Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing 2019 Conference Travel Report

Introduction

The Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing (PEARC) conference series are events in which various advanced research computing topics are covered discussed in the form of tutorials and workshops. These topics usually include but aren’t exclusive to modeling, simulation, and data-intensive computing. The primary focus of this year’s conference (PEARC19) was machine learning and artificial intelligence, both of which have recently proved to be a disruptive technology in a wide range of scientific fields. PEARC19 was held in Chicago, Illinois.

Volunteer Program

The volunteer program at the Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing (PEARC) conference was intended to provide an immersive look behind the scenes of the different conference activities as well as give students a chance to network with other students who share their interest in advanced research computing. All student volunteers were given access to the full conference program and tutorials. In addition to helping to support the conference students the valuable opportunity to meet and network with professionals in the industry as well as experience the conference.

Student Mentor Program

The student mentor program was a program that paired each individual student with a mentor based on that student’s career interest. Aunshul Rege was the mentor that I was paired with, who is an Associate Professor at Temple University teaching cyber-security. Students and mentors were tasked to attend two events to get to know one another as well as ask their mentors any questions they might have. During the
Edsel Norwood

student-mentor dinner Aunshul and I spoke about various topics, some of which included Aunshul’s experience at her first DEF CON conference and current day cyber-security issues.

**Speed Networking**

The speed networking session gave students a chance to meet individually with exhibitors attending the PEARC19 conference. The event took place in a large ballroom with each exhibitor occupying a single table. Students were then told to move around to each table with copies of their resumes in-hand and give their best elevator pitch with a time limit of two minutes. Some of the exhibitors in attendance were Microsoft, University of Illinois, NVidia, and Intel.

**Poster Presentation**

Students were also given the opportunity to present a paper or poster during the conference. Student papers and posters presentations gave students a way to meet with their peers during the conference as well as a chance to discuss their research with the attendees and exhibitors of the conference. The topic of my poster presentation was the 10 weeks I interned at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion the Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing 2019 conference was a very student-inclusive event that any computer science student should attend. I have gained an immeasurable amount of experience and knowledge from the conference and am thankful to all of those that made it possible.