COMSCICON ATLANTA

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

WEDNESDAY
Evening Pre-Workshop Mixer at Manuel's Tavern

THURSDAY
Day 1: Panels, Breakout Sessions, Data Viz Playground, Networking Dinner, and Digital Stories, *oh my!*

FRIDAY
Day 2: Panels, Keynote, Writeathon, Mock Interviews, Collaboration Wall, Book Swap, *Au Revoir!*

@ComSciConATL
comsciconatl@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 28th | MARCH 1ST & 2ND| GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

A LETTER FROM THE ORGANIZERS

To our sponsors, attendees, supporters, and ComSciCon family,

This year, we had the honor of bringing you the inaugural ComSciCon-Atlanta, the first ComSciCon workshop in the Southeast. We have much to be grateful for in this first year: generous donors, wonderful speakers, talented breakout session leaders, amazing volunteers, and best of all, wildly engaged attendees.

The 50 selected attendees represented the best out of a competitive applicant pool of nearly 130 people. Between student interest and the outpouring of community support, we believe that there continues to be high demand for the valuable skills ComSciCon can offer, and we hope ComSciCon-Atlanta will continue as a resource for training graduate students in the Southeast in the important mission of sharing science with the public.

This event would not have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors; to them, we offer our most sincere thanks. We would also like to thank our more than 30 invited workshop leaders and speakers, including our keynote speaker Dr. Joe Hanson of PBS Digital Studios. Finally, we would like to thank our local attendees who shared their living spaces with traveling attendees for the two-day event.

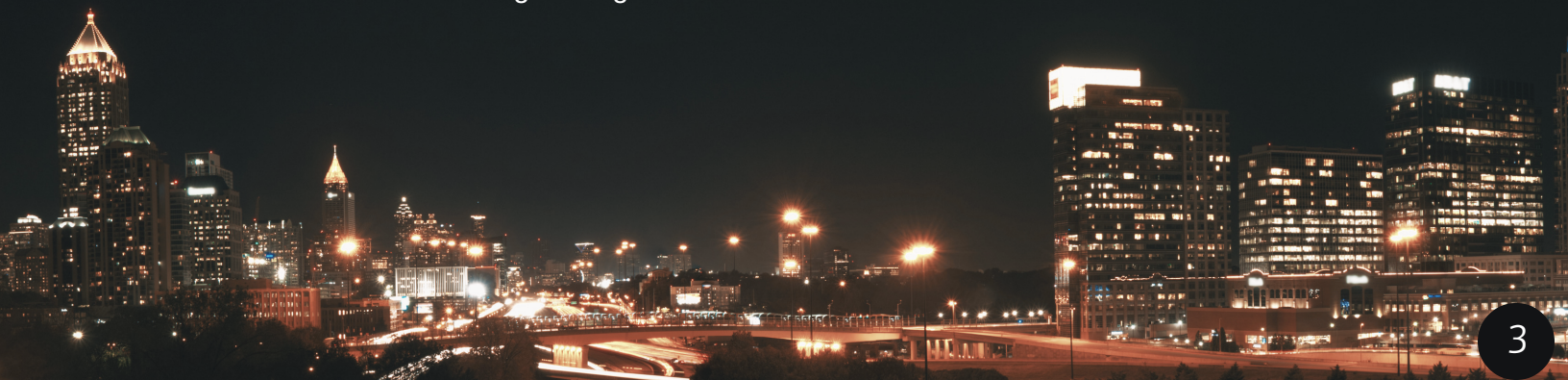
ComSciCon is designed as a workshop for graduate students, by graduate students, and as such, many thanks also go to the organizing team, whose hard work made this event possible.

The following pages include information about our program, feedback from attendees, attendee demographics, as well as our funding and budget information. We hope that this report provides a clear snapshot of the first ComSciCon-Atlanta workshop: of its success, as well as the potential of the scicomm community of Atlanta.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at comsciconatl@gmail.com if you have questions.

Sincerely,

The ComSciCon-Atlanta 2018 Organizing Team



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR MAKING THIS EVENT POSSIBLE

EMORY | LANEY GRADUATE SCHOOL

Georgia Tech EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

Georgia Tech Campus Services

ATLANTA BEST PROGRAM
Broadening Experiences In Scientific Training

EMORY LANEY GRADUATE SCHOOL
Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences

Georgia Tech Graduate Education and Faculty Development
Office of the Provost

Georgia Tech College of Sciences

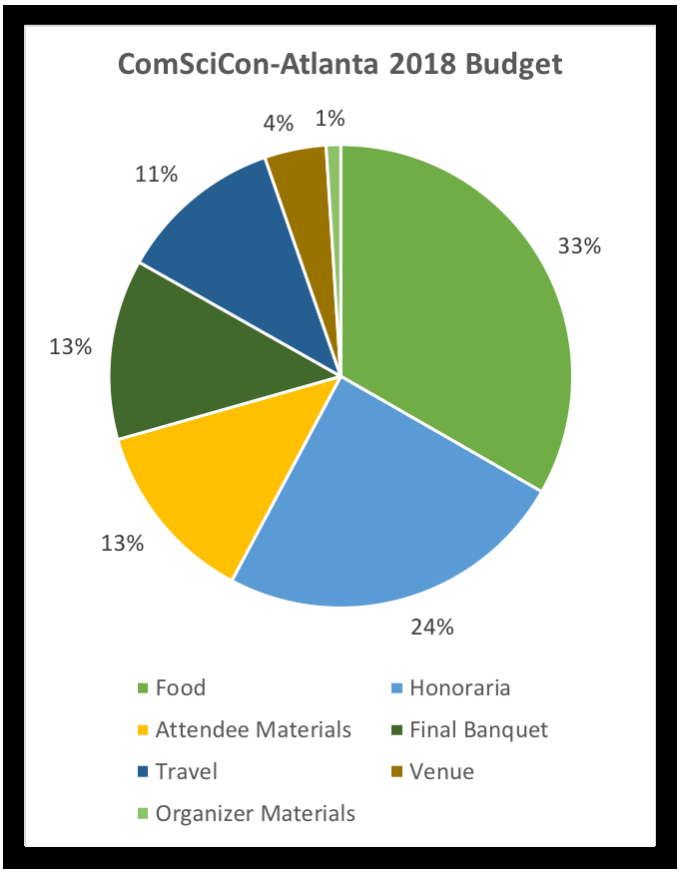
Georgia Tech College of Engineering

POPULY Voting Systems

AMY STONE
Scientific and Medical Communications, Inc.

