

Dear all,

On behalf of Houston Community College, I want to express our sincere gratitude to all of you who contributed to the success of our second annual AI conference, the Gulf Coast Conference on Artificial Intelligence in 2023. This includes our students, faculty, staff, speakers, panelists, exhibitors, sponsors, and volunteers. Your dedication and hard work made it a great event that brought together students, professionals, and researchers from different fields to share their experiences and knowledge. The quality of the keynotes, panels, and presentations was exceptional, and we received a lot of positive feedback from many attendees for weeks following the conference. It was heartwarming to see how much everyone appreciated what they learned, the connections they made, and the opportunities they received. We've had a lot of interest from industry professionals and start-ups to collaborate with HCC. These collaborations include enhancing HCC's AI program and providing micro internships for our students. We had 152 attendees that checked in for Academia and 122 that checked in for Industry.

The conference would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors:

- AWS Machine Learning University: Platinum Sponsor
- Toolkit Technologies, ABB and SMC combined: Gold Sponsor
- Dell: Silver Sponsor
- Intel: Silver Sponsor
- University of Houston - Victoria: Silver Sponsor
- IntelliTide Corp: Bronze Sponsor
- Tech Labs: Bronze Sponsor
- Greater Houston Partnership: In Kind.
- Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce: In Kind.

We are also thankful for the HCC College Activity Board (CAB) for providing funding to cover costs such as food and tickets for our students. We would also like to thank the PepsiCo foundation for providing snacks and water. Special thanks to our tremendous keynote speakers, Dr. Andrews and Dr. Bradbury, whose inspiring talks left a lasting impact on all of us. Our panelists were also phenomenal, and we are still reflecting on many of the ideas, thoughts, and insights that were shared. If you were a speaker or panelist and didn't receive a small bag of gratitude, please let us know. We appreciate your unwavering commitment to helping our community.

We would like to acknowledge all the organizations that participated in the conference and helped make it a success. Our booths included representation from:

- DELL
- HCC Career Services
- HCC Coleman College
- HCC Computer Science Association Club
- HCC Cybersecurity Club
- HCC Digital & Information Technology faculty & staff
- HCC Fabrication and Innovation Lab
- HCC Gulf Coast Apprenticeship Club
- HCC LSAMP/Engineering

- HCC Southwest Innovation and Entrepreneurship Club
- HCC United Student Council
- HCC X-Labs
- Intel
- Tech Labs
- The Citadel School of Engineering
- Toolkit Technologies
- University of Houston – Victoria
- UH Cougar AI
- Women in Cybersecurity (WyCiS)

Many thanks to Toolkit Technologies for bringing the robodogs and for ABB for also bringing their robots.

You can go to HCC's official Flickr account for pictures of the conference
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/hccphotos/albums/72177720307123266>

You can download high-resolution versions of the photos we used directly from the album above (from our SW college FB): Day 1 - <https://tinyurl.com/acve9s46> Day 2 - <https://tinyurl.com/2vjmc7p8>

Additionally, you can find pictures from the following DropBox (zip file): tinyurl.com/2fm62fzs Please share what you have either through Microsoft Teams or via email (dit.office@hccs.edu). Please be mindful with how you use these pictures. Thank you! We do have raw footage of the entire conference and we'll keep you posted on a video.

We are already planning for the third conference and have some exciting announcements to make. We learned a lot from this second conference and have many ideas to improve it next year. We're thrilled to get you all involved in our planning and believe that we will make it an awesome conference. We may be sending a survey in the coming weeks. Finally, we urge you to help us get more sponsorships next year. The funds will allow us to provide more opportunities for our students, such as a third-party event organization app, swag, prizes, and more. We understand that many companies need at least a year to prepare for sponsorships, so please get in touch with Kristina Perez if you are interested (kristina.perez@hccs.edu).

Thank you all for your support and commitment to our AI community. Your contributions go a long way in helping us achieve our goals.

Sincerely,

Samir Saber
Dean, Digital & Information Technology Center of Excellence and Executive Director, Workforce
Technology
Houston Community College