

Caroline Braun

Graduation Year: Senior

College: Engineering

Major(s): Computer Science

Minors(s): n/a

Scholar Group Membership: Landon Scholars

Did you received other funding for this project?: Computer Science Department

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? Yes

More details on CUSE funding assistance?

Project Title: Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing

Project Location: Orlando, FL, USA

ND Faculty Mentor: Patrick Flynn

Project Type: Conference - Attendance

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Career discernment and/or preparation

Did your funded experience help you:

[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]: Very Much

[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]: Very Much

[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]: Not Applicable

[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]: Not Applicable

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:Not Applicable

Tell us about your experience.

Two other female computer science majors and I sought CUSE funding to attend the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, the largest gathering of women technologists. During this three-day conference, we attended speakers, visited the career fair, participated in workshops, and attended a networking breakfast. We heard from keynote speakers like Melinda Gates, and I made an effort to attend speakers focused on the social impact of technology. I was inspired to focus my skills on what I am passionate about, which is using technology to solve our society's most pressing social problems. At the career fair, I spoke to recruiters from various companies, many of which do not recruit at Notre Dame. I also attended workshops, like an accessibility in design workshop, where we explored how to use colors in web and mobile design in order to allow use by the most people. Lastly, I went to a breakfast with Pariveda, the company I interned at last summer.

Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.

Overall, this conference was inspiring for me. It was so nice to connect and network with women in my field, especially women who have found great success and who have been in the industry

for years. Because engineering is a largely male field, I very much enjoyed being able to be surrounded by other women who are passionate about the same things I am.

Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.

This experience is very directly connected to my plans as a future professional. Because of this experience, I was able to discern my beginnings in the industry, as well as learn some valuable skills for career growth and career change later down the line. Beyond practical career knowledge, I left the conference feeling empowered as a women in computing. I will be less susceptible to feeling down on myself if I am the only female on a team, and I will be able to maintain the connections I made to seek out mentorship and advice throughout my career.

What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?

I would recommend that undergraduate women in computer science attend this conference. I think attending junior year might be more beneficial for someone interested in finding a job or creating connections with recruiters before accepting a full-time job offer.

I acknowledge that this form has been filled out truthfully and to the best of my ability. I understand that this information will be shared with many different CUSE constituencies. As such, I have provided as much useful information as I was able. I understand that CUSE will not complete my award disbursement until this form is successfully completed. If I have any questions or concerns, I will contact CUSE before submitting this form. To illustrate that you understand all of these points, please enter your Notre Dame email in the box below.
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