Donor	Donation
Emory University Laney School of Graduate Studies	$ 7,000
Georgia Institute of Technology Executive Vice President for Research	$ 4,000
Georgia Institute of Technology Campus Services	$ 3,000
Emory University Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences	$ 1,500
Atlanta Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training (BEST) Program	$ 1,000
Georgia Institute of Technology Office of the Provost	$ 500
Georgia Institute of Technology College of Science	$ 500
Georgia Institute of Technology College of Engineering	$ 500
Amy Stone Scientific and Medical Communications, Inc.	$ 250
Total	**$ 18,250**

COMSCICON NATIONAL
A PROJECT OF THE STORY COLLIDER



WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK:

Our event volunteers
Aaron Blanchard, Madison Silverstein

Our Write-a-thon Volunteers
Lisa Rosenstein, Amanda Gable

Our Mock Interview Volunteers
Joshua Stewart, Chris Gunter, Jason Maderer

Our Data Viz Workshop Volunteers
Aditya Anupam, Victoria J Chai, Shruti Rajeev Dalvi, Curtis Balusek

The Emory TechLab
Robin Horton & Amelia Stagg

The Georgia Tech Invention Studio

Populy Voting Systems, LLC

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY February 28
7:00 - 9:00 PM Attendees Mixer at Manuel's Tavern

THURSDAY March 1
8:00 Breakfast begins
9:00 Welcome Address
9:30 PANEL1- Outside of the Box: SciComm in Creative Outlets
11:00 PANEL 2- The Engaged Scientist: Reaching Out from the Ivory Tower
12:15 Lunch
1:15 Breakout Session 1
3:00 Breakout Session 2
4:45 Data Viz Playground
5:45 Wrap Up + Walk to Dinner
6:00 Career Networking Dinner at the Marcus Nanotechnology Building
7:15 Digital Storytelling with Joe Hanson

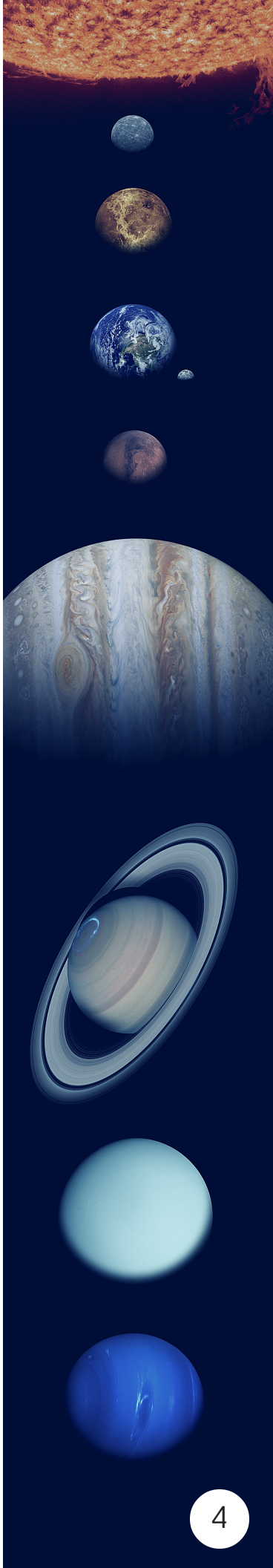
FRIDAY March 2
8:00 Breakfast begins
9:00 PANEL 3- The Big Picture:
The importance of interdisciplinary collaboration & intersectional thinking
10:30 KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Dr. Joe Hanson, PBS Digital Studios
12:00 Lunch
1:00 PANEL 4: The Bread and Butter Panel: Writing for Non-Technical Audiences
2:30 Write-a-thon Expert Review and Mock Interviews
5:00 Collaboration Wall / Book Swap
5:30 Closing Remarks
6:00 Group Photo
6:30 Conference Banquet at Ormbsy's

All events in EBB 1st floor conference room unless stated otherwise.
Breakout Sessions Descriptions (page 8)
Maps (page 4)

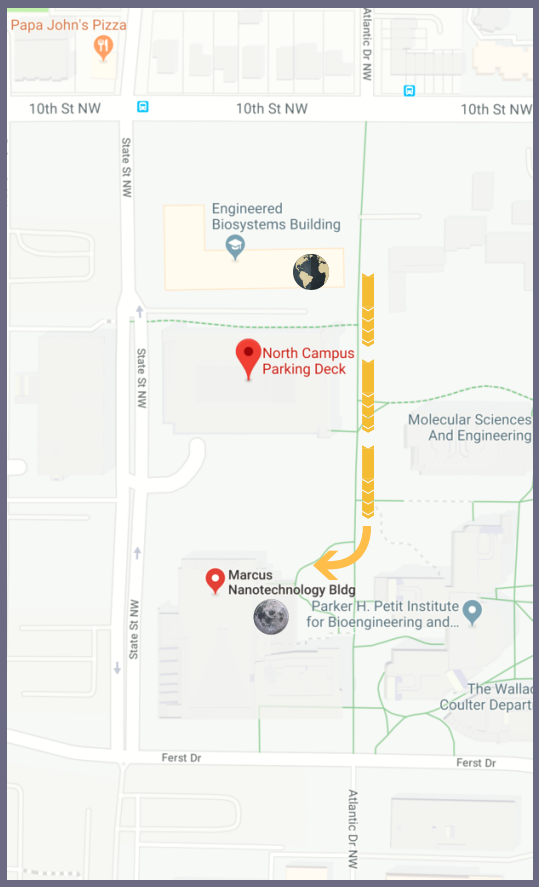
COM.SCI CON ATLANTA

"NOT EXPLAINING SCIENCE,
TO ME, SEEMS PERVERSE.
WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE,
YOU WANT TO TELL THE WORLD."

