

# Women in Computing at Cornell

YEAR IN REVIEW 2013-14



# Introduction



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***As of 2013, women only make up 18% of CS majors nationwide ...***

**WICC (WOMEN IN COMPUTING AT CORNELL)** was founded on March 25, 2013 as a chapter of the national ACM-W (ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN COMPUTING). We are the **first** organization to bring together women in Computer Science at Cornell University.

## Mission

Our mission is to educate, inspire, and equip young women to help them explore new opportunities and carve their own paths in Computer Science.

Through our shared experiences, we wish to support and encourage prospective female Computer Science majors.

We seek to connect with women leaders in the field and create a network of women undergraduates, alumni, faculty, and staff to inspire each other and foster interaction regarding academic, social, and professional issues.

## Why?

Women are largely underrepresented in computing fields, and we hope to dispel negative stereotypes to encourage women that they belong in Computer Science.

WICC is open to all women in computing fields. We strive to be a support network to empower women and to guide them through their flourishing careers.

We hope to make a **difference** and **advocate** for women in Computer Science for many years to come.

# Events



# Events

## Our events aim towards:

Building a sense of community among women in computing fields at Cornell.

Accelerating tech careers for women by providing support, information, and opportunities.

Extending our influence with events that inspire and motivate young girls to consider and pursue computing fields.



## List of Events 2013-14

**WICC Events Fall 2013**

- Welcome Ice cream Social and Student Internship Experience Panel
- Facebook Interview Workshop
- Facebook Kayaking Social
- Yelp Resume Workshop Lunch
- Google Women Internship Panel
- Google Bowling Social
- Lean In Circles
- Mentorship Info Session
- Movie Night Social
- Microsoft Women in CS panel
- Mentorship Meet and Greet Coffee Break
- WICC Study Break
- MEng in CS Info Session

**WICC Events Spring 2014**

- Welcome Social
- LearnCS workshop for high school girls
- Google Technical Interview Prep Workshop
- Screening of the She++ documentary and Group Discussion: Why are women underrepresented in Computing?
- Facebook Ice-Skating
- Microsoft Coding Challenge
- Faculty Tech Lightning Talks
- Cornell CS Community Discussion
- Annual Faculty Dinner and Celebration

# Events

## Event Highlights and activities 2013-14

### Student Internship Welcome Social

For our kickoff event this year, we invited five students to share their experiences from their summer internships, project teams, and research experiences. The panel answered internship-related questions and gave general career advice. Since many internship interviews occur in the Fall semester, this event was especially useful in preparing students and was well-received by underclassmen. The event was preceded by a fun ice cream fall welcome social where undergrads could meet upperclassmen and chat casually.



### LearnCS

To increase exposure to Computer Science early on, we started offering classes to high school female students in Ithaca through LearnCS at Cornell this spring. Every Saturday, we held a workshop session on campus during which students learned basic programming concepts and then applied their knowledge with hands-on projects. The lesson plans were provided by Girls Who Code and led by female student volunteers with significant CS experience at Cornell. Because of our instructors, most students see it's normal for women to program and to be interested in technology.



### Facebook Kayaking

In the beginning of the Fall semester, Facebook recruiters took WICC members to Cayuga Lake for kayaking and canoeing. The event was filled with great fun and bonding as boats raced each other and (occasionally crashed). The event ended with a quaint lunch where Facebook employees and students mingled and discussed opportunities available at Facebook.



# Events

## Microsoft Coding Challenge

Microsoft hosted a 2-hour coding challenge with WICC. Students were allowed to be in groups of up to 3 members while tackling some coding challenges after a catered dinner. Example problems involved building a sudoku solver, querying a text file, and much more. Students were allowed to use any language they wished to solve the problems. The winners of the challenge were rewarded with \$100 each. The winning team managed to output the correct solution for every problem.



## Grace Hopper Scholarship

Along with the CS department, this was the first year we funded 2 women with a travel scholarship to go to the conference. The year before WICC was founded, Cornell had 2 attendees, but last year, we increased to 14. This year, we hope to have even more attendees, and even more ambitiously, we want to encourage more underclassmen to attend the conference. We believe the conference is an inspiring and career-changing event that really changes one's perspective on what it means to be a women in computing.



## Faculty Lightning Talks

We invited three female faculty members to present their projects/ subjects of study for 15 minutes each. Topics ranged from mobile computing, algorithms, to graphics. The talks were then followed by a networking session between students and faculty. This was a great way to showcase the great work of our female faculty while getting them more involved with WICC and have a more relaxed atmosphere where students can get to know professors and talk to them about their research interests.



# Events

## Google Bowling

After an information session/ panel of Google employees during recruiting season in the fall, Google employees and recruiters took students for dinner and bowling at our campus bowling lanes. During dinner, Google employees were able to share their experiences and students were able to ask any questions they had. Afterwards, we all enjoyed ourselves bowling at Helen Newman's own bowling alley. It was a fun setting where students could chat some more with recruiters and current employees.



## Lean-in Group Discussions

Inspired by Sheryl Sandberg's Lean In, we began the year with a series of successful small group discussions. Listening students discuss their personal experiences in computer science, we saw that there are many problems in the CS community. These issues include inexperienced teaching assistants, elitism, and gender bias. In response to these concerns, WICC organized a larger CS community-wide discussion in collaboration with the CS Department and ACSU. The department is now looking into creating a formal training program for teaching assistants.



## Annual Faculty Dinner and Celebration

We held our first annual dinner celebration with faculty and students in our new building Gates Hall. This event also marked our first year anniversary! We served a catered dinner as we presented WICC's achievements this year and hopes going forward. We had a photo booth where students could take pictures with fun props provided by our sponsors. We also had a message board where students left us supportive messages. With the great turnout from students and faculty and exciting raffles, this annual event was a reflection of our successful year.





## Thanks for Reading!

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