



## *Spring News from the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence*

### AAAI Announces New Senior Members!

AAAI congratulates the following individuals on their election to AAAI Senior Member status.

**Yigal Arens** (USC Information Sciences Institute, USA)

**Wingyan Chung**

**Yun Fu** (Northeastern University, USA)

**Kobi Gal** (Ben-Gurion University, Israel and University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom)

**Nick Hawes** (University of Oxford, United Kingdom)

**Lane A. Hemaspaandra** (University of Rochester, USA)

**Balaraman Ravindran** (Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, India)

**Paolo Remagnino** (Kingston University, United Kingdom)

**Biplav Srivastava** (IBM, USA)

**Pradeep Varakantham** (Singapore Management University, Singapore)

**Fusun Yaman** (BBN Technologies, USA)

**Hankz Hankui Zhuo** (Sun Yat-Sen University, China)

This honor was announced at the recent AAAI-20 Conference in New York, NY, USA. Senior Member status is designed to recognize AAAI members who have achieved significant accomplishments within the field of artificial intelligence. To be eligible for nomination for Senior Member, candidates must be consecutive members of AAAI for at least five years and have been active in

the professional arena for at least ten years.

### Congratulations to the 2020 AAAI Award Winners!

Yolanda Gil, AAAI President, Rao Kambhampati, AAAI Past President and Awards Committee Chair, and Bart Selman, AAAI President-Elect, presented the AAAI Awards in February at AAAI-20 in New York.

#### Henry Kautz Receives 2020 AAAI Distinguished Service Award and the Robert S. Englemore Memorial Award

Each year AAAI recognizes an individual for extraordinary service to the AI community. The AAAI Awards Committee is pleased to announce that the 2020 recipient is Henry Kautz (University of Rochester, USA), who was recognized for his significant contributions to the field of artificial intelligence through sustained service to the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence and the furtherance of the field as a researcher, mentor and NSF IIS director. A special posthumous award also honored Alan Schultz (Naval Research Laboratory, USA) (please see separate announcement).

Kautz was also awarded the annual Robert S. Englemore Award for outstanding research contributions in the area of knowledge representation, data analytics, and data mining of social media for public good. The Robert S. Englemore Award and accompanying lecture was established in 2003 to honor Dr. Robert S. Englemore's extraordinary service to AAAI,

and the AI applications community, and his contributions to applied AI. Kautz presented his award lecture, entitled The Third AI Summer, at AAAI-20 in New York, exploring the scientific, social, and geopolitical forces at play in the third AI summer. The RSE award is sponsored by IAAI and the *AI Magazine*.

Henry Kautz is currently serving as director for the division for Information & Intelligent Systems at the National Science Foundation. He is a professor of computer science and founding director of the Goergen Institute for Data Science at the University of Rochester. He has been a researcher at AT&T Bell Labs in Murray Hill, NJ, and a full professor at the University of Washington, Seattle. In 2010, he was elected President of AAAI, and in 2016 was elected Chair of the AAAS Section on Information, Computing, and Communication. His interdisciplinary research includes practical algorithms for solving worst-case intractable problems in logical and probabilistic reasoning; models for inferring human behavior from sensor data; pervasive healthcare applications of AI; and social media analytics. In 1989 he received the IJCAI Computers & Thought Award, which recognizes outstanding young scientists in artificial intelligence, and 30 years later received the 2018 ACM-AAAI Allen Newell Award for career contributions that have breadth within computer science and that bridge computer science and other disciplines.

#### 2020 Classic Paper Award

The 2020 AAAI Classic Paper Award was given to the author of the paper deemed most influential from the

## Congratulations to the 2020 AAAI Fellows!

Each year a small number of fellows are recognized for their unusual distinction in the profession and for their sustained contributions to the field for a decade or more. An official dinner and ceremony were held in their honor during AAAI-20 in New York, New York.

**Yoshua Bengio** (Université de Montréal, Canada)

For foundational contributions to development of deep neural networks, scientific leadership in Canada, and service to the AI community.

**Cynthia Breazeal** (MIT Media Lab, USA)

For foundational contributions to the field of socially interactive robots.

**William T. Freeman** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Google Research, USA)

For significant contributions to computer vision and machine learning, especially the development of steerable filters, belief propagation, and motion re-rendering.