Carl Sagan



MAP



Engineered Biosystem Building (EBB):
950 Atlantic Dr NW, Atlanta, GA 30332

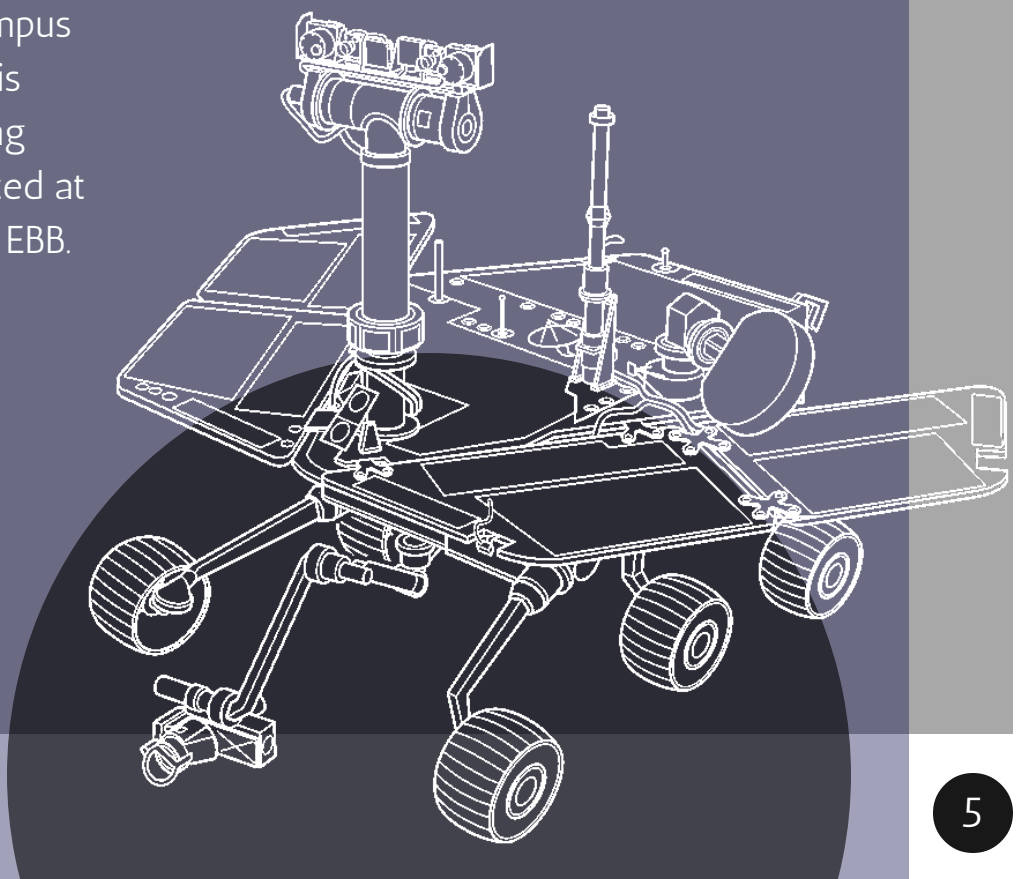
Marcus Nanotechnology Building:
345 Ferst Dr NW, Atlanta, GA 30318

North Campus Parking Deck- W23:
911-935 State St NW, Atlanta, GA 30318

Manuel's Tavern:
602 North Highland Avenue Northeast, Atlanta, GA 30307

Ormsby's:
1170 Howell Mill Rd, Atlanta, GA 30318

Parking at the North Campus Parking Deck (W23) is complimentary. Parking validation will be distributed at the check in table inside EBB.



PANELISTS

Outside of the Box: SciComm in Creative Outlets

Sheila Tefft

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Sheila L. Tefft is a senior lecturer in the Emory University Department of English and specializes in science writing about health and climate change, composition, and multimedia journalism. A reporter, editor and foreign correspondent for almost 25 years, she served as Emory Journalism director from 2000-2009. Prior to joining Emory, she taught journalism and composition courses at Louisiana State University.

Diego Golombek, PhD

@DiegoGolombek

DGOLOMBEK@UNQ.EDU.AR

Diego Golombek is currently Professor at the National University of Quilmes, where he heads the Chronobiology Lab, and Investigator at the National Research Council (CONICET). He has published over 130 scientific papers, many book chapters, about 20 science books for general audiences, as well as produced, scripted and hosted several TV shows. Diego coordinates the National Program for Science Popularization and created the Cultural Center for Science.

Meisa Salaita, PhD

@meisask

meisa@

atlantasciencefestival.org

Meisa is enamored with the beauty of science. Through her work founding and directing the Atlanta Science Festival, she spends her days trying to convince everyone else to fall in love with science as well. To that end, Meisa also writes, has produced radio stories, and hosted tv shows- all in the name of science. Meisa has a Ph.D. in chemistry, has birthed two humans, and requires a shoehorn be present in every room of her house.

Marc Abrahams

@MarcAbrahams

MARC@IMPROBABLE.COM

Marc founded and organizes the Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony held every year at Harvard University. Marc maintains a vast file of improbable research about everything that humans have devised, discovered, or desired. He also edits a magazine called the Annals of Improbable Research (which also manifests itself as a blog, podcast, and video series) and writes for other publications.

The Engaged Scientist: Reaching Out from the Ivory Tower

Manu Platt, PhD

@DrPlattLab

manu.platt

@bme.gatech.edu

Dr. Manu Platt's research centers on proteolytic mechanisms of tissue remodeling. He has received the Georgia Tech Diversity Champion award, Junior Faculty Above and Beyond Award, and the Junior Faculty Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor Award from Georgia Tech. He was recently named an Emerging Scholar by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education magazine, Atlanta 40 under 40 by the Atlanta Business Chronicle, and the Biomedical Engineering Society Diversity Award.

Mar Sanchez, PhD

MMSANCH@EMORY.EDU

Dr. Mar Sanchez studies the neurobiological systems that control stress physiology and emotion regulation. Dr. Sanchez is particularly interested in the effects of early experiences, such as maternal care and social stress, on the development of those brain systems and the psychopathology and pathophysiology of anxiety and mood disorders.

Kim Cobb, PhD

@CoralsNCaves

KIM.COBB@EAS.GATECH.EDU

Dr. Kim Cobb's research uses corals and cave stalagmites to probe the mechanisms of past, present, and future climate change. Kim has sailed on multiple oceanographic cruises to the deep tropics and led caving expeditions to the rainforests of Borneo in support of her research. Kim has received numerous awards for her research, most notably a NSF CAREER Award in 2007, and a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2008.

David Hu, PhD

@DrDavidHu

HU@ME.GATECH.EDU

Dr. David Hu is an assistant professor in Mechanical Engineering and Biology at Georgia Tech, focusing on the biomechanics of animal locomotion. Dr. Hu's research has played a role in educating the public in science and engineering. He has been an invited guest on numerous television and radio shows to discuss his research, including Good Morning America, National Public Radio, The Weather Channel, and Discovery Channel.

