

## **KEYNOTE PANEL**

Friday, October 9, 2009

### **EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN COMPUTING \***

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This panel will address how to make computer science, computer engineering, and information technology programs more accessible to students with disabilities. The panel will have three students with disabilities, to be announced, who are currently in or have recently graduated from computing departments. The students will have a variety of disabilities, blind, deaf, learning disabled to give a broad perspective to the attendees.

The panel will begin with a 15 minute introduction by Richard Ladner that will include demographics about students with disabilities in STEM and IT specifically. He will also describe some basic strategies for improving the accessibility of your classes to students with disabilities. Students will have 10 minutes each to describe their backgrounds and describe their challenges in computing majors. The panel will then be open for questions from the attendees for the remainder of the time.

The panel will benefit the CSCC community because it is always best to learn first-hand from students about their successful strategies. Seeing the students' points of view will help faculty members see their disabled students as assets in their classes and not as burdens. Seeing that students have personal and institutional resources to help them achieve success helps faculty develop a healthy attitude toward having disabled students in their classes.

The participation of the panelists is funded by the AccessComputing Alliance. The goal of the AccessComputing Alliance is to increase the participation and success of people with disabilities in a wide range of computing careers, including those in computer

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science, information systems, software development, computer engineering, systems management and maintenance, research, and teaching. Alliance activities are designed to reach three objectives:

1. to increase the number of students with disabilities successfully pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees and lifelong careers in computing fields.
2. to increase the capacity of postsecondary computing departments to fully include students with disabilities in computing courses and programs.
3. to create a nationwide resource to help students with disabilities pursue computer fields and computing educators and employers, professional organizations, and other stakeholders develop more inclusive programs and share effective practices.

This panel will help meet these objectives, especially number 2. Attendees will learn first-hand from students how they succeed in computing fields. AccessComputing literature about making computing departments accessible will be made available to all attendees of the conference.

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