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Georgia Tech aims to drive Cell processor research

By Ann Steffora Mutschler, Senior Editor -- Electronic News, 5/31/2007

To focus on applications for the Cell Broadband Engine (B.E.) processor including gaming, virtual reality, home entertainment, tools and programmability and high performance scientific and technical computing, the **College of Computing** at Atlanta-based **Georgia Tech** said today it will host the Georgia Tech Cell Broadband Engine (Cell/B.E.) Processor Workshop on June 18 and 19.

The workshop will be held at the Klaus Advanced Computing Building on Georgia Tech's campus.

David A. Bader, associate professor and executive director of high-performance computing in the College of Computing at Georgia Tech said in a statement, "The Cell/B.E. processor represents the future of computing using heterogeneous multi-core processors, and we are proud to help drive the continued advancement of computationally-intensive applications that will directly impact the global growth of our industry and evolution of our society."

IBM's Cell/B.E. processor contains a central processing core, based on Big Blue's Power Architecture technology, and eight synergistic processors.

The company says that the processor "supercharges" compute-intensive applications, allowing fast performance for computer entertainment and handhelds, virtual-reality, wireless downloads, real-time video chat, interactive TV shows and other image-hungry computing environments.

The processor was created through a collaboration of **IBM**, **Sony**, **Sony Computer Entertainment** (SCEI) and **Toshiba**.

The College of Computing also said that it is one of the first universities to deploy the IBM BladeCenter QS20 Server for production use, which uses the same Cell/B.E. processor that powers products such as SCEI's PLAYSTATION 3 computer entertainment system, and Toshiba's Cell Reference Set, a development tool for Cell/B.E. applications.

The Georgia Tech said its installation includes a cluster of 28 Cell/B.E. processors in 14 blades and supports the operation of Cell-optimized multi-core applications in areas such as digital content creation, gaming and entertainment, security, scientific and technical computing, biomedicine, and finance.

Georgia Tech will grant users access on the cluster to test drive the Cell/B.E. processor and support ISVs that develop products and tools for the Cell/B.E. processor. The Georgia Tech Cell/B.E. processor installation will use Altair Engineering's PBS Professional job scheduling software that increases the utilization of the IBM Blade Center QS20, the company added.

Bader directs the **STI Cell Center of Competence at Georgia Tech**, which has a mission to grow the community of Cell/B.E. processor users and developers by performing research and service in support of the Cell/B.E. processor, and further equip students at the College to grow their skills and experience around Cell/B.E. technology to apply in future career opportunities.

Also, the university says that the Center will sponsor discussion forums and workshops, provide remote access to Cell/B.E processor based blade hardware installed at Georgia Tech, create and disseminate software optimized for Cell/B.E. processor based systems, and perform research on the

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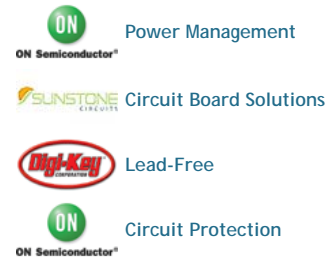
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design of Cell/B.E. processor based systems, algorithms, and applications.

A collaboration with SCEI, Toshiba and IBM supports the Center's activities and research efforts in support of broadening the Cell/B.E. processor's impact into multiple sectors and industries, including scientific computing, digital content creation, bioinformatics, finance, gaming and entertainment, the companies noted.

Speakers at the event include Bijan Davari, IBM Fellow and VP for next generation computing systems and technology; Dominic Mallinson, VP of U.S. R&D for Sony Computer Entertainment; and Yoshio Masubuchi, general manager for the broadband system LSI development center at Toshiba's semiconductor company.

The **workshop** is sponsored by Sony Computer Entertainment, Toshiba and IBM.



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