**Yann LeCun** (New York University, USA)

For significant contributions to deep learning, neural networks, and image recognition, including the introduction of convolutional neural networks.

**Radhika Nagpal** (Harvard University, USA)

For significant contributions to collective intelligence, especially self-organizing systems, including novel robotics and foundational theory.

**Natasha Noy** (Google, USA)

For significant contributions to semantic web and ontology-development research, and for distinguished service to the community.

**Martha Palmer** (University of Colorado Boulder, USA)

For significant contributions to natural language processing and knowledge representation, including widely-used corpora of annotated structures in several languages.

**Dragomir Radev** (Yale University, USA)

For significant contributions to natural language processing and computational linguistics, and development of widely used techniques in text summarization, question answering, and education.

**Thomas Schiex** (Institut National de Recherche pour l'Agriculture, l'Alimentation et l'Environnement, France)

For significant contributions to the theory and algorithms of constraint-based reasoning and to their applications in computational biology.

**Sylvie Thiébaux** (The Australian National University, Australia)

For significant contributions to algorithms and applications of planning and scheduling, and service to the AI community.

Nineteenth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence, held in 2004 in San Jose, California, USA. The 2020 recipient of the AAAI Classic Paper Award is as follows:

**QUICKXPLAIN: Preferred Explanations and Relaxations for Over-Constrained Problems** by Ulrich Junker

The author was honored for developing an influential approach for formalizing and efficiently computing user-preferred failure explanations in over-constrained problems.

Ulrich Junker presented an accompanying invited talk, entitled *The QuickXplain Story: How to Compute Explanations for Over-Constrained Problems?*, during AAAI-20. His talk revisited the basic ideas, discussed improvements, and highlighted some applications because the publication of QuickXplain at AAAI 2004, which paved new ways for explanation detection and led to methods that work with arbitrary constraint solvers while guaranteeing the minimality of explanations.

Ulrich Junker received his Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Kaiserslautern in 1992. His long-term research interests include the study of preference handling and explanation generation for problem solving. He helped to establish a working group on advances in preference handling and serves as its coordinator. Ulrich has worked as a scientist at GMD and IFP before joining ILOG in 1995, which was acquired by IBM in 2009. In these roles, he has developed AI software on a variety of topics covering nonmonotonic logic, model-based diagnosis, qualitative reasoning, combinatorial optimization, configuration, and rule analysis.

### AAAI/EAAI 2020 Outstanding Educator Award

The AAAI/EAAI Outstanding Educator was established in 2016 to recognize a person (or group of people) who has (have) made major contributions to AI education that provide long-lasting benefits to the AI community. Examples might include innovating teaching methods, providing service to the AI education community, generating pedagogical resources, designing curricula, and educating students outside of higher education venues (or the general

## COVID-19 Pandemic Response

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we want to provide you with an update on our ongoing efforts to continue assisting AAAI members while also protecting the health and safety of our staff and volunteer leaders. Despite the current challenges facing all of us, AAAI is committed to remaining connected to our members, authors, volunteers, and the greater AI community. The AAAI staff in Palo Alto, California has, since March 17, been working remotely as a result of both regional and state-wide shelter-in-place orders. Nevertheless, we anticipate no interruption in membership services, and will continue to move all ongoing programs and publications forward as well.

AAAI has suspended all physical meetings and conferences through June 2020, including the Spring Symposium Series and the ICWSM-20 Conference. In most cases, the AAAI Spring Symposia have been colocated with the Fall Symposium Series in Arlington, Virginia, later this year. In some cases, a virtual meeting took place instead or in addition to fall sessions. The June ICWSM-20 conference has been converted to a virtual conference. For information on registration and participation details, please consult [www.icwsm.org/2020](http://www.icwsm.org/2020).

Although delays are possible, members will continue to receive *AI Magazine* in print and electronic form, and publications will continue to be posted in the AAAI Digital Library. We encourage you to check your email for upcoming AAAI announcements, such as the Spring election of AAAI Executive Council Members and President-Elect.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at [membership20@aaai.org](mailto:membership20@aaai.org).

We send our best wishes to everyone to stay safe and healthy.

Carol Hamilton  
Executive Director



## Special Posthumous Distinguished Service Award Honors Alan Schultz

AAAI is pleased to announce a special posthumous Distinguished Service Award in honor of Alan Schultz for his significant contributions to the field of artificial intelligence through sustained service to the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence and the furtherance of the field as an organizer, researcher, and mentor.

