

SHPE '19: Phoenix, AZ

SAG Final Report

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Overview

Between October 30th and November 2nd, we attended the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) conference at the Phoenix Convention Center in Arizona. The purpose of our attendance at this conference was professional development, networking, and educating ourselves about the organization to bring that knowledge back to Olin. Additionally, we plan to start a SHPE chapter here at Olin to provide the opportunities extended to us at the conference to Olin students. While at the conference, we were able to attend multiple talks on professionalism, networking, and various engineering workshops to gain insights into engineering in a broader context to grow as developing engineers.

The Conference

The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) is an organization for engineers who are a part of and wish to support the Latin American community. It is mainly open to professionals who currently work in industry and students who are aiming to one day work in those fields. The organization has chapters in schools and businesses all over the country. SHPE seeks to diversify the STEM field by connecting students with organizations in businesses to

overcome the social and economic boundaries that make it difficult for Latinx people to join the STEM community.

The SHPE convention is held to promote the success of current and future Latinx populations in STEM. It is possible to achieve this goal through a variety of channels; namely, career fair conventions, professional development talks, preparative career fair sessions, and professional networking opportunities. The conference provides plenty of opportunities for the Hispanic community to advance into STEM fields. It holds multiple events such as career fairs and resume workshops to encourage and aid Hispanic students in entering the workforce. These events allow many students to network with professionals, which provides them a chance to make connections within companies and see people like them thriving in professions that they are passionate about.

The conference also provided a place for companies to come and support the Latinx community. A lot of companies had the chance to interview and hire well-qualified individuals who will do good work and help improve their companies in the coming years. By actively targeting Latinx students, these companies help diversify the STEM field and create a more diverse workplace that is more open and welcoming to Latinx workers.

Many different events were happening at the conference, but they boil down to 4 specific types. The first was the talks. These were sessions hosted by different companies going to the conference, from Facebook and Google to Boeing and IBM, which covered a wide variety of topics. There were some talks about etiquette and preparation for a Conference, others,

talking about developments the companies had done, like IBM's Quantum Computing one. Others like Google's were a panel with people working at the company, where you could learn from their day-to-day and their feelings about working there. Finally, there were others like Facebook that aimed to prepare for an interview and the like.

The other types of events weren't as broad. These were Career Fairs, where companies (and universities) would set up shop with their stand, and one could go and talk to them. The other two were hospitality suites and Resume Reviews. The resume reviews were hosted so candidates could review their resume with a recruiter from a company, and the hospitality suites were career fairs that were from only one company, where you talked specifically with the job offer you were looking for,

Because of the diversity of events at the conference, it was fairly easy to personalize what we wanted to get out of it. In general, the several talks and information sessions allowed us to get a better idea of new products that a company we are interested in is going to release while some gave insight on how to become a better professional in the work environment. If we wanted a work opportunity with this company, we were able to practice our elevator pitches by approaching representatives in these several environments, gaining more confidence as the convention went on. Some companies also sponsored workshops that helped us improve aspects of our application, such as Lockheed Martin's Resume Review.

At the career fair, several of us received interviews, allowing us to practice the skills necessary to succeed in the outside of just practice interviews at Olin. These interviews led to

job opportunities for a lot of us as well, which was a huge benefit of the convention. Besides interviews, however, everyone was able to practice their elevator pitch even more at the career fair in a larger setting with larger companies. In the end, all of these events worked to make us better at presenting ourselves on paper and in person.

The conference also provided interactions with engineers at almost every academic level (Bachelors, Masters, Ph.D. candidates, and even Post-Doctoral). There were plenty of opportunities to have conversations with people over what they were researching or programs they participated in, which we could apply for as well. There were opportunities to listen about the innovations happening in certain industries, and we, as the next generation, are going to do as the next steps of the industries we work for. Even fellow undergraduates were able to advise on possible scholarships to apply to labs that were taking positions, rapid prototyping, and companies that were favorable to apply to. All these interactions helped us split away from the Olin bubble and experience the engineering community as a whole.