TAMUHack hosts successful first hackathon

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By: **Rachel Rose**

TAMUHack, a new student run organization in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at Texas A&M University, hosted its very first hackathon Oct. 24-25. The event, which was named after the organization, included almost 400 students from all over the country, including many who had never before participated in a hackathon.

The co-founders of the organization, Robert Timm, Eleni Mijalis, Christopher Nolan and Rafa Moreno, have attended over 50 hackathons in their college career, and have done very well. Mijalis and Moreno placed first at Lousiana State University's first hackathon, **GeauxHack** and Timm and Mijalis received first place at the University of Pennsylvania's prestigious hackathon, **PennApps X**.

"At the beginning of the hackathon, I asked whose first hackathon this was," Moreno said. "About 80 percent of the people present (including one of the companies) raised their hand. I'm glad to see we were able to take this first step in getting that many people involved in this type of community."

Event sponsors Google, Microsoft and AT&T had representatives at the event to provide application program interfaces to contestants.

The winning team made a Chrome Extension called Google FFITI. The group was comprised of Texas A&M computer science and engineering students Christopher Findeisen, David Zeng and Wei Lu, and University of Houston student, Aaron Dancer.

"Googleffiti allows you to graffiti on websites, and also overlays a public 'wall' for each website you visit, containing past tags that were made there," said Findeisen. "You can also share a private graffiti for use in annotations, tutorials, etc. It's a great tool for both fun — allowing visitors to contribute, and work — providing for meaningful annotations that don't remove functionality from the website."

The second place team created an app that allowed users to play musical instruments with the Leap Motion. The third place team made a game similar to "Attack on Titans" called "Attack on Oculus," which actually put you in the virtual world.

TAMUHack was the largest hackathon to take place on campus at Texas A&M and the student organization could not be happier with the turnout.

"I am incredibly proud of what they have accomplished for the inaugural TAMUHack and am excited about the yearly events to come," said Associate Professor Tracy Hammond, faculty adviser for TAMUHack.

TAMUHack has already begun planning for next year's event and looks forward to giving other students the opportunity to see what "hacking" is all about.