

2010 CiSoft Virtual Academy

July 26 – July 27, 2010

Different from ever before, the 2010 CiSoft Academy was entirely virtual. Previous CiSoft Academies transported Chevron's interns from multiple locations to attend the training program featuring faculty from University of Southern California. This year, interns from Chevron's Bakersfield, Covington, Lafayette, and Houston locations participated remotely from their respective offices while the faculty introduced their research from a CiSoft lab at USC via video conferencing.

On Monday, July 26th the interns began their first day of CiSoft Academy with a warm welcome from Chevron's Vice President for Gulf of Mexico, Warner Williams. The students then listened to various speakers, learning more about the digital oilfield and smart technologies. Guest speakers included Mike Hauser, "*i-field: Re-Thinking How We Work*", Lyndon Arscott, "*Environmental Health & Safety in the Oil Industry*", Fred Aminzadeh, "*4D Monitoring*", John Heidemann, "*Sensor Technology*", Cyrus Shahabi, "*Data Management*", Ulrich Neumann, "*Immersive Visualization*", Gaurav Sukhatme, "*Exploring the Coastal Ocean using Underwater Robots*", and Iraj Ershaghi, "*Smart Wells, Decision Support System, IAM*". Each location also featured a domain expert who explained specifically how CiSoft projects were enhancing operations in their oilfields.

After the intense 6 hour training session, the interns were divided into teams and given competition questions based on their new understanding of smart oilfield concepts. Though in different locations and different time zones, each team was given equal time to collaborate and put together an inventive and persuasive presentation for the competition on Tuesday, July 27th. There were a total of eight teams: 4 from Bakersfield, 2 from Covington, 1 from Lafayette, and 1 from Houston. Each team defended their innovative solutions against a panel of judges at USC in addition to the other teams competing. Team B from Bakersfield consisting of Taylor Alexander from Cal State University, San Diego, Nathan Dietert from Texas A&M, Krista Muela from San Diego State University, Benjamin Saucier from Louisiana State University, Ricardo Vera from the University of Texas at Austin, and Timothy Woolsey from Texas A&M, won 1st place. There was a tie for 2nd place between Team A from Bakersfield made up of Anne Branson from Penn State, Nick Chipponeri from Texas A&M, Michael Owens from Texas A&M, David Swain from the University of Texas at Austin, Justin Walker from Cal State University, San Marcos, and Keisha Durant from Stanford University; and Team G from Lafayette whose members were: Josef Muska from University of Washington, Nathan Davis from Brigham Young University, Lori Harrington from University of Florida, Benjamin Kingsdorf from Louisiana State University, John Cortines from Texas A&M, and Adam Ray from University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Team D from Bakersfield included Daniel Cory from University of Texas at Austin, Jamie Glas from Louisiana State University, David Herrera from Cal Poly Pomona, Christopher Savage from Brigham Young University, and Brandon Baylor from Marietta College placed 3rd. The virtual CiSoft Academy was beneficial because it drastically cut travel costs and the interns were still able to maintain their daily operation projects and deadlines. While many commented that networking in person would have been ideal, an anonymous intern commented that the CiSoft Academy was, "Very effective; we got to communicate "face to face" with the other interns as well as faculty from USC" through the video conferencing technology.