U.S. slips lower in coding contest

By *srlinuxx*
Created *09/04/2005 - 3:10pm*
Submitted by srlinuxx on Saturday 9th of April 2005 03:10:14 PM Filed under Software [1]

The University of Illinois tied for 17th place in the world finals of the Association for Computing Machinery International Collegiate Programming Contest, which concluded Thursday. That's the lowest ranking for the top-performing U.S. school in the 29-year history of the competition.

"The U.S. used to dominate these kinds of programming Olympics," said David Patterson, president of the Association for Computing Machinery and a computer science professor at the University of California, Berkeley. "Now we're sort of falling behind."

Shanghai Jiao Tong University of China took top honors this year, followed by Moscow State University and the St. Petersburg Institute of Fine Mechanics and Optics. Those results continued a gradual ascendance of Asian and East European schools during the past decade or so. A U.S. school hasn't won the world championship since 1997, when students at Harvey Mudd College achieved the honor.

The relatively poor showing of American students is a red flag about how well the United States in general is doing in technology, compared with its global rivals, said Jim Foley, chairman of the Computing Research Association, a group made up of academic departments, research centers and professional societies.

"This confirms concerns expressed by the Computing Research Association about the U.S.'s status in the worldwide race for technological leadership," said Foley, who is also a professor in the College of Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

A number of developments in recent years suggest the world's tech leadership could shift from Silicon Valley and other U.S. locales to Asian nations such as China, Korea and India. One sign is the way American technology companies are conducting some of their research and development activities in Asia.

The U.S. educational system is another area of concern. Technology leaders, including Intel's Craig Barrett, have pointed to education woes as a major problem for the U.S. tech industry. Student interest in computer science departments in the United States has waned in the wake of the dot-com collapse and amid reports that companies are shipping some of their technology work to low-wage countries like India.

Also alarming to some is a dip in applications from international students to U.S. graduate schools.

Many observers have said that U.S. elementary and secondary schools should improve their ability to boost interest in technology, with proposed reforms ranging from higher pay for teachers to education tax credits that let parents pay for private-school tuition.

Other proposed steps to foster U.S. tech leadership include higher pay for positions in the field and more federal funding for computing research.

While those in the United States may be fretting over their tech future, some in China are celebrating. A photo on the Web site of the programming contest seems to show students from Shanghai Jiao Tong University tossing someone into the air in the wake of the school's victory.

Source.

Software

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/536

Links:
[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/38