Cornell Cup Experience

Last weekend I had the opportunity to attend the Cornell Cup USA in Orlando, Florida. Cornell Cup is an annual embedded design competition sponsored by Intel. Teams from around the country compete to develop innovative solutions to real world problems. All school year built up to this event as my team and I worked developing our entry which is also our senior design engineering project. Cornell Cup presented a great opportunity for furthering my education, networking, developing professional skills, as well as simply being a fun, memorable experience.

The majority of the competition consists of project exhibition time during which teams share their projects in a large expo hall. We took turns manning our project booth and showcasing our project to any passersby. During this time we had to explain what our project was both in layman’s terms as well as technical detail to those interested. The expo time also allowed for us to travel around to the other team’s booths and see their projects. It was a great opportunity to network with fellow engineers and work on professional skills, especially in presenting something rather complex and needing to get an idea across efficiently and effectively. This was also reiterated during our judging time, where we had to present our project to the judges both as a live demo and as a standard PowerPoint.

Another part of the competition included several addresses from renowned speakers including; Kevin Sellers, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Intel; Young Guru, an icon in the audio engineering industry; and even a panel of Disney’s engineers otherwise known as Imagineers. Topics of these talks ranged from the skills needed in engineering to be successful, to the importance of innovating new technologies to solve problems, to getting an inside look at engineers at Walt Disney World. All of the speakers were captivating and gave excellent advice seeing as how most of the students are about to enter into the engineering industry. I found all of the talks to be very helpful in giving insight into joining the industry and being successful, seeing as how I will graduate in June and look to find work.

Looking back on the whole event, I can already see how valuable the experience was. The skills that I learned and am still developing will certainly be useful in the future. I am glad that I had the opportunity to attend and have this once in a lifetime experience.