**IT FUTURES SUMMIT 2018**

**Blockchain Technology**

**Presentation Preview: Maricel Medina-Mora, Faculty for**

**Institute of Business and Information Technology**

**Bellevue College, Bellevue, Washington**

The North American Bitcoin Conference

[A part of World Blockchain Forum: Investments & ICOs](https://btcmiami.com/)

January 18th-19th 2018

Attended by Maricel Medina-Mora, Bellevue College

Pioneers in the industry of Bitcoin led the sixth annual North American Bitcoin Conference. More than 3,000 professionals gathered at James L. Knight Convention Center, Miami, Florida, to learn about cryptocurrencies, new companies and products, investment opportunities or just to educate themselves about the disruptive technology. As an educator, I was part of this last group, interested in learning about the different technologies, terminology, and innovation.

The conferenced itself was a full day of “Pitch sessions” and Keynotes, with a panel and an interview each day. The pitch sessions gave the opportunity to emerging companies to present their product, whitepaper, business and financial model, underneath technology, and in most of the case, the release of their Initial Coin Offering (ICO).

The diversity in products and nationalities was impressive as it really represented a global movement. Some of the products were in initial stages, while other products have been in the market already.

Regarding the presenters, the conference provided also a diversity in fields, and leading companies. From the founder of Salesforce, Halsey Minor, to leaders in Economics such Jeffery Tucker from the American Institute for Economic Research, the conference provided enough information in each field to get a sense of the implications of Blockchain across the markerts. The speakers are considered leaders from the world of FinTech, innovators and decision makers. Unfortunately, only one woman was part of the speakers among 22 main speakers.

Definitively, the conference provides a preview of how this industry is moving toward the future, and is definitively creating their own ecosystems. As faculty, we have the responsibility to transfer knowledge and technologies, and prepare the students to potential opportunities.

# Presentation

The many challenges in the industry and the willingness to remove intermediaries led to the creation of Bitcoin. The pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto created Bitcoin, however the underlying technology go back to the late 80s. Bitcoin was created by combining different technologies. Bitcoin is used in two ways: as a decentralized financial network and as a digital commodity (Cryptocurrency).

As we think about Cryptocurrencies as money, it is important to consider computing architecture. Originally, we had decentralized computers, "human beings", as shown on the "Hidden Figures" movie. Eventually, a centralized mainframe replaced people. A decentralized client servers replaced those centralized mainframes. In the earlier 2000, we decided to centralize functions in the cloud. Now, the Blockchain is able to use cheaper resources from around the world and create a decentralized network. For the first time, people can run software and get paid. This set up a new model of computing. In the case of Bitcoin, you will compete in the cost of electricity and it is believed that this “*new model will disrupt the big cloud companies such Amazon and AWS that currently charge based on the resources allocated on the cloud (Halsey Minor, Salesforce Founder)*”.

Considering that this model is already getting momentum, it is important to get the fundamentals of the technology and look for opportunities to educate the students about what is available in an agnostic perspective.

The presentation will cover the following topics:

* History of Bitcoin and Blockchain: 2008-Present
* The three core values: Trust + Transparency and Infrastructure
* The Age of ICOs
* Business Model: Idea + Whitepaper + ICO
* Bitcoin 101:
  + What is Bitcoin?
  + What is Bitcoin Mining?
  + How to trade Bitcoins?
* Blockchain 101
  + What is Blockchain?
  + What platforms are leading the development?
  + Blockchain-Enabled Use Cases: From healthcare to education
* Implications in IT Curriculum Design and Instruction

**Conference Video Presentations**

* Halsey Minor CNET/UPHOLD: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiWdJimCBFI>
* Patrick Byrne TO.COM/CO-FONDER & CEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cfeo3JTPqy4>
* Jeffrey Tucker, American Institute for Economic Research | Editorial Director: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9YPiKrsaHU>