



The Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing

September 26-28, 2018 in Houston, Texas

What is the Grace Hopper Conference?

From September 26th to September 28th, 49 Ohio State students attended the [Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing](#) in Houston, Texas, supported by Ohio State's [ACM-W](#) chapter. Grace Hopper Conference (GHC) is an international technical conference highlighting and celebrating the achievements of women in the technology field, as well as empowering all minorities in tech to make a place for themselves in the tech industry.

The conference's namesake, Admiral Grace Hopper, was a rear admiral in the U.S. Navy in the late 1900's and a contributor to the compiler for the COBOL programming language. She was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016 for her contributions to the technology industry and humanity, and is today a worldwide role model to women in the technical field.

GHC is an annual 3-day technical conference featuring speakers, technical talks, workshops, a career fair with hundreds of companies, networking, poster showcases, and awards for remarkable technical women. Students, young professionals, and seasoned pros alike are all welcomed at Grace Hopper Conference to expand their technology skills, explore the industry, and meet peers.

Of Ohio State's 49 students in attendance at GHC this year, 35 were sponsored and sent by Ohio State's [Women's ACM chapter \(ACM-W\)](#).



Pictured above: the ACM-W group at Grace Hopper



Pictured: Former ACM-W President Winnie Li (left) and ACM-W member Caitlyn Horn (right)

What is ACM-W?

[ACM-W](#) is a student organization at Ohio State and a university chapter of the national ACM organization. [ACM](#) features hundreds of local women's chapters (all known as ACM-W) and Ohio State's ACM-W chapter is actually the oldest in the world, founded in 2003.

ACM-W has 75+ active members in the organization and hosts dozens of events each semester, ranging from company info sessions, to technical workshops, to networking nights, to socials. ACM-W's mission is to empower all women in the technical community and do so through community outreach, campus outreach, and technical development of other students. All genders and majors are welcome at our meetings as allies or supporters of our mission.

In the past few years, ACM-W has greatly increased our presence at GHC. In 2016, ACM-W sponsored 12 women to attend the conference. In 2017, ACM-W sponsored 25 women to attend. This year, we are proud to announce that we sponsored 35 Ohio State students to attend the conference, 32 women and 3 men, as well as supported an additional 14 students to attend through shared travel arrangements.

Every spring, ACM-W advertises Grace Hopper Conference in the local community and recruits students to apply for our scholarship. By offering several tiers of financial assistance ranging from 50% of conference costs covered up to 100% costs covered, ACM-W is able to offer a scholarship to every student who would like to attend. This approach has helped us scale quickly by sending 4x the number of students to the conference this year compared to two years prior.

By the Numbers: Interviews & Offers

Grace Hopper is an excellent place for our attendees to get their first internship, connect with their dream company, discover new corners of the industry, and more.

Our attendees routinely both interview and get offers at Grace Hopper. We collected data from 37 of Ohio State's 49 attendees about their interviews and offers. This is a bit more about their success.

86 interviews & 20 offers

50% of our attendees interviewing received at least one offer within 1 week of the conference

70% of ACM-W attendees had at least **1 interview** at GHC

51% of ACM-W attendees had **2+ interviews** at GHC

41% of ACM-W attendees had **3+ interviews** at GHC



Where we interviewed

AEO
Amazon
American Express
Apple
Asurion
Bank of America
Blackrock
Cisco
Classpass
CME Group
Comcast
Deutsche Bank
Datadog
Dataminr
Dell
Disney
Ericsson
Expedia

ExpressScript
Facebook
Fidelity
Groupon
Honeywell
IBM
John Hopkins APL
JP Morgan Chase & Co
Liberty Mutual
Mastercard
Microsoft
Morgan Stanley
Morningstar
Nationwide
NBC
Northrop Grumman
Qualcomm
Raytheon

RetailMeNot
Salesforce
Snapchat
Splunk
Square
Stripe
Tableau
Target
Texas Instruments
Thomson Reuters
Thoughtworks
Two Sigma
Ultimate Software
United Airlines
Viasat
Visa
Walmart
Workday
Zillow

Where we received offers

Apple
Disney
Fidelity
Groupon
IBM
Mastercard

Microsoft
Morgan Stanley
Morningstar
Nationwide
Northrop Grumman
Raytheon

Tableau
Target
Texas Instruments
Thomson Reuters
Walmart
Workday

By the Numbers: who went to GHC?

