the underlying principle behind Oxfam International's Hunger Banquet, an event that seeks to communicate to participants the multiple ways that hunger affects the daily experiences of the world's underprivileged.

Many of us in the United States tend to see hunger as a being the result of failures on the part of the individual, but one of the objectives of this event is to expose us to the ways in which hunger results from—and perpetuates—systemic oppression and violence on both national and global scales. Hunger is about power; the world's equality graph is quite badly skewed, and hunger falls somewhere along the line as a consequence of human rights, opportunities being not

accorded in the right proportion, and very little corrective action being carried out about this scenario. Companies and governments control more of the food patterns in today's world than the farmers who grow it or the consumers who eat it. Resource constraints, growing families, gender stereotypes, erratic weather patterns and ethnic conflicts are driving food prices up while record numbers of people go hungry.

Last year's inaugural IIT-hosted event will probably go down as one of the most socially engaging ones we have had the privilege to attend at IIT, thanks in no small part to the work of its organizers.

It was a truly interactive experience that forced us to question what it means to be "underprivileged" and how that conception can and does change according to different economic, environmental, and social contexts. Its power lays in the fact that it demonstrably showed, through narratives and symbols, the ways in which context ultimately determines one's choices and one's

access to resources, not simply one's "drive" or "sense of self."

The event served as a kind of catalyst to promote becoming more interested and involved in community mobilization and organizing. Many people at this school often wonder how they can get involved in activism and social causes and this event does this by bringing together people from different backgrounds, many of whom currently work on issues like hunger specifically in the geopolitical context of Chicago. In this way, it is a great opportunity to meet and engage not only fellow students on these issues, but also active community leaders, serving as a way to galvanize student interests that will direct their social and intellectual pursuits long after their time at IIT. Socially conscious student organizations like Engineers without Borders and Alternative Spring Break are expected to have a large presence at the event.

This year, IIT will once again host a Hunger Banquet on February 26, from 5 to 7 p.m., as part of Social Justice Month, co-

hosted by Engineers without Borders and the Office of Service Learning. As the politics of social justice deal primarily with examining systems of inequality and access to material resources, this event is perfect for anyone interested in observing inequality through the lens of food insecurity. This year's will be an equally informative and eye-opening experience that raises awareness not only of hunger, but of illiteracy, poverty, disease, war and the complex connections that crucially and inevitably link these societal ills.

The event is free for all IIT students, staff and faculty; and you can RSVP at tiny.cc/hbiit14. Without giving too much away, at this interactive event, the place where you sit and the meal that you eat are determined by the luck of the draw—just as in real life some of us are born into relative prosperity and others into poverty. A lively discussion will follow the meal and students will hopefully leave with a better understanding of the world's skewed equality ratio and a renewed drive to help tackle it.

IIT@IEEE planning exciting events for semester

Vijai Baskar

TECHNEWS WRITER

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) at IIT is conducting a tour of Roberson & Associates, a technology and management consulting company on Wednesday, February 19. Vice Provost for Research at IIT, Dennis Roberson, also the CEO of Roberson & Associates will be the host for this tour.

Roberson and Associates, LLC, is a technology and management consulting company serving government and commercial customers that provides services in the areas of Radio Frequency (RF)

spectrum management, RF measurements and analysis, strategy development, and technology management. The organization was founded in 2008 and is composed of a selected group of individuals with corporate and academic backgrounds from Motorola, Bell Labs (AT&T, Telcordia, Lucent, Alcatel-Lucent), IBM, IITRI (now Alion), independent consulting firms, and the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Together the organization has over 350 years of high technology management and technical leadership experience with a strong telecommunications focus.

On Thursday, February 13, the Association for Computing Machinery

(ACM) and IEEE together conducted a Windows 8 app development workshop at IIT. This event witnessed participants developing and publishing Windows phone 8 Apps built on their own ideas. The host, Martin Schray, also works with Microsoft to help developers become interested, engaged and successful in building applications on Microsoft Windows 8, Windows Phone and Windows Azure.

IEEE at IIT is hosting an e-week on February 22. The e-week is a fun, free, family interactive event providing children and adults the opportunity to experience and explore the many fields of science and engineering through interactive displays

and presentations. Five volunteers from the Ardupilot project group will be displaying one of their 10 interesting small projects designed during the work of Ardupilot. They will present a demonstration on how to play music on stepper motors.

There is also an upcoming conference being held by the IEEE region 4 at Chicago. Undergraduate students and IEEE members can participate in this contest.

They are required to submit a technical paper by Thursday, May 1 and present their work on Thursday, June 5. The current project teams are preparing four papers based on their topics. Visit the IEEE website at ieeetech.org for more details.

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MATTI SCANNELL

A&E

High times at Hancock Tower

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It seems like everyone is always asking if you have been to the Skydeck at the Willis Tower. Has anyone checked out the Hancock Observatory? It is almost like a hidden gem in the city. At the Hancock, students receive a discounted price of \$10 (just tell them you are a student) to go up to the top, while Skydeck admission costs \$19! The Skydeck boasts its glass floor balconies high above the city, but the Hancock actually has a portion of open air space at their Observatory level, called the Skywalk. From 1,000 feet above the Magnificent Mile, you can stand with the wind flowing through your hair as you gaze across the city. Additionally, the Skydeck does not offer a sweeping view of the expanse of Chicago at night like the Hancock.

