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Computer science and engineering students attend 2016 Grace Hopper Conference



Each year, the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at Texas A&M University participates in the Anita Borg Institute's Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing (GHC). This year, over 50 undergraduate and graduate students from computer science and engineering attended the event, which was held Oct. 18-21 in Houston.

GHC is the world's largest technical conference for women in computing, where the greatest minds in computing come together to recognize the contributions women have made to the field. The event showcases the expertise of women in academia and industry in a variety of fields and offers opportunities for practitioners to be introduced to emerging technologies and trends.

This year, the areas of focus were data science, security, artificial engineering, wearables and internet of things (IoT). The program also included sessions on career topics and on organization transformation.

GHC 2016 surpassed the expectations of Cassandra Oduola, vice president of professional development for the Computer Science and Engineering Graduate Student Association (CSEGSA).

"This year, I was able to network with people from Google at the Hop Up and Tech makers event," she said. "I was also able to eat lunch with Jeff Dean, the creator of TensorFlow and MapReduce."

The event boasted prestigious keynote speakers such as Ginni Rometty, CEO of IBM, and Megan Smith, United States chief technology officer.

Computer science and engineering Department Head, Professor and Holder of the Ford Motor Company Design Professorship II, Dr. Dilma Da Silva, and Unocal and Regents Professor, Dr. Nancy M. Amato, also gave talks during the event. Da Silva's talk was titled, "Finding Your Dream Job with a Ph.D." Amato's talk was titled, "Gaining Recognition for Your Accomplishments in Academia."

"Grace Hopper was in Houston again this year and was the biggest it's ever been with about 15,000 attendees," said Seth Polsley, CSEGSA vice president of social. "In comparison with my experience from Grace Hopper last year, there was a more noticeable focus on the career fair this time. The companies that I spoke with sent hundreds of employees, and the organizers moved talks from Wednesday to Thursday to give students and other attendees a chance to talk face-to-face with many engineers in industry. Those interactions were some of the best I had at Grace Hopper this year."

Inspired by the legacy of Admiral Grace Murray Hopper, Dr. Anita Borg and Dr. Telle Whitney co-founded GHC in 1994. The conference is produced by the Anita Borg Institute and presented in partnership with the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM).

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By: **[Rachel Rose \(mailto:rdaggie@tamu.edu\)](mailto:rdaggie@tamu.edu)**