Conference

20,000+

attendees

3+

days

80+

countries

Attendees

49 attendees from Ohio State

// **44** women

5 men

// **25** seniors

17 juniors

5 sophomores

35 attendees sent on ACM-W's scholarship

// **32** women

3 men

3 attendees with Google scholarships

2 attendees with Anita Borg Institute scholarships

2 attendees with NCWIT, CRA-W scholarships

Conference Summary

The Grace Hopper conference took place over 3 days in September, beginning with an opening keynote Wednesday morning and culminating in a closing keynote Friday afternoon and a celebration Friday evening. In between the keynotes, conference attendees can attend a 3-day career fair, choose from hundreds of technical talks and workshops, dozens of featured speakers, and dozens of company networking events.



Pictured: the opening ceremony of GHC in the Toyota Center

Opening Keynote

Wednesday's opening keynote featured several notable speakers: Padmasree Warrior, CEO of NIO US, and Jessica O Matthews, co-founder and CEO of Uncharted Power. The keynote kicked off with a reading of a letter from former President Obama, encouraging conference attendees to "keep aiming high, dreaming big, and working hard".

Warrior focused her talk primarily on her recent work with autonomous vehicles and how that related to her journey as a woman in leadership. She gave three key points of advice to listeners: first, "open doors and go through them". Warrior explained that in her career, doors have not been simply opened for her and opportunities handed out - she had to seek out and relentlessly pursue them herself. Second, "keep your eyes on the stars and feet on the ground", as she spoke about how big women can dream and how far you can go if you stay grounded at the same time. Finally, she encouraged, "work across boundaries." Tech will never be a heads-down field, she said. Your greatest success will come in collaboration.

Next, Matthews (pictured right) took the stage to speak about her journey in entrepreneurship, beginning at age 17 when she built a soccer ball to harness kinetic energy and culminating today in her current Brooklyn-based energy company, Uncharted Power. She spoke about the obstacles she's overcome as a woman in color not only in the technology field, but in the entrepreneurship and venture capitalism spaces. Matthews emphasized that not fitting the stereotype of tech was her greatest strength, not at all a weakness.



Finally, stealing the show and closing the keynote, Matthews brought out her company's latest product, a jump rope, and jumped rope in bright red heels on stage to demonstrate the rope's ability to harness and store kinetic energy.

Career Fair and Sponsor Expo

Throughout Grace Hopper Conference, hundreds of the conference's industry sponsors participated in a three-day career fair and sponsor expo. Attendees could network with companies, connect with recruiters, participate in interviews and for a lucky few, even receive offers. The career fair is renowned for the number of companies that attend it each year and their enthusiasm for hiring women at the conference.

Additionally, the sponsor displays each year are a sight to see. In stark contrast to the typical career fair of gray tables and folding chairs seen at many universities, Grace Hopper's Career Fair is known for its companies' elaborate displays and generous swag. Depending on a company's sponsorship level, they may have much more than just a table at the fair - many have full-blown rooms to themselves.



Pictured: Google's career fair booth

Technical Sessions

GHC offers hundreds of technical sessions and workshops throughout the course of the 3 days, ranging in level from beginner to expert. Popular beginner topics often include overviews of computer science topics such as security, cryptography, machine learning, big data, and more. Expert topics will often delve deeply into a speaker's research and more.

A popular talk on Thursday (pictured below), was, "AI, Ain't I a Woman?" addressing the speaker's research in the AI field and experiences as a woman in the field as well.



"I liked going to the session where a panel of women told how they got into game development. It was interesting because they gave some insight into the inner workings of the video game industry and how women at large AAA companies feel about working there."

- Evan McWilliams, B.S. CSE 2019

"My favorite experience was the session 'Think like a Hacker, Defend like a Pro' because it provided an excellent thought experiment on how to look at security from an attacker's perspective."

- Stephanie Pirman, B.S. CSE 2020

Featured Speakers

Grace Hopper Conference is also known for the remarkable speakers it hosts each year. This year, GHC featured two prominent speakers on Friday: Dr. Anita Hill, and Emily Chang, author of *Brotopia*.

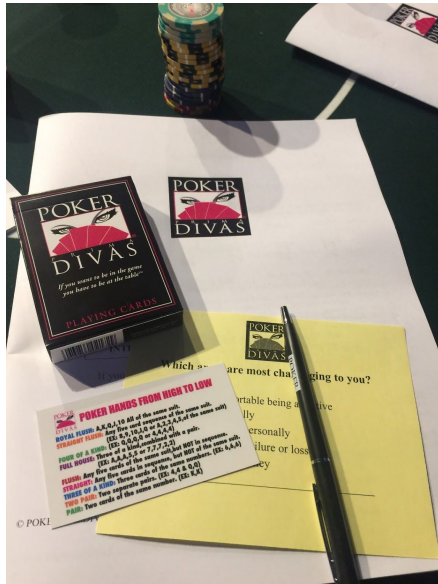
Dr. Hill (pictured right) spoke at length about her experiences testifying in front of the Senate in 1991 and compared them to the Kavanaugh hearings happening that same day. She discussed the ways in which the treatment of sexual harassment in our society had changed in the past two decades, and the ways that it unfortunately hasn't. She offered advice to the women in the crowd, saying, "Don't ever do anything that dehumanizes you."