WHAT OUR ATTENDEES SAID

I REALLY ENJOYED THE FIRST TWO PANELS. I WAS VERY MOTIVATED BY THE IVORY TOWER PANEL TO GO OUT AND TRY TO DEMONSTRATE MY SCIENCE TO OTHERS, AND THE FIRST PANEL GAVE ME SOME IDEAS ON HOW TO DO JUST THAT!

SciComm in creative outlets pushed me **to think beyond** writing long articles and be creative about how I get my message out to the public.

Meisa Salaita had a really interesting perspective on the connection between art and science and how we might follow the lead of artists in **making science into a cultural experience** that doesn't necessarily teach all of the concepts, but simply exposes the public to science.

Outside of the Box: SciComm in Creative Outlets

Outside of the Box: SciComm in Creative Outlets has inspired me to begin **writing pieces for different media outlets** beyond academic journals.

.THE FIRST TWO PANELS WERE THE MOST IMPACTFUL AND EYE-OPENING FOR ME. HEARING FROM PANELISTS WITH EXTREMELY CREATIVE OUTLETS FOR COMMUNICATING SCIENCE FOLLOWED BY A PANEL DEDICATED TO DISCUSSING THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF BEING AN ENGAGED SCIENTIST REALLY HIT HOME.

I enjoyed "The Engaged Scientist", because I really enjoyed hearing from all four panelists about how we can have a grassroots effect in addition to disseminating our writing. I really clicked with the idea that **one-on-one interactions** can make the difference in how scientists are viewed by the public.

The Engaged Scientist: Reaching Out from the Ivory Tower

The second panel had a profound impact on me and how I view science communication. All of the panelists were clearly doing incredible work and were very experienced, but these panelists particularly were open about the specific challenges each of them faced to get to that place of success. The ways they described using those challenges as tools for outreach and communication was really inspiring. It also seemed to give them **a strong passion and sense of obligation to the public**, an obligation they handle with genuine love and care. They had so many memorable and striking quotes about science advocacy, outreach, and communication. **It has made me re-evaluate what it means to be an engaged scientist.**

The panelists in the Engaged Scientist were stellar. They each had a different perspective and knew how to keep the audience engaged and asking great questions throughout. Wonderful personalities! Really showed that you can be successful by being yourself.

Dr. Manu Platt from Panel 2: The Engaged Scientist. I strongly believe that diversity greatly improves the discourse and regular course of scientific advancement. **The more perspectives and backgrounds, particularly as a way to bridge the gap to the public, is so critical**. I really enjoyed hearing about his experience of telling incredulous people he is a scientist. I enjoy that almost none of us in the room looked like a "typical scientist" (i.e. white male). I thought Dr. Platt's insights and stories were fantastic. Particularly the insight about how doing outreach as an academic at a respected institute (Georgia Tech) helps his outreach clout enormously, as compared to going at it alone and full-time.

I enjoyed all of the panels but I really appreciated "the engaged scientist" because **they talked about issues that I'm struggling with** and will probably continue to struggle with as my career progresses - like how to balance reaching out and making connections with research and career goals.

PANELISTS

The Big Picture: The importance of interdisciplinary collaboration & intersectional thinking

Christopher Parsons

@4chemevolution

christopher.parsons@chemistry.gatech.edu

Christopher Parsons is an American scientist and outreach specialist. He holds degrees in chemistry from the University of Georgia and is presently the Director of Education, Outreach, and Diversity for the NSF/NASA Center for Chemical Evolution. In this role, Christopher addresses gaps in public understanding of science through art-centered programs and media that highlight science in its broader social context.

Deboleena Roy, PhD

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droy2@emory.edu

Deboleena Roy holds a joint faculty position as Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology, and is also Associate Faculty in the Neuroscience Program, Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences at Emory. Her research and scholarship attempt to create shifts from feminist critiques of science to the development of feminist practices that contribute to scientific inquiry in the lab.

Jennifer Leavey, PhD

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jennifer.leavey@cos.gatech.edu

Dr. Jennifer Leavey is the Integrated Science Curriculum Coordinator for the Georgia Tech College of Sciences where she has served as a faculty member in the School of Biological Sciences since 2005. An Atlanta native, she earned her B.S. from Georgia Tech in 1995 and Ph.D. from Emory in 2001. In her spare time, Jennifer fronts Leucine Zipper and the Zinc Fingers, a band that writes bacterial love songs and punk rock anthems about entropy.

David Lynn, PhD

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dlynn2@emory.edu

Dr. David G. Lynn has contributed in the general areas of molecular recognition, synthetic biology and chemical evolution after teaching briefly at the University of Virginia, Cornell University, and University of Chicago, he moved to accept the Asa Griggs Candler Professorship in Chemistry and Biology at Emory University, and in 2002, was awarded one of 20 inaugural Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professorships.

The Bread and Butter Panel: Writing for Non-Technical Audiences

Ian Bogost, PhD

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Dr. Ian Bogost is an author and an award-winning game designer. He is Ivan Allen College Distinguished Chair in Media Studies and Professor of Interactive Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he also holds an appointment in the Scheller College of Business. Bogost is also Founding Partner at Persuasive Games LLC, an independent game studio, and a Contributing Editor at The Atlantic.

Sonya Collins

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Sonya Collins is an independent journalist covering health care, medicine, and biomedical research. She speaks with students, journalists, scientists and science communicators frequently on the topics of health and science writing and reporting, the science journalism profession, building a freelance business, and communicating effectively with the media.

David Terraso

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terradave@gmail.com

Terraso's love of science began in 1983 when he stumbled across Mr. Wizard's World on Nickelodeon. Mr. Wizard showed that science could explain what was happening, how it happened and most importantly why. In addition, it could even be used to predict the future of what is likely to happen. Since then he has spent time as a story teller first in news and then public relations. He's currently a freelance public relations consultant and has recently trying is hand at fiction.

Amy Stone

@healthtwisty

amy@scimedd.com

Amy Stone is a medical and scientific communicator with over 30 years experience. She focuses her work on enabling non-profit and government organizations to achieve their missions through strategic communications, advocacy, partner engagement, and evidence-based content. Stone holds a BA in physiology with a chemistry minor, and a BS in design science,.

