Winners of Hong Kong Computer Society' First-ever Hackathon Travels to Computing Conference
Hong Kong's Top Student Programmers Gain Traction on ICT Development and Start-up Landscape

(03 November 2015) Earlier last month, winners of Hong Kong Computer Society's first-ever student Hackathon travelled to Yunqi Cloud Town in Hangzhou, China for Alibaba Group's fifth annual Computing Conference. Recognizing the need to address the ever increasing popularity of mobile use and the demand of ICT talents, this is part of HKCS's Youth Club, iSpirit's, initiative to attract young talents into the industry and to equip them with the necessary skills by providing them with a platform for practical experience and guiding them in exploring the industry.

At the beginning of October, over 60 student ICT enthusiasts from 12 of Hong Kong's post-secondary institutions gathered for a 42-hour Hackathon to develop and promote a software based on the theme: Cloud Computing to Promote Development of Education in Hong Kong. Sixteen teams comprised of students from different institutions and an array of studies including Economics, Game Software Development, Engineering, Global Supply Chain Management and different majors in the IT discipline competed this year, exceeding the expected participation of ten teams.

Representing Hong Kong's top student programmers, the winners of Hackathon were invited to attend the Computing Conference accompanied by Mr. Chris Tam, Chairperson of HKCS's Youth Club. The 2-day conference, visited by over 3,000 cloud enterprises and 15,000 participants, focused on Internet, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Cloud Computing. "Through this conference, we could clearly see that Big Data and Cloud are the keys to the future development of the ICT. Hence, I will be choosing relevant subjects to study in order to equip myself to meet the growing demands," shared Peter Wong Ka Ho, Winner of Hackathon and Computing major at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU).

Computer Science Major at Hong Kong University of Science & Technology and Hackathon Second Runner Up, Fong Ho Yee, found immense relevance between Hackathon and the future development of ICT, "Jack Ma pointed out in his keynote session that cloud computing will become the core of future technological development. Innovations in technology will change the way in which traditional businesses operate and most importantly, improve people's lives. This human-centric development was evident in many of the application of cloud technology that was displayed at the conference such as traffic monitors and electrocardiogram monitors"

Apart from being amazed and inspired by the technological advancements in Mainland China, the students were also attracted by their entrepreneurial landscape. "By being immersed in the Yunqi Cloud Town, I could feel the difference in attitude towards entrepreneurship between Mainland China and Hong Kong. There is immense support from the Mainland Government; hence, comparatively, Hong Kong seems lukewarm. There is resistance in Hong Kong." expressed Lawrence Law Shi Yin, first-runner up and Cloud and Data Centre Administration student from the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education. Mr, Chris Tam further encouraged, "Starting up is a lot easier now as technology advances. With the many channels such as Apps or online platforms like Taobao; the cost of rent and operations will be significantly reduced."

Even with the growth in Mainland China, Hong Kong still proves to be on par and highly recognized. Catherine Cheng, Winner and PolyU Computing-major shared, "Upon learning that we are students from Hong Kong, 2 investment intermediary companies have expressed their interest in cooperating with us on some of their development projects. We were even more elated with their invitation to participate in a Mainland broadcaster's programming competition."
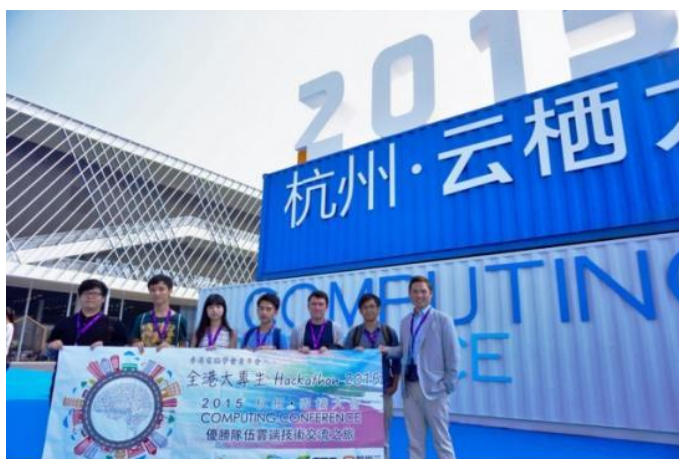
Mr. Tam concludes, "Not only have students been able to gain ICT-related knowledge, but this trip has opened their minds into the possibilities of developing a career in Mainland China. HKCS looks forward to organizing more of such events to provide students and young practitioners with a better understanding of different landscapes, opening new windows of opportunities."

Over 60 post-secondary students gathered for a 42-hour Hackathon, marking a major milestone in the development of ICT in Hong Kong.

Winners of HKCS's Hackathon 2015 getting ready to board for their trip to Computing Conference 2015.

Astounded by the scale of the conference, winners of Hackathon made the most out of the trip having been inspired by keynote sessions and through interactions with investors and ICT practitioners.

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