Later that morning, Emily Chang (pictured left), author of the best-selling book *Brotopia* detailing the history of harassment and mistreatment that has led the tech industry to its current state, spoke about her work and answered a panel of questions. She discussed the work that went into writing *Brotopia*, as well as shared a few key points from the beginning of the book to highlight the stories it tells.

Both Hill and Chang were incredibly inspirational speakers, and wonderful role models to hear from. Chang even offered to meet as many audience members as she could after her talk.

Company Networking



Outside of the talks, workshops, speakers, interviews, and more that the conference itself offers each day in Houston, many of the conference's sponsors hosted networking nights and similar events each evening. These events are known for being excellent places to connect with company engineers, ask questions, and have fun.

Notably, many companies have transitioned these events to be as productive for attendees as possible. Palantir was a key example of this. Pictured to the left, Palantir hosted a “How to win big in business and in life with the principles of poker” night, teaching hundreds of young women the basics of poker and the intuition, emotional, negotiation, and interpersonal skills needed to be successful at the game as well.

With the focus on attendees' professional development, these company events have become excellent places to learn new skills (technical or otherwise!) and meet peers in the field as well.

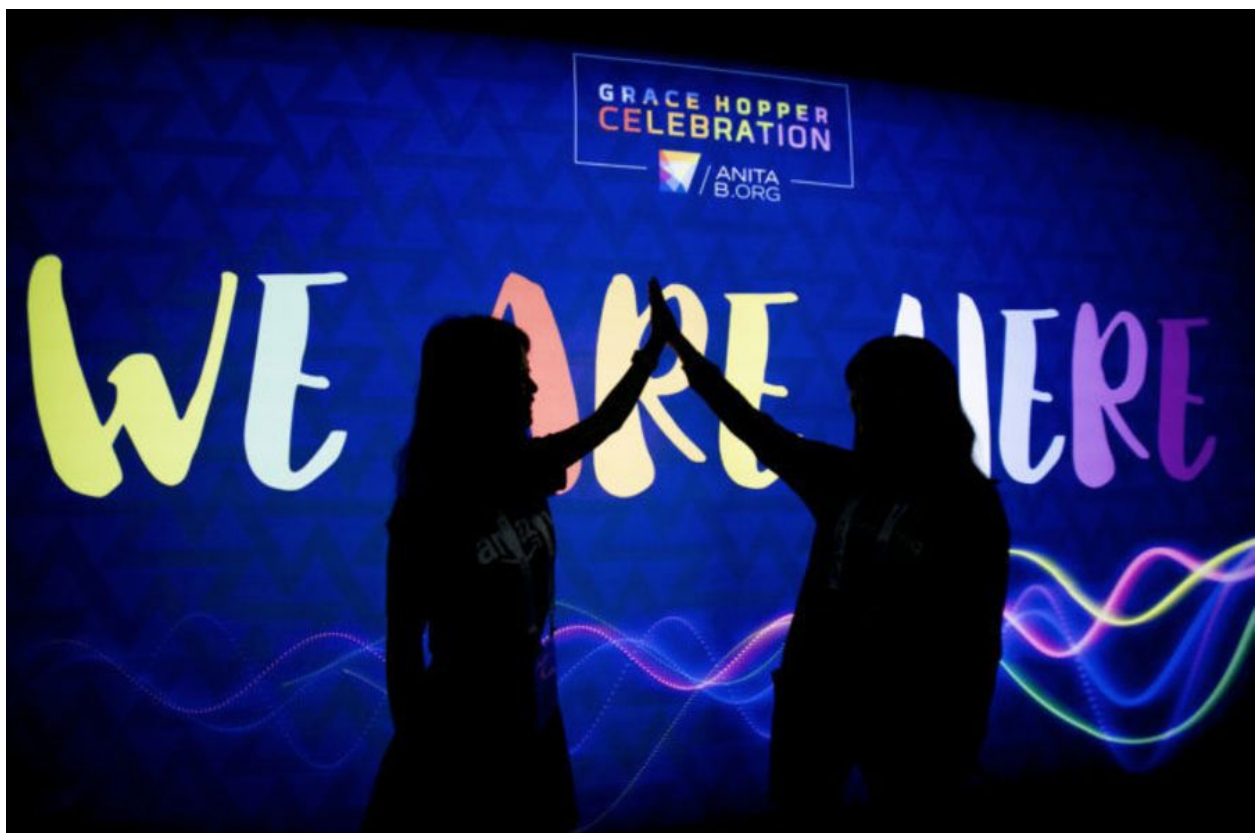


Pictured: ACM-W members at a Twitter Networking Party during the conference

Closing Keynote

Finally, the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing closed on Friday afternoon with a keynote in the Toyota Center. They awarded many prizes to notable women in technology, ranging from high schoolers pitching startup ideas, to execs at existing companies dedicated to fostering an inclusive, diverse environment in their workplaces.