Open every night until 11 p.m., the 360-degree night views from the Observatory are spectacular. All the light pollution present in the city illuminates the entire area of Chicago in an endless grid of orange-yellow glow. Many of the famous Chicago landmarks are visible from the 94th floor of the Hancock, including Willis Tower, Trump Tower, and Navy Pier's Ferris wheel.

One of the coolest things about visiting the Observatory at night is the ability to watch the lights as they move through the city organism against the black night backdrop. The red lights of vehicles heading north on Lakeshore Drive appeared like red blood cells whilst the white lights of vehicles driving south on Lakeshore Drive looked like white blood cells; Lakeshore Drive like an artery led into the heart of the city and the streets off of

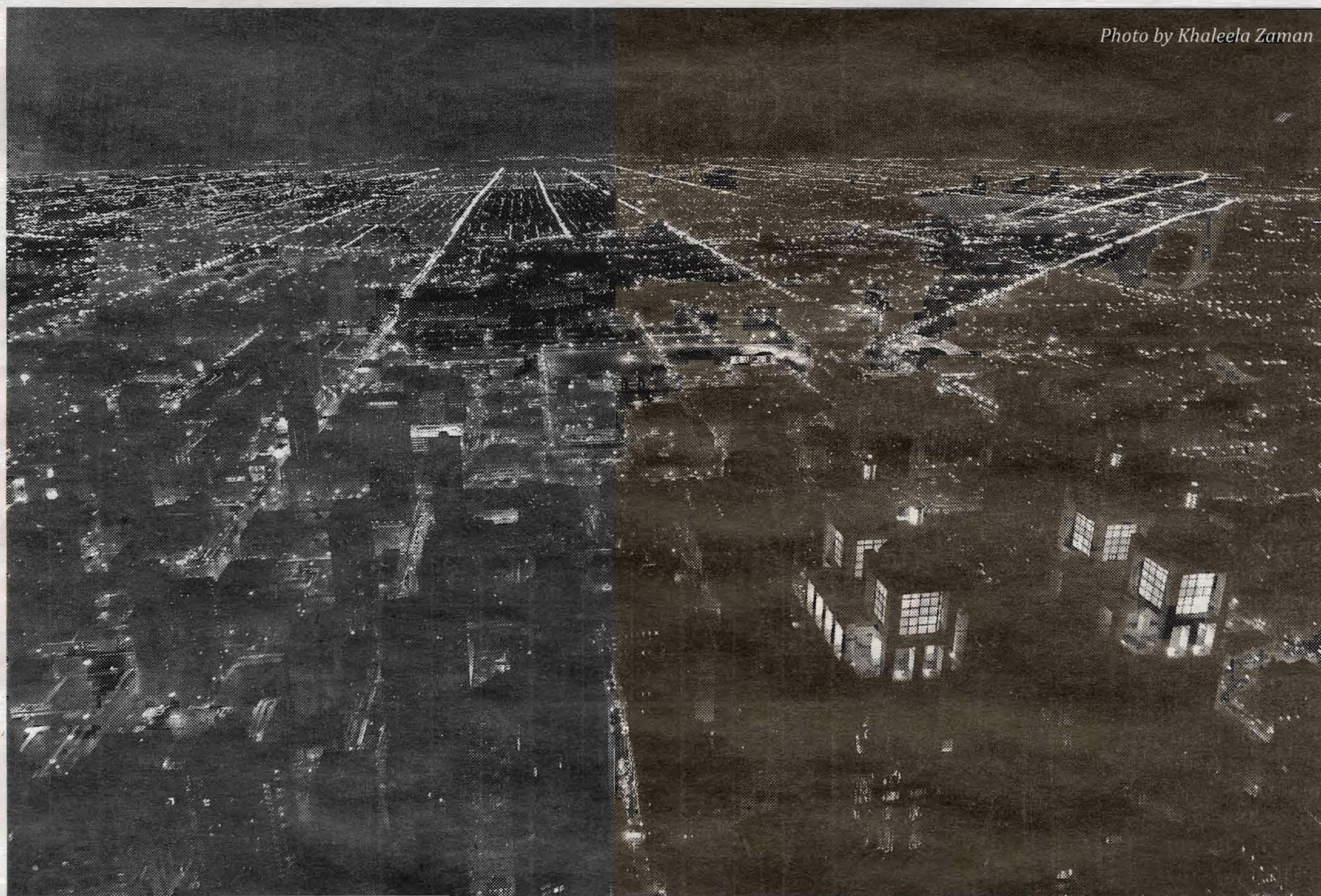


Photo by Khaleela Zaman

Lakeshore like capillaries running through the organization of buildings, or organs, of Downtown Chicago all alter your perception of the city in amazing ways.

To be honest, there is one annoying

aspect about the Observatory at night—the reflection of all the inside lights and human activity in the windows while you are trying to capture a photograph of the outer city. After a while, though, I found this to be eye-opening;

I realized how the people within the confines of the 94th floor of the Hancock are just as much a part of the city fabric as what can be seen outside the window. So next time you have a free night, consider visiting the Hancock Observatory.