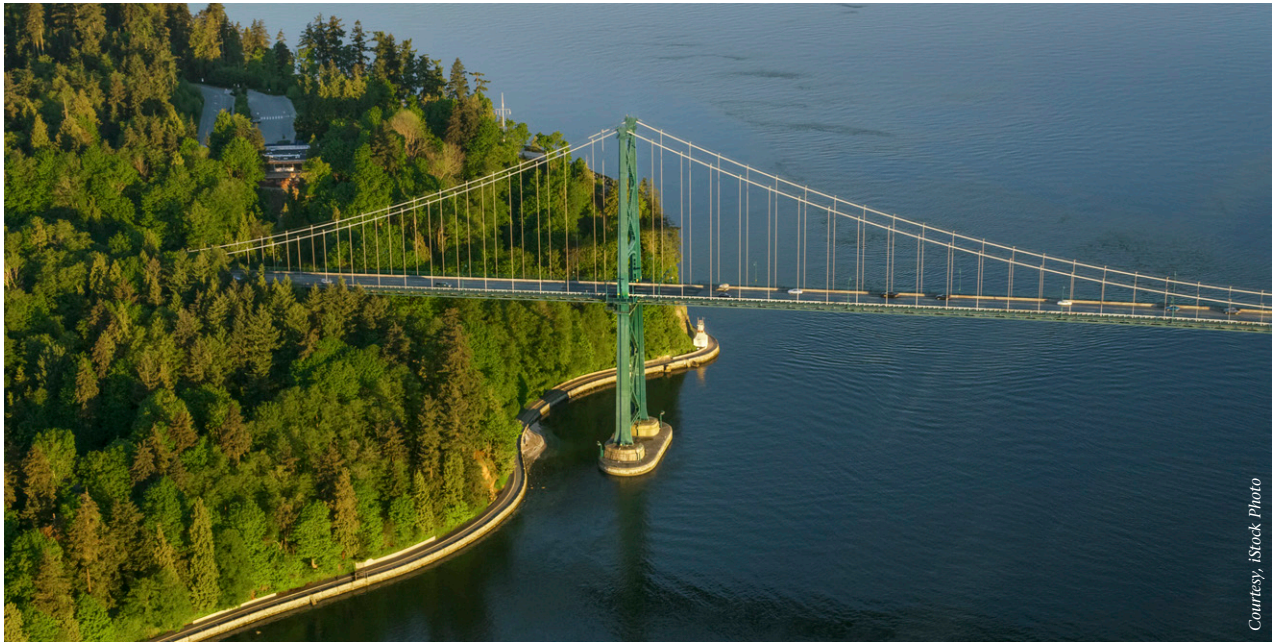
Alan C. Schultz graduated from American University in Washington, D.C. with a B.A. in print journalism in 1979. Realizing that his talents lay elsewhere, he joined the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory's (NRL) Navy Center for Applied Research in Artificial Intelligence (NCARAI) in 1986, and received his M.S. in Computer Science from George Mason University in 1988. He advanced to become the Head of the Intelligent Systems Section, and eventually his research in Artificial Intelligence earned him the directorship of the AI Center in 2006, which he maintained to his retirement in 2018.

Schultz's research focused on what has become known as *adjustable autonomy*. He formed NRL's first Robotics Lab, drawing together researchers from many different disciplines, such as robotics, cognitive modeling, natural language processing, and machine learning. As a result of this work, Alan was asked to be a Visiting Research Scientist in the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. His affiliation there and his position at NRL led to several advances in adjustably autonomous robotics systems. One of NRL's early robots, Coyote, was featured in an Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) Mobile Robot competition held in 1997. Coyote interacted with conference attendees, served hors d'oeuvres, and won First Place. In 2002, the robot GRACE, a collaboration of government, academia, and industry, self-navigated through a convention center, interactively registering and navigating to a conference hall. GRACE won the Judge's Award for Human-Computer Interaction, the Judge's Award for Robustness in Recovery from Action and Localization Errors, as well as the Ben Wegbreit Award for Integration of AI Technologies.

Over the years, Schultz continued to serve as director of NCARAI and was asked to be the first director of NRL's Laboratory for Autonomous Systems Research (LASR). It opened in March 2012 as a 50,000 square foot facility supporting basic and applied research in autonomous systems. He directed its design, construction, and eventual maintenance to support fundamental and applied research.

