

CEWIT CHOSEN TO HOST MICROSOFT DIGIGIRLZ SUMMER CAMP *Stony Brook only New York Designated Site*

STONY BROOK, NY, February 19th, 2007— After a successful conference which attracted 26 sponsors from as far away as San Jose, California, keynote speakers from such industry giants as Motorola, Dell Computers and IBM, technology presenters from such distant lands as South Korea, and over 400 attendees from the local region, Stony Brook's Center of Excellence in Wireless and Information Technology (CEWIT) has formed a partnership with Microsoft Corporation. Stony Brook's Center of Excellence in Wireless and IT and Computer Science Department are pooling their resources to host a three day summer camp for girls interested in learning more about the information and emerging technology fields.

"In general, at any IT event, there is a higher percentage of boys that attend than girls," says Carol Dopps, an Internship consultant for Microsoft High Tech Learning Centers. "And when you're the only girl competing for attention among 20 boys, a lot of girls will drop out. This is a way for them to be around other girls who are interested in technology and to hear from women who made careers in technology, and this will help them understand what their opportunities are and get answers to questions that they might have -- such as what steps they should take next."

Microsoft has long promoted careers in technology for girls. The company's annual participation in Take Our Daughters to Work Day has been cited as one of the biggest and most effective corporate versions of the nationwide observance. At Microsoft, Take Our Daughters to Work Day is sponsored by Microsoft Hoppers, an employee-resource group named in honor of a pioneering U.S. computer scientist -- Admiral Grace Hopper. Founded in 1990, Hoppers works to attract, develop and keep great women at Microsoft by promoting solutions for issues that affect women in business.

Microsoft has chosen seven locations for this national summer camp program. Stony Brook is the only one in New York, which makes sense if you consider that according to ASME, in 2003, Stony Brook was the largest producer of Computer Science graduates in the country. "If you look at our website, www.cewit.org, under Initiatives, you will see there is only one- OPLITE, aka Outreach Program for Long Island Technology Education," says Scott Passeser, Director of Industrial Outreach for the Center of Excellence on the Stony Brook campus. We have been concerned about the drop-off in computer science majors, (caused by the dotcom implosion six years ago).

Our OPLITE initiative is designed to bring technology careers back into the classroom. We need to re-educate young people and parents that top emerging growth careers in the next 20 years, such as biotechnology will benefit from a degree in Computer Science just as much as a career as a computer programmer. “Hosting this DigiGirlz summer camp, which we hope will be a permanent fixture at Stony Brook, will allow us to meet the goals of our own OPLITE initiative, help industry tackle the shortage of technology workers and raise awareness among high school age women, who are under-represented in the technology job market,” adds Passeser,

Microsoft is expecting nearly 100 girls to attend the camp at Stony Brook. “It is our pleasure to supply the lab space and equipment for an event of this type and potential impact,” says Arie Kaufman, Chair of the Computer Science Department at Stony Brook. “We think it is important that initiatives which increase the number of women in the technology fields are of paramount importance,” adds Kaufman. They will have an opportunity to see things on campus like our new Immersive Virtual Environment, which puts users inside a 3-D landscape, that will leave a lasting impression

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