WHAT OUR ATTENDEES SAID

I thought that the panel on interdisciplinary collaboration and intersectional thinking was the most memorable part of the conference, for me. These are both things you often hear mentioned in academia/research, but actually being able **to hear what scientists are doing to form collaborations and incorporate big issues like social justice, socioeconomic status, and climate change into research areas** that may not directly be focused on these components was awesome. It's also inspired me to try to look for new ways to get more involved in sharing scientific knowledge with my community/many different publics in a way that is accessible on multiple levels.

The Big Picture: The importance of interdisciplinary collaboration & intersectional thinking

I LOVED THIS PANEL AND THINK THIS IS AN IMPORTANT TOPIC IN SCIENCE. I FEEL THAT ENGAGING IN INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION WOULD MAKE BETTER SCIENCE! THE PANELISTS GAVE SOME THOUGHTFUL ADVICE ON ENGAGING IN DEPARTMENTS OUTSIDE OF YOUR OWN.

The interdisciplinary panel had the greatest impact on me. I really enjoyed the speakers and thought **this sparked the most interesting conversations**. Discussions around intersectional thinking and inclusivity in science have always interested me, and I took a lot away from this presentation in terms of intersecting "humanities" approaches with science/engineering.

It was fascinating In the interdisciplinary panel to hear from folks from a range of backgrounds speaking about the range of hats they wear. But I guess this is also true for a number of the panels!

I got a ton of useful information out of all of the sessions, but especially from The Big Picture. They discussed many different theories and resources that **I plan on using with my students.**

The Bread and Butter Panel: Writing for Non-Technical Audiences

THE BREAD AND BUTTER PANEL PROVIDED THE PRACTICAL ADVICE THAT I WAS CRAVING..

It was interesting to hear the different perspectives on **how to engage with different audiences.**

I was most impacted by The Bread and Butter panel. It was really cool to hear from communicators that were not career scientists. I don't plan on staying in academia, and hearing from these speakers **helped me see ways that I could pursue communication full time** outside of the academy.

Writing for non-technical audiences proved to be most memorable; it had a **high density of useful tips/suggestions.** I also appreciate that we went from this panel into the write-a-thon critiques.

The bread and butter panel was the most impactful. **All of their insight was useful.**

KEYNOTE

ABOUT JOE HANSON, PHD

HOST/WRITER/CREATOR
IT'S OKAY TO BE SMART [PBSDS]

"**Science is my passion**, whether it's writing about it, teaching it, or doing it. I have a broad background in research, education, science advocacy, and communication. These days I make videos about science for my show **"It's Okay To Be Smart" from PBS Digital Studios**, which have been viewed more than 125 million times and attracted 1.8 million+ subscribers. I also regularly write about science for print and digital publications, including Nautilus, Wired, Texas Monthly and Scientific American."

Joe was awesome. Not only did he make good points, but **he was an excellent example.**

HE HAS A POWERFUL MESSAGE AND A GIFT FOR STORYTELLING.

Yes! I thought he was a great, engaging speaker and it was really relatable because he went through a lot of the same difficulties/wanting to do SciComm that goes against the normal "academic grain", so to speak, that a lot of us do. Hearing about his experiences **definitely makes me want to ramp up my involvement during my PhD!**

He was excellent and his statement that **"hope lies where we can counter stories with other stories"** REALLY resonated with me.

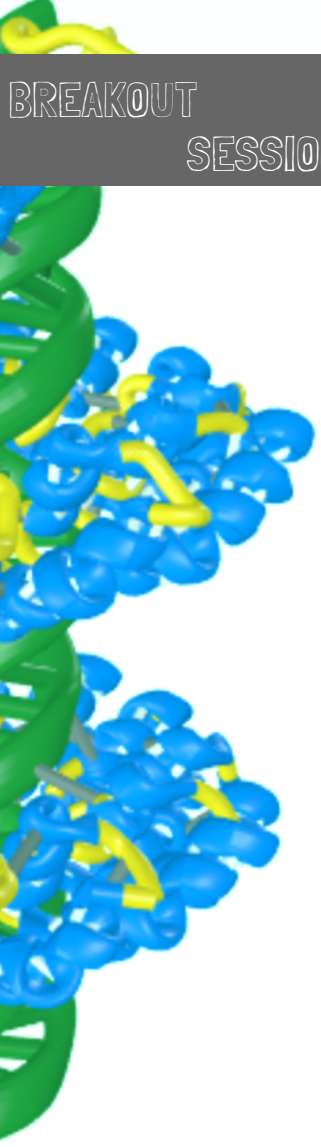
Joe's Digital Story session was so insightful. It's cool to see behind the scenes into the actual process. **That's where the rubber meets the road.**

This was maybe the best part of the workshop. We got to hear directly from a real expert in digital media how his process works, how he got into it, and some of the nuances.

HEARING FROM A PHD WHO HAS MADE A SUCCESSFUL LIVING DOING SOMETHING OTHER THAN ACADEMIA WAS REALLY ENCOURAGING.

On Thursday evening, Joe showed some of his videos and talked about elements of successful digital storytelling.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS



SCIENTIFIC VISUALIZATION: DATA IS BEAUTIFUL

Featuring: Drs. James Gumbart, Nassim JafariNaimi, Nicole Sharp, with support from the Emory TechLab and the Georgia Tech Invention Studio

The Data is Beautiful session (inspired by the sub-reddit group r/Dataisbeautiful) highlights innovative tools that allow for different styles of interpreting and showcasing information. **This interactive workshop illustrates the continuously growing range of platforms of scientific visualization** and how the different modalities cater to different audiences, concepts, and purposes, ie. the longevity and breadth of YouTube videos, the levels of comprehension and engagement in gamification, the scalability of optimizing standard scientific tools for different expertise levels, and so on.

HUMOR IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Featuring: Drs. Pete Ludovice & Lew Lefton

While humor is commonly used to influence and engage people in advertising and marketing (recall your favorite Super Bowl commercials), it is rarely used in science communication. However, **humor can be used with basic principles of persuasion to improve science communication**. Two Georgia Tech faculty, who have spent decades using their experience as comedians to improve technical communication and innovation will show you how, via this interactive workshop. Specifically this workshop will illustrate how humor, and humorous improvisation may be used to effectively (i) prepare science speakers, (ii) produce engaging content and materials, and (iii) deliver those materials.