With his years of experience as a research scientist, a section head, branch head, and as director of two world-class research facilities at NRL, he received 20 Navy Special Achievement awards, producing over 200 publications. He was selected to teach at the first Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Robotics and Automations Society Summer School on Human-Robot Interaction. While Schultz made great strides in advancing the science of artificial intelligence, his true avocation was in mentoring young researchers. Yearly, the robotics laboratory at NRL was filled with men and women from various high schools, colleges, and universities from around the country. Their work not only furthered existing research at NRL, but led them to pursue careers of their own upon graduation. Many of his interns have gone on to stellar research positions in the various areas of Artificial Intelligence today. For several years, Schultz was instrumental in having NRL sponsor AAAI symposia, with him conducting annual kick-off workshops that focused on the ways and means of obtaining government funding.

As a research scientist, manager, director, and mentor, Alan C. Schultz excelled as a key figure and a dynamic force shaping research in AI nationally and internationally for over three decades. While he succumbed in his personal battle with pancreatic cancer in 2019, Alan Schultz will continue to be an intellectual beacon, inspiring researchers young and old in the various fields of artificial intelligence.



## Join Us in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada for AAAI-21, IAAI-21, and EAAI-21!

The Thirty-Fifth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-21), the Thirty-Third Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence (IAAI-21), and the Eleventh Symposium on Educational Advances in Artificial Intelligence will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, February 2-9, 2021.

The schedule in 2021 will follow a different pattern than in past years. While the technical conference will continue its 4-day schedule, it will be preceded by the tutorial program (one day only), the Doctoral Consortium, and the Undergraduate Consortium. The AAAI-21 Workshop Program will follow the main program on February 9.

AAAI-21 will be held at the Vancouver Convention Centre. Located on Vancouver's downtown waterfront with a dramatic mountain backdrop, the award-winning Vancouver Convention Centre offers one of the most beautiful settings in the world. The center is steps away from hotels, restaurants, and all the entertainment, retail, and nightlife that the city offers.

Voted as one of the Best City in the Americas year after year, Vancouver is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the soaring peaks of the North Shore Mountains. With the convention center and Vancouver as home base, you will be well positioned to explore this unique region. Seaplanes, helicopters, ferries and cruise ships are just minutes away.

Discover attractions like Victoria — British Columbia's capital — and the scenic Gulf Islands. Take a leisurely drive up the Sea-to-Sky Highway to Whistler, one of North America's top ski resorts, sample the award-winning vintages of the Okanagan wine country, or travel the Alaskan coastline. For complete information about options in Vancouver, please visit [www.tourismvancouver.com](http://www.tourismvancouver.com).

The 2021 Call for Papers will be available soon at [www.aaai.org/aaai21](http://www.aaai.org/aaai21).

*[www.aaai.org/aaai21](http://www.aaai.org/aaai21)*

## AAAI Issues First Call for Nominations for the AAAI Squirrel AI Award

The AAAI Squirrel AI Award for Artificial Intelligence for the Benefit of Humanity recognizes positive impacts of artificial intelligence to protect, enhance, and improve human life in meaningful ways with long-lived effects. The award will be given annually at the conference for the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI), and is accompanied by a prize of \$1,000,000 plus travel expenses to the conference. Financial support for the award is provided by Squirrel AI.

Candidates may be individuals, groups, or organizations that are directly connected with the main contribution stated in the nomination. Qualifications or technical knowledge in artificial intelligence are not requirements for nominations. The emphasis is on the significance and impact of the work.

The inaugural award will be given at AAAI-21 in Vancouver, Canada in February 2021. Nominations are due May 24, 2020, End of Day, Anywhere on Earth (AoE), UTC -12 hrs. Nomination packets should be emailed to the AAAI Executive Director at [aaai-exec-director@aaai.org](mailto:aaai-exec-director@aaai.org). For complete information about nomination requirements, please see [www.aaai.org/Awards/squirrel-award-call.php](http://www.aaai.org/Awards/squirrel-award-call.php).

public) about AI. AAAI is pleased to announce the 2020 award is being given to Marie desJardins (Simmons University) for leading the AI community in cultivating and recognizing advances in AI education, sharing pedagogical advances, increasing diversity, and improving K-12 CS teacher preparation. This award is jointly sponsored by AAAI and the Symposium on Educational Advances in Artificial Intelligence.

desJardins presented an invited talk at AAAI-20, entitled #AIForAll: A 64-year Perspective on AI, Computing, Inclusion, and Diversity, focusing on trends in education, diversity, and inclusion in AI and computing, with recommendations for increased emphasis on ethical computing, best practices for inclusive classroom and work environments, and effective methods for being an ally for underrepresented groups.

