



**Association for
Computing Machinery**

Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession

Contacts:

Virginia Gold
ACM
212-626-0505
vgold@acm.org

Sara Appleyard
Widmeyer Communications
212-260-3401
sara.appleyard@widmeyer.com

**FIRST-EVER COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK TARGETS ISSUES IN
TEACHING COMPUTER SCIENCE**

*ACM Leads National Effort to Connect Importance of Computing to Need for
Stronger Computer Science Education*

TWITTER PITCH: Join in recognizing the importance of computing and its role in society during @CSEdWeek (Dec 6-12) <http://bit.ly/4BrSjd>

WASHINGTON, D.C.—December 7, 2009— The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and its partners are launching Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek) to uncover and remedy the inadequacy of the nation’s computer science education system at the K-12 level. While 5 of the top 10 fastest growing jobs are in computing-related fields, the percent of schools with rigorous high school computing courses fell from 40 percent to 27 percent from 2005 to 2009. The last 60 years witnessed an extraordinary burst of innovation and talent that have produced a nation where most can scarcely remember life without computers. Yet this innovation-based society is at risk if students are not learning fundamental computing knowledge in our nation’s schools.

“CSEdWeek is a new national movement to raise awareness of the significance of computer science in our daily lives and our economy,” said John White, CEO of ACM. “We need to make a concrete connection in people’s minds between that reality and the need to focus on computing knowledge in K-12 classrooms. The conversation about computer science education speaks directly to the issues of innovation, competitiveness, and a healthy future.”

Watch John White’s introduction to CSEdWeek on the official YouTube channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/CSEdWeek>

As states prepare their Race to the Top reform plans and the nation absorbs the recent “Educate to Innovate” call to action from President Obama, CSEdWeek is alerting the education community that computer science cannot be an add-on or an optional course. It is a critical element of the national science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) movement that instills computation and computational thinking— knowledge

necessary for success in the digital age.

Chris Stephenson, executive director of the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA <http://csta.acm.org>), noted that “Providing students with high level computer science skills is essential if they are going to thrive in the new global economy. Our educational system needs to acknowledge that point by ensuring that all students have the opportunity to take rigorous computer science courses in high school and by providing teachers with the ongoing learning they need to keep up with the discipline.”

The central hub for CSEdWeek is www.csedweek.org, which houses computer science curriculum guides, data, research, posters, and brochures. The site highlights best practices that demonstrate the rigorous level of computer science education necessary to train future innovators as well as ways to engage and excite students in these courses. The site also provides a platform to share and celebrate ideas at the national and local levels through links to Facebook <http://facebook.com/CSEdWeek>, Twitter <http://twitter.com/CSEdWeek>, and YouTube www.youtube.com/csedweek.

“The CSEdWeek Web site will become a more robust resource each day as teachers, national organizations and others share resources and join the conversation,” said Lucy Sanders, CEO of the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) “The site provides a roadmap for change—highlighting the challenges and drawing attention to solutions.”

Join the hundreds of teachers, computer science community members and others connected through Facebook and Twitter.

CSEdWeek is a joint effort led by ACM with the cooperation and deep involvement of CSTA, the Computing Research Association (CRA), NCWIT, the Anita Borg Institute (ABI), the National Science Foundation (NSF), Google Inc., Intel, and Microsoft. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the resolution creating CSEdWeek, which was introduced by Congressmen Vernon Ehlers (R-MI) and Jared Polis (D-CO).

“Research shows that computing careers will only expand in the coming years. We need to do our part now to ensure that schools have the resources to provide the courses that translate into talented computing professionals in the workforce,” said Andrew Bernat, CRA executive director.

The second week in December was chosen for CSEdWeek in honor of Grace Murray Hopper, an outstanding pioneer in computer science, who was born on December 9, 1906. She engineered new programming languages and developed standards for computer systems that laid the foundation for many advances in computer science from the late 1940’s through the 1970s.

About ACM

ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery www.acm.org, is the world’s largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field’s challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession’s collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

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