STORYCENTRIC

Featuring: Janece Shaffer

Knowing your story and being able to articulate that story with confidence and clarity is essential to success. This 90-minute, interactive session will offer a look at **how you can craft impactful, memorable stories** -- how to create a powerful opening and closing, why details make our stories "sticky," and how a "see it, see it, feel it" strategy builds emotion and connection. Participants will have the chance to put theses strategies into action by pairing off and sharing their own stories. Some stories will also be shared with the larger group with coaching from the session presenter – award-winning, nationally produced playwright Janece Shaffer.

I HAVE READ AND TRAVELED AND THOUGHT AND WRITTEN. I HAVE HAD AN INTERCOURSE WITH THE WORLD, THE SPECIAL INTERCOURSE OF WRITERS AND READERS.

OLIVER SACKS

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

DATA IS BEAUTIFUL

James Gumbart, PhD

JCGUMBART@GATECH.EDU

Dr. James Gumbart is an Assistant Professor of Physics at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Dr. Gumbart designs hands-on workshops for college/graduate students and classroom demonstrations for K-12 students, particularly illustrating molecular simulations using VMD Lite, a program designed by Dr. Gumbart's lab specifically to bring molecular viz down to the HS level. Modules featured emphasize free-form questions and self-guided exploration to give students a chance to develop their own curiosity.

Nicole Sharp, PhD

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Dr. Nicole Sharp is an engineer, writer, and science communicator specializing in fluid dynamics. In 2014, she completed her PhD in aerospace engineering at Texas A&M University studying the effects of surface roughness on hypersonic aerodynamics. She earned her Master's degree from Cornell University studying subsonic turbulence and completed her undergraduate degree from Case Western Reserve University, also in aerospace engineering. As a PhD student, she created the popular fluid dynamics blog FYFD, which she now runs full-time.

Nassim JafariNaimi, PhD

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NASSIM@GATECH.EDU

Nassim JafariNaimi is an Assistant Professor at the Digital Media program at Georgia Tech and the director of the Design and Social Interaction Studio, which she established in 2013. Her research explores the ethical and political dimensions of design and technology especially as related to democracy and justice, and spans both theoretical inquiry and experimental design, situated at the intersection of Design Studies, Science and Technology Studies, and Human Computer Interaction.

HUMOR IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Pete Ludovice, PhD

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PETE.LUDOVICE@CHBE.GATECH.EDU

Dr. Pete Ludovice is an Associate Professor of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Georgia Tech. His research activities include the computer simulation of synthetic and biological macromolecules, and the application of humor to enhance technical communication, education, and innovation. He has a B.S. and Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Illinois and M.I.T. respectively.

Lew Lefton, PhD

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Dr. Lew Lefton is a faculty member in the Georgia Tech School of Mathematics and the Assistant Dean of Information Technology for the Georgia Tech College of Sciences. He also has the role of Assistant Vice President for Research Cyberinfrastructure in the EVPR office at Georgia Tech. Lefton is also an accomplished and experienced comedian with over 30 years of experience in stand up and improv comedy.

STORYCENTRIC

Janece Shaffer

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Janece Shaffer is the founder and chief story consultant for StoryCentric, an organization that collaborates with companies and individuals to create impactful stories for professional success. In this role, Shaffer leverages her 25 years of experience as a writer/ content developer/marketer crafting stories in a variety of settings (nonprofit, academic, arts, for-profit) and as a nationally produced, award-winning playwright who has had seven world premiere productions at the Tony Award-winning Alliance Theatre.

DATA IS BEAUTIFUL

An attendee visualizes a protein using an Oculus Rift VR headset.

It was interesting to use the oculus to visualize proteins. I also find the quantum mechanics game quite **fascinating.**

I REALLY ENJOYED THE PANELISTS/SPEAKERS! IT WAS ALSO VALUABLE TO SEE HOW EASY VIRTUAL REALITY AND 3D PRINTING COULD BE IMPLEMENTED.

It was hands-on and engaging. I enjoyed speaking with the associated experts, and loved the physiological data collection. I also liked learning about the different options for the makerspaces.

F*CKING AMAZING. I've been telling everybody about the Data Viz workshop. I loved that several stations had the same theme: See a molecule in VR, then 3d print one, then build one out of atoms in a simulation. The simulation workshop was particularly mind-blowing for me. I also loved being able to spend some time with the panelists.

VERY COOL. THOUGHT PROVOKING.

I enjoyed the Data Viz Playground a lot. The VR was a cool experience, and the VMD space **gave me ideas for my own research.** The Data Viz volunteers were super helpful and engaging.

An attendee watches a video while various devices track her heart rate, perspiration, and eye movements, in a game designed in the Design and Social Interaction Studio at Georgia Tech.

The Data Viz Playground featured 3D printer show and tell, presented by volunteers from the Emory TechLab.

Pretty awesome show and tell. As someone who works with a lot of spatial/georeferenced data, it was cool to see 3D options for displaying data and getting people interested. As a science nerd always cool to see how other people present their work, too!

An attendee holds a 3D printed jawbone.

STORYCENTRIC

Awesome awesome awesome. She gave personalized advice that also helped all of us. She was engaging. Very lively.

IT WAS FANTASTIC. JANECE IS CLEARLY A MASTER.

This was my favorite part of ComSciCon (other than just meeting everyone!). It made me realize **what parts of a story are essential** and what parts are not.

I loved it! She did a great job leading the group and explaining **how to bring out details** in our story.

Attendees told increasingly shorter versions of a story to each other under the guidance of Janece Shaffer from StoryCentric (center).

It was absolutely fantastic. I really enjoyed Janece's method and while I felt a little out of my comfort zone, I think the storytelling method is really important to communicating science. **I actually felt that it almost immediately made me a better public speaker for the conference.**

I thought this workshop was very valuable! They offered an informative introduction, specific tips, and interactivity all in one session-- this made it engaging, challenging, and **I walked away with things I could directly apply** in my next science communication experience.

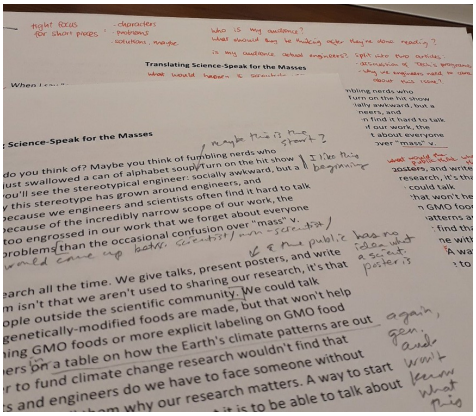
HUMOR IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

I TOOK THE MOST NOTES ON THIS PANEL/WORKSHOP. IT WAS VERY WELL RUN WITH A LOT OF TAKE AWAY POINTS AND MESSAGES.