The closing keynote featured in particular the speaker Professor Justine Cassell of Carnegie Mellon University, discussing how her work in the AI field is pushing society towards a brighter future. In particular, she discussed the ethical concerns that her team has had to address of late and going forward, as the topics they broach in AI become more difficult to wrangle. Finally, former CTO of the United States Megan Smith took the stage for the closing keynote to offer attendees words of encouragement and wisdom.



Why do we do this? In the words of students who attended...

The Grace Hopper Conference is a life-changing conference for the dozens of students that ACM-W sends each year. From securing their first internship, to connecting with the company of their dreams, to meeting their role models, to simply improving their technical skills, conference attendees can find anything and everything they need to further their professional development at Grace Hopper.

We don't want to speak for them though. We asked our attendees to tell us how the conference impacted them. These are their words:

"I feel honored to have had the opportunity to listen to such great women speak, especially Jessica O. Matthews. She was so raw and honest about the fact that uncertainties exist and that not everything works according to a specific plan. "Just because it's not your plan doesn't mean it's not your destiny" is a quote that will always be on my mind from now on."

- **Meghana Yechuri, B.S. Data Analytics 2020**

"I realized how lucky I am to be surrounded by supportive and powerful women! The tech field is not an easy field to navigate, but it'll be worth it in the end."

- **Camila Robalino, B.S. Computer & Information Science 2020**

"My favorite experience was the second speaker, Jessica Matthews. She was an incredible inspiration for me to stop doing nothing and actually get things done, specifically to pursue my ambitions. Her story that she shared was amazing."

- **Stacy Kauntz, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2020**

"One of my favorite experiences at GHC was learning how companies focus on making accessible applications. It was amazing to see how technology has shifted to ensure these products are usable for the entire population and sparked my interest in helping to develop accessible applications in future roles."

- **Dannie Prince, B.S. Computer & Information Science 2019**

"My favorite was a workshop on self-promotion and beating the bragging stigma; it focused on how we can fairly portray our accomplishments while also offering experiences to other people we meet along the way. This was amazing for me because I've been struggling with how to talk about myself and be proud of my accomplishments while still being mindful of others and remaining humble."

- **Nora Myer, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2019**

"My favorite experience was learning about the history of women engineers. I got to see both historical and modern women in computing at the gallery booth. I never knew there were so many great women engineers that had so much impact in our society."

- **Jacob LeBlanc, B.S. Computer & Information Science 2020**

"I am so glad to know that I am not alone. We are not alone because there are other women out there doing what we are doing in similar environments, unsure, underestimated, and under appreciated and yet there are very successful role models that young tech-driven women can look up to."

- **Emily Wise, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2021**

"I was extremely grateful to be surrounded by a community of women who understood my experiences in tech."

- **Amy Book, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2020**

"Seeing how the women who spoke had such diversity in the way they held themselves, their backgrounds, personalities, and career paths really inspired and motivated me in a way I wasn't expecting. Feeling their pride and excitement about what they have and will do, makes me want to work harder to lead the kind of life that movement-starters like them do."

- **Kelly Wu, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2020**

"I learned more of how to be an ally in technology for women facing bias and discrimination. Hearing everyone's perspectives and experiences firsthand is something that will always stick with me."

- **Brian Gainer, B.S. Computer Science & Engineering 2019**

Thank you to our sponsors!

Finally, we would like to say a *huge* thank you to the sponsors who have made attending this conference possible for ACM-W.

We would like to thank first OCIO at Ohio State, the Office of the CIO, and specifically Helen Patton and Mike Hofherr for their continued support of ACM-W. Their generous donations and repeated support to the ACM-W organization has made it possible for us to send so many students to Grace Hopper each year. For that, we cannot say thank you enough.

We would also like to thank the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at Ohio State for their support and generosity as well.

Without our sponsors and Ohio State's support, we would not be able to do this. Thank you.



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

Website: <https://acmwosu.github.io/>

Follow us: [@acmwosu](https://twitter.com/acmwosu)

Learn more: [ACM-W 2017 - 2018 Annual Report](#)

ACMW @ GHC 2017: [ACM-W 2017 GHC Report](#)

About GHC: <https://ghc.anitab.org/>