Marie desJardins is the Dean of the College of Organizational, Computational, and Information Sciences at Simmons University in Boston. She was

previously a professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where she was a UMBC Presidential Teaching Professor, Academic Innovation Fellow, Honors Faculty Fellow, and Associate Dean of UMBC's College of Engineering and Information Technology. She is an AAAI Fellow, an ACM Distinguished Member, and the recipient of the A. Richard Newton Educator ABIE Award, the UC Berkeley Distinguished Alumni Award in Computer Science, and mentoring awards from CRA-E and NCWIT. Dr. desJardins is known for her research in artificial intelligence, her work in expanding access to K-12 computer science education, and her leadership as a mentor, teacher, and champion for diversity in computing. While at UMBC, she advised 12 Ph.D. students, 26 M.S. students, and over 100 undergraduate researchers.

For more information about nominations for AAAI 2021 Awards, please contact Carol Hamilton at [awards21@aaai.org](mailto:awards21@aaai.org).

### AAAI-20 Program Committee Awards

AAAI-20 Program Cochairs Vincent Conitzer and Fei Sha recognized the following members of the AAAI-20 Program Committee for their distinguished service on the committee. These individuals went above and beyond the expectations for the role, showing exceptional judgment, clarity, knowledgeability, and leadership in reaching a consensus decision while serving on the committee.

#### Outstanding Senior Program Committee Members.

Anelia Angelova (Google, USA)

Michele Flammini (Gran Sasso Science Institute, Italy)

Zhe Gan (Microsoft, USA)

Thomas Keller (University of Basel, Switzerland)

Junyi Jessy Li (University of Texas at Austin, USA)

Dominik Peters (University of Oxford, UK)

## Submissions for HCOMP-20 Are Due in June!

The Eighth AAAI Conference on Human Computation and Crowdsourcing (HCOMP 2020) will be held Oct 26–28 at the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision in Hilversum, The Netherlands. The program is already taking shape, with the selection of four keynote speakers: Julia Noordegraaf (University of Amsterdam), Anna Ridler (Artist), Chris Welty (Google), and Mounia Lalmas (Spotify).

HCOMP is the home of the human computation and crowdsourcing community. It's the premier venue for presenting latest findings from research and practice into frameworks, methods and systems that bring together people and machine intelligence to achieve better results. While artificial intelligence (AI) and human-computer interaction (HCI) represent traditional mainstays of the conference, HCOMP believes strongly in fostering and promoting broad, interdisciplinary research. The HCOMP field is particularly unique in the diversity of disciplines it draws upon and contributes to, including human-centered qualitative studies and HCI design, social computing, artificial intelligence, economics, computational social science, digital humanities, policy, and ethics. The conference promotes the exchange of advances in human computation and crowdsourcing not only among researchers, but also engineers and practitioners, to encourage dialogue across disciplines and communities of practice.

This year, HCOMP organizers especially invite works that will generate new insights into the quality (or qualities) of human-annotated datasets, including elements such as reliability and replicability of human computation and crowdsourcing experiments, novel metrics for aggregation of results, and holistic approaches to deal with bias, fairness and interpretability.

Technical abstract submissions are due June 5, followed by full papers on June 12. For complete information about the conference, please see [www.humancomputation.com](http://www.humancomputation.com), or write to [hcomp20@aaai.org](mailto:hcomp20@aaai.org).