This workshop was so much better than I thought it was going to be! I'll admit, after hearing that Georgia Tech professors were also comedians, my expectations weren't very high. But both of these professors were so welcoming, not to mention very funny. They made everyone feel like they could be humorous, and **gave us real, tangible things that we could do to incorporate humor into our work.** Not only that, but they explained why that might be useful, and used fun, engaging exercises throughout the workshop. **10/10, would recommend.**

Dr. Lew Lefton (left) and Dr. Pete Ludovice (right) review the basics of humor with attendees.

I think it was great. I loved the improv exercises, learning to loosen up in preparing to communicate science. I like that it didn't focus so much on "yuk yuk humor" but in **simply seeing the humor in normal events** and concepts and the idea that you can share your science in that light.



Tweeted by Natasha Jane @chrisandium "The best part of #ComSciConATL : writing reviews "

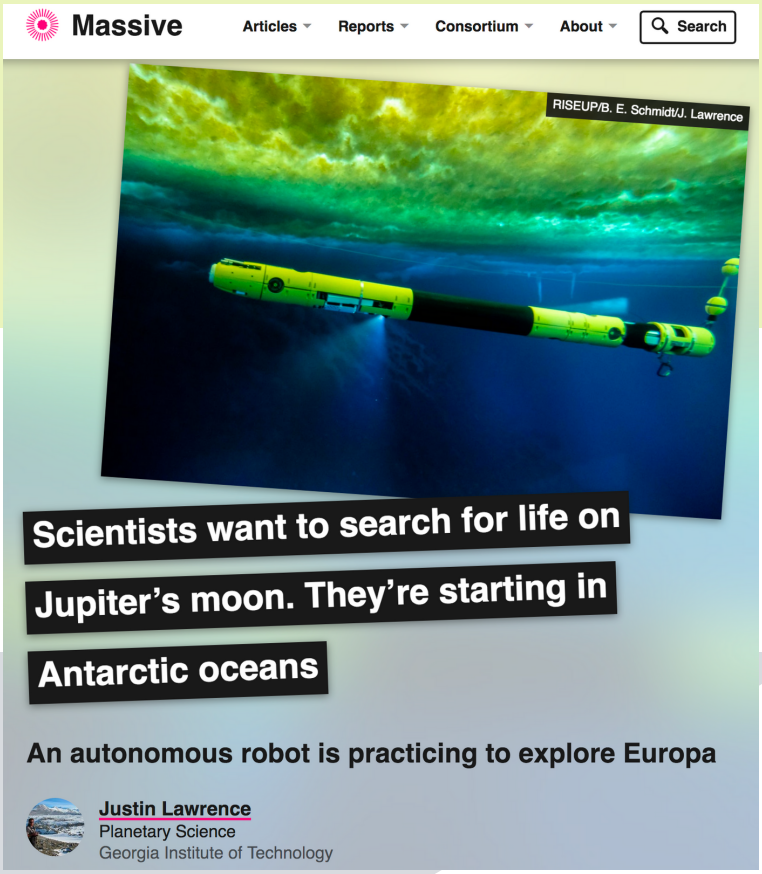
I found my reviewer incredibly helpful and he gave attention and **thoughtful feedback** to each of us in a way I wasn't expecting.

Amy Stone was so nice and obviously put a lot of time and effort into reviewing our pieces. She gave us **tangible tips** on what to do next, and was very encouraging. **This was my favorite part of the ComSciCon.**

Dr. Bogost was very helpful in describing how I could **make a cohesive story** and how to think about the big picture within a piece, rather than just writing out the information in a logical way.

Amanda Gables was very helpful and nice. That was my first time writing a comm piece so I was worried about someone being too harsh on me but it was a **good mix of criticism and support.**

WRITE-A-THON



One attendee has pitched and published his write-a-thon piece with the Massive Writing Consortium. After publication, it was syndicated by Quartz. Read it here: https://bit.ly/2ITDtnQ

MOCK INTERVIEWS

I didn't know what to expect in the mock interview, and then once I did it, I realized how much I need to work on my ability to concisely and clearly state my research goals and efforts. **This session actually helped me to prepare for my talk a week later to middle school students.**

So helpful!!!! I love mock interviews. **They put us on the spot** and we get to see how even little fidgety motions are amplified on camera. So useful!!!!!

Very fun and useful. I've been on TV a few times, but never got feedback except from the always-positive producers and always-positive family and friends. **This is also something I've been telling people about as a 'supercool' part of ComSciCon.**

Doing mock interviews was extremely useful. I honestly had no clue what to expect and was really nervous to be told that I was going to be filmed, but in the end it was a good experience. **I learned some valuable lessons on how journalists work and how to stick to my story as a researcher.** It also provided valuable practice on explaining my work in general terms and connecting it to applications that are appealing to "anyone walking down the street."

GENERAL ATTENDEE FEEDBACK

I'VE BEEN TELLING EVERYONE I KNOW THAT IT WAS THE MOST USEFUL CONFERENCE I'VE EVER BEEN TO. I LOVED IT. EVERYTHING WAS ENGAGING.

It was really great to meet other graduate students interested in SciComm. This is such a valuable workshop and needs to continue. **It made me feel like I found my scientific voice!**

Throughout the workshop, attendees shared ideas for new scicomm projects on the Collaboration Wall.

I TRULY ENJOYED THE WORKSHOP AND LEFT FEELING BOTH EMPOWERED AND INSPIRED.

Attendees look through the Collaboration Wall at the end of the conference.

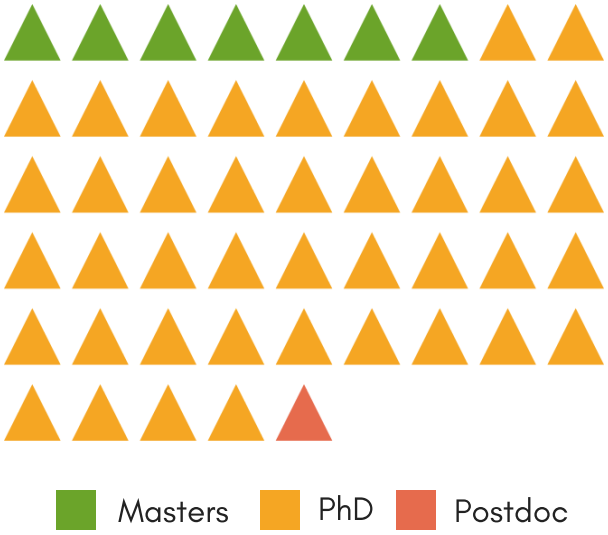
THE BOOK SWAP WAS GENIUS.

