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## Workshop Creates Network of Computer Science Educators

University Park, October 19, 2006 – How to effectively meet the increasing demand for well-educated and experienced computer scientists and to encourage greater participation by minority students were the subjects of a daylong workshop sponsored by Governors State University and the National Science Foundation.

Computer science educators from Joliet Junior College, Moraine Valley Community College, Kankakee Community College, Daley College, South Suburban College, Prairie State College, and Morton College, met with members of the GSU computer science faculty. They discussed methods of improving the education each facility offers and how the community college curriculum and the GSU program can be aligned to offer a seamless transition toward a degree.

The educators also listened to Dr. Zhian Li from Argonne National Laboratory discuss modeling, simulation, and visualization, computer-based techniques used in research at the laboratory. Governors State University sponsored three teams of faculty and student researchers at Argonne Labs this summer.

According to Karen D'Arcy, chairperson of the science division at Governors State University, "This was an excellent opportunity for our students, many who are also graduates of the community college system, to learn that they can contribute and compete at the highest level of computer science research."

As part of the workshop and a component of the National Science Foundation grant awarded to Governors State University, the educators also received palm pilots and training in how to use them effectively in the classroom.

"We want them to take this technology back to the community college classroom and demonstrate to their students the broad effects of computer science research and development," explains Dr. Xueqing (Clare) Tang, professor of computer science coordinator of the NSF grant at Governors State University.

Sandee Kastrul, President and co-founder of the Chicago-based i.c.stars, discussed employment opportunities in technical fields with conference participants. i.c.stars is a non-profit organization providing information technology training programs and internships for inner city young adults.

"Our job is to generate innovation, invention, and change. We must work to create leaders in information technologies and expand employment opportunities," explained Kastrul. "By creating a diverse workforce of technical innovators, we create leaders in both business and the community."