Daniel Preotiuc-Pietro (University of Pennsylvania, USA)

Miquel Ramirez (University of Melbourne, Australia)

Sylvie Thiébaux (The Australian National University, Australia)

Jenna Wiens (University of Michigan, USA)

Yair Zick (National University of Singapore, Singapore)

### Outstanding Program Committee Members

Ingo Pill (TU Graz, Austria)

Sarath Sreedharan (Arizona State University, USA)

Sergio Mover (Ecole Polytechnique, France)

Alexander D'Amour (Google Brain, USA)

Rodrigo de Salvo Braz (SRI International, USA)

Chris Harshaw (Yale University, USA)

Andrzej Kaczmarczyk (TU Berlin, Germany)

Dario Bertero (Hitachi, Ltd., Japan)

Mahmoud Assran (McGill University / Facebook AI Research, Canada)

Brais Martínez (Samsung AI Research, USA)

Konstantin Mishchenko (King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia)

Mak Roberts (Naval Research Laboratory, USA)

### AAAI-20 Outstanding Paper Awards

This year, AAAI's Conference on Artificial Intelligence honored the following six papers, which exemplify high standards in technical contribution and exposition by regular and student authors. Four papers were selected from the main track and two from the Special Track on AI for Social Impact.

#### AAAI-20 Outstanding Paper Award

WinoGrande: An Adversarial Winograd Schema Challenge at Scale by Keisuke

Sakaguchi, Ronan Le Bras, Chandra Bhagavatula, Yejin Choi

#### Outstanding Paper Award, Honorable Mention

A Unifying View on Individual Bounds and Heuristic Inaccuracies in Bidirectional Search by Vidal Alcazar, Pat Riddle, Mike Barley

#### AAAI-20 Outstanding Student Paper Award

Fair Division of Mixed Divisible and Indivisible Goods by Xiaohui Bei, Zihao Li, Jinyan Liu, Shengxin Liu, Xinhang Lu

#### Outstanding Student Paper Award, Honorable Mention

Lifelong Learning with a Changing Action Set by Yash Chandak, Georgios Theodorou, Chris Nota, Philip S. Thomas

#### Outstanding Paper Award: Special Track on AI for Social Impact

A Distributed Multi-Sensor Machine Learning Approach to Earthquake Early Warning by Kevin Fauvel, Daniel



## AAAI Member News

### In Memoriam, Jaime Carbonell

It is with deep regret that AAAI reports the passing of AAAI Fellow Jaime Carbonell, Allen Newell Professor of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University. Carbonell launched the CMU Center for Machine Translation 35 years ago, envisioning a world where people could freely communicate with each other, no matter what language they spoke. The Center expanded in 1996 to become the Language Technologies Institute (LTI), as machine translation took hold in the business world. LTI has been a leader in areas including natural language processing, question-answering systems, and speech recognition and synthesis. Carbonell, who joined CMU in 1979, led teams that developed knowledge-based machine translation of text as well as speech-to-speech translation. He invented a number of well-known algorithms and methods, including maximal marginal relevance (MMR) for summarizing text and a type of machine learning call proactive learning.

Carbonell advised more than 60 Ph.D. recipients, and created the university's PhD program in language technologies. He is the cocreator of the Universal Library and its Million Book Project, which scanned and digitized books and made them available for free online. He also made lasting contributions to machine learning, including methods that allowed computers to reason by analogy, developing algorithms that could actively query a teacher to more efficiently learn new concepts, and applying machine learning to diverse real-world applications, ranging from information retrieval and search to protein folding.

Carbonell grew up in Spanish-speaking Uruguay before his family moved to Boston when he was nine. He earned bachelor's degrees in mathematics and physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his master's degree and PhD in computer science at Yale University. While studying at MIT, Carbonell worked part-time translating computer manuals into Spanish and developed machine-translation tools to speed up the process, which later became the focus of his AI research.

Carbonell also played a key role in establishing language technologies as an industry in the Pittsburgh region, including his own spin-off companies — Carnegie Speech, Carnegie Group, Wisdom Technologies — and other local enterprises.

Balouek-Thomert, Diego Melgar, Pedro Silva, Anthony Simonet, Gabriel Antoniu, Alexandru Costan, Véronique Masson, Manish Parashar, Ivan Rodero, Alexandre Termier

Outstanding Paper  
Honorable Mention:  
Special Track on AI for Social Impact

The Unreasonable Effectiveness of  
Inverse Reinforcement Learning in

Advancing Cancer Research by John Kalantari, Heidi Nelson, Nicholas Chia

### Student Abstracts Awards

Each year AAAI honors its student abstract spotlight presenters with an award for the Best 3-Minute Presentation. In 2020, there were 20 finalists selected to compete for the best 3-Minute

Presentation from among a field of 137 student abstracts. The finalists presented oral spotlight presentations during the second day of the technical conference. The winners, who were selected by a special panel of judges, were:

LGML: Logic Guided Machine Learning  
by Joseph Scott, Maysum Panju, Vijay Ganesh



Sample Complexity Bounds for RNNs with Application to Combinatorial Graph Problems by Nil-Jana Akpinar, Bernhard Kratzwald, Stefan Feuerriegel

## IAAI-20 Innovative Application Awards

Each year the AAAI Conference on Innovative Applications selects the recipients of the IAAI Innovative Application Award. These deployed application case study papers must describe deployed applications with measurable benefits that include some aspect of AI technology. The application needs to have been in production use by its final end-users for sufficiently long so that the experience in use can be meaningfully collected and reported. The 2020 winners are as follows.

