CAREERS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

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WORKSHOP FORMAT
Presentation and discussion on careers in information technology with a focus on how educational institutions at various levels are recruiting, retaining, and preparing female students and a look at what awaits the IT professional in the current economic climate.

ABSTRACT
Numerous studies investigate gender differences as they relate to career choices in information technology. Organizations, both for-profit and non-profit, are seeking to diversify their workforce especially highly technical areas that are predominantly male [9] [10] [11]. Surveys of college-bound high school students report that top choices for both college major and career path for boys are computer science and engineering [2] [7]. Colleges and universities are examining ways to attract and retain women in technology related areas [1] [3] [4]. Reports from industry are mixed. A study from ACM reports no gender-related differences in identification with IT in their “large sample of IT professionals” [6]. On the other hand, Melymuka [8, p. 1] reports that “half of the women in science, engineering and IT leave the field at midcareer” (see also, [5]). Attracting women to IT requires changes at every level according to Tim Berners-Lee [10]. Berners-Lee notes that though overt sexism is finished, bits of male geek culture and engineer culture remain and alienate people [9, p. 1].

REFERENCES