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LSU CCT Reaches Out to BRCC for HPC Training

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LSU's Center for Computation & Technology (CCT) has made a lasting connection with the science faculty at the Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) as part of CCT's and the Louisiana Alliance for Simulation-Guided Materials Applications's (LA-SIGMA's) outreach programs. LSU Associate Professor Juana Moreno of the Department of Physics & Astronomy and CCT, CCT IT Analyst Kathy Traxler, and CCT LA-SiGMA Coordinator Leigh Townsend, visited BRCC faculty, and, as a result of these meetings, were invited to lecture on programming, problem solving, High Performance Computing (HPC), computer and network security, and computational research.

BRCC students and teachers in the courses Introduction to Programming and Operating Systems hosted LSU staff for three consecutive weeks.

Isaac Traxler, LSU's HPC systems administrator, presented information on the differences in operating systems. In addition, he disassembled a desktop computer and discussed in detail the various parts and their purposes. This activity was very popular with the students, as most were seeing the inside of a computer for the first time.

CCT's Assistant Director of HPC Enablement Jim Lupo explained what HPC is and provided visual examples of different types of HPC research. Many of his examples caught the students' interest. One in particular was a movie of an incident that caused the death of several firefighters. In this demonstration, weather conditions caused a small fire to be caught between two winds, which then produced an instantaneous fire rush to the walls and roof of a house creating a deadly blaze.

LSU's Information and Network Security Analyst Quang Le gave an excellent presentation on job readiness discussing his background, his experience, how he got the job, what the job is, and what the students should start doing outside of class as preparation to qualify for a similar job. In addition, Kathy Traxler gave a problem solving demonstration to the BRCC students. Many tips and tricks were discussed during the demonstration, although most students did not realize they were "problem solving."

An important goal of these outreach events is to recruit students who are interested in and excited about working with LSU faculty in the science, math, engineering, and computer science fields. LSU CCT also offers two Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) programs during the summer, one in computational sciences, and one in materials sciences (LA-SiGMA), which benefit students wishing to further their research experiences.

Several CCT faculty and research staff will be attending BRCC's Career Fair to recruit graduating students to LSU STEM majors and to CCT for research. They will take the LitteFe Cluster in a box and discuss several researchers' projects that will be of interest to the students.

For more information on the LSU Center for Computation & Technology and/or these programs, visit: http://www.cct.lsu.edu/.

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