The workshop ended with an attendee science book swap. Above, attendees can't keep their hands off the books during a lunch break!

My main take-aways from the conference ended up being reminders that **science is cool- I have forgotten some of that while in the trenches with my PhD work**- and that I know things about science. Those were not things I was expecting to having stick out during the conference, but these reminders were really impactful.

An attendee gives his pop talk, a 60-second lay-person summary of his research.

ATTENDEE GRADUATE PROGRAM



ATTENDEE SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE

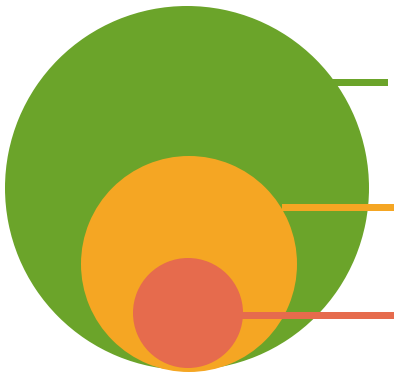
GEOGRAPHICALLY SPEAKING...

Our attendees came from institutions in...

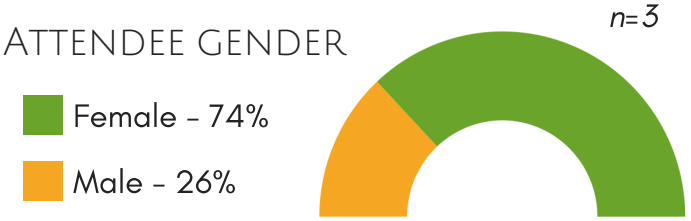
- Southeast U.S.
- Georgia
- Atlanta

A list of all universities and specific disciplines represented can be found on page 18.

ATTENDEE FIELD



ATTENDEE GENDER



ATTENDEE IMPROVEMENT

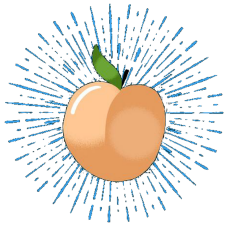
The data below are based on attendee pre- and post-workshop surveys.

100% **would recommend** ComSciCon-Atlanta to their colleagues

55% reported that they felt more confident in their abilities to communicate **with the public**

53% reported that they felt more confident in their abilities to communicate **with the other scientists**

57% reported that they felt more confident in their abilities to **pitch a story to a popular science outlet**



We were honored to have the following graduate students as the attendees at the inaugural ComSciCon-Atlanta in March 2018.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	UNIVERSITY	FIELD	EMAIL	TWITTER
Andrews	Brooke	Emory	Chemistry	brooke.andrews@emory.edu	@baandrews1993
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Bivins	Aaron	GT	CEE	aaron.bivins@gmail.com	@water_REP
Bizzell	Erica	Emory	Biology	erica.bizzell@gmail.com	@E_Bizzell
Bozeman	Bryan	UGA	Biology	bryanbozeman@uga.edu	@bbozeman7
Bradford	Heather	UGA	Biology	heather.bradford25@uga.edu	@HelenSiaw
Carter	Mackenzie	UGA	BME	mackenziecarter@uga.edu	-
Castillo	Stephanie	Vanderbilt	Chemistry	stephanie.castillo@vanderbilt.edu	@phuturedoctors
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Daniels	Emily	GT	CEE	edaniels8@gatech.edu	-
Davidson	Audra	GT	Neuroscience	davidson.audra@gatech.edu	-
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Freytes-Ortiz	Ileana	USF	Biology	freytesortiz@mail.usf.edu	@UnCafeConJose
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Guitard	Michelle	USF	EAS	mguitard@mail.usf.edu	@mgmakai
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Kemp	Alexandra	ERAU	Aero. Eng.	alexandrackemp@gmail.com	@singsinthestars
Landis	Erica	Emory	Neuroscience	elandis@emory.edu	@ericainthelab
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Sgro	Lauren	UGA	Physics	lsgro2013@gmail.com	-
Shaw	Daniel	UGA	Biology	Daniel.Shaw@uga.edu	-
Shishkov	Olga	GT	Mech. Eng.	olga.shishkov@gatech.edu	@o_shishk
Siaw	Helen	Emory	Chemistry	hsiaw@emory.edu	-
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Smith	Rachel	UGA	Biology	Rssmith218@gmail.com	@Rssmith218
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Theis	Mallory	Emory	Chemistry	mtheis@emory.edu	-
White	Signe	Emory	Biology	pswhite@emory.edu	@TheRealSigWhite
Williams	Evelyn	Emory	BME	ewilliams42@gatech.edu	@hlbradford1990

BME Biomedical Engineering
EAS Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
CEE Civil & Environmental Engineering
FSU Florida State University
GSU Georgia State University
GT Georgia Tech
UGA University of Georgia
UTK University of Tennessee at Knoxville
USF University of South Florida
ERAU Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Worldwide (Marietta Campus)

THANKS AGAIN, AND SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

As I hope you have gathered from this report, we consider this initial ComSciCon-Atlanta a tremendous success. If you have any questions about this report or about ComSciCon in general, please do not hesitate to reach out! The organization email address is comsciconatl@gmail.com; you can also reach me directly at laura.g.mast@gatech.edu.

Cheers,
Laura Mast
Lead Organizer, ComSciCon-Atlanta 2018

The ComSciCon-Atlanta 2018 Organizers (left to right):

Dr. Kellie Vinal
Emory University
Microbiology & Molecular Genetics

Laura Mast
Georgia Institute of Technology
Environmental Engineering

Carleenmae Sabusap
University of Alabama at Birmingham
Pathobiology and Molecular Medicine

Anzar Abbas
Emory University
Neuroscience

The second annual ComSciCon-Atlanta will be hosted at Emory University and is tentatively scheduled for February 2019.

COM SCI CON ATLANTA

Let's talk science

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