

BarCamp Texas “Unconference” To Be Held in B/CS

By JENNIFER MADDOX

Recently, the technology industry has been thriving in Bryan/College Station. Therefore, it was only a matter of time before our area would play host to a state-wide tech gathering. The Creative Space, a collaborative workspace of local tech professionals, will be hosting BarCamp Texas on January 26th and 27th in downtown Bryan.

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- Cody Marx Bailey

“We wanted to host BarCamp Texas here to change the misconception that the Research Valley lacks technology and innovation,” said Ryan Plesko, co-founder of The Creative Space. Furthermore, Plesko said, Bryan/College Station is centrally-located between Houston, Dallas, and Austin, so hosting the event here made sense.

BarCamp is an international network of user-generated conferences that include discussions, demos, and interaction from participants. Since the first BarCamp took place in Palo Alto, California in August of 2005, there have been BarCamps all over the world from Auckland to Bangalore.

BarCamp is one of several gatherings that follow an emerging trend in the tech industry called “unconferences”. The popularity of this trend can be attributed to its unique format. These industry gatherings are typically inexpensive, informal, and often planned with little advance. Rather than have topics chosen by sponsors, participants get to decide what will be discussed.

“BarCamp doesn’t have a set schedule of speaking sessions,” said Plesko. “Sessions are proposed through the wiki on BarCampTexas.com and scheduled the day of the event using a large, gridded whiteboard. The schedule-on-the-fly and ‘unconference’ characteristics provide a relaxed atmosphere for sharing. It’s a great place for idea and experience sharing with other great people.”

The Creative Space Co-Founder Cody Marx Bailey explained that BarCamps, as attendees

are called, are encouraged to present and interact throughout the conference. “You don’t have to be an expert on a subject. Just bringing it up can generate ideas and connections to other campers,” he said.

There are notable individuals from the tech community scheduled to appear including Ed Schipul, CEO and president of Schipul – The Web Marketing Company, and Marc Nathan, founder of Bulldog Financial. Not only will BarCamp Texas attract individuals from all over the state, there are speakers and attendees planning to come in from out of state as well – and not everyone is a techie.

“There are some awesome networking opportunities,” said Bill Erickson, also a co-founder of The Creative Space. “So many different types of people attend these events – not just designers, developers, and programmers. I’ve met up with angel investors, venture capitalists, attorneys, and other entrepreneurs.”

The event is free to attend and will be sponsored by Fibertown, Linux Journal, the Research Valley Partnership, and the Research Valley Innovation Center. ■

TEXAS
barcamp
January 26 - 27, 2007
Downtown Bryan, TX
It's Free!

For more information:
www.barcamp texas.com
www.barcamp.org