Day-Ahead Forecasting of Losses in the Distribution Network by Nisha Dalal, Martin Mølnd, Mette Herrem, Magne Røen, Odd Erik Gundersen

Question Quality Improvement: Deep Question Understanding for Incident Management in Technical Support Domain by Anupama Ray, Csaba Hadhazy, Pooja Aggarwal, Gargi Dasgupta, Amit Paradkar

PIDS: An Intelligent Electric Power Management Platform by Yongqing Zheng, Han Yu, Yuliang Shi, Kun Zhang, Shuai Zhen, Lizhen Cui, Cyril Leung, Chunyan Miao

FedVision: An Online Visual Object Detection Platform Powered by Federated Learning by Yang Liu, Anbu Huang, Yun Luo, He Huang, Youzhi Liu, Yuanyuan Chen, Lican Feng, Tianjian Chen, Han Yu, Qiang Yang

How Machine Learning Is Improving U.S. Navy Customer Support by Michael Powell, Jamison A. Rotz, Kevin D. O'Malley

Automated Conversation Review to Surface Virtual Assistant Misunderstandings: Reducing Cost and Increasing Privacy by Ian Beaver, Abdullah Mueen

Clarity: Data-Driven Automatic Assessment of Product Competitiveness by Sheema Usmani, Mariana Bernagozzi, Yufeng Huang, Michelle Morales, Amir Sabet Sarvestani, Biplav Srivastava

Understanding Chat Messages for Sticker Recommendation in Messaging Apps by Abhishek Laddha, Mohamed Hanoosh, Debodoot Mukherjee, Parth Patwa, Ankur Narang

Embedding Convolution Neural Network-Based Defect Finder for Deployed Vision Inspector in Manufacturing Company Frontec by Kyoung Jun Lee, Jun Woo Kwon, Soohong Min, Jungho Yoon

Accelerating Ranking in E-Commerce Search Engines through Contextual Factor Selection by Anxiang Zeng, Han Yu, Qing Da, Yusen Zan, Chunyan Miao

Feedback-Based Self-Learning in Large-Scale Conversational AI Agents by Pragaash Ponnusamy, Alireza Roshan Ghias, Chenlei Guo, Ruhi Sarikaya

## Special Computing Community Consortium (CCC) Blue Sky Awards

AAAI-20, in cooperation with the CRA Computing Community Consortium (CCC), honored three papers in the Senior Member track that presented ideas and visions that can stimulate the research community to pursue new directions, such as new problems, new application domains, or new methodologies. The recipients of the 2020 Blue Sky Idea travel awards, sponsored by the CCC, were as follows.

*First Place:* Philip R. Cohen for Back to the Future for Dialogue Research

*Second Place:* Sarit Kraus, Amos Azaria, Jelena Fiosina, Maik Greve, Noam Hazon, Lutz Kolbe, Tim-Benjamin Lembecke, Jorg P. Muller, Soren Schleihaum, and Mark Vollrath for AI for Explaining Decisions in Multi-Agent Environments

*Third Place:* Gerardo Ocampo Diaz and Vincent Ng for Unveiling Hidden Intentions

## AAAI Fall Symposium Series

AAAI is currently accepting proposals for the 2020 Fall Symposium Series, to be held Thursday – Saturday, November 12-14 at the Westin Arlington Gateway in Arlington, Virginia adjacent to Washington, DC. The Fall Symposium Series provides the AI community with a unique venue in which researchers from different areas of AI can present speculative work and work in progress, hold focused discussions over several days, build new communities for emerging disciplines, and build ties between

## AAAI Executive Council Elections

Please watch your mailboxes for an announcement of the 2020 AAAI Election. The link to the electronic version of the annual AAAI Ballot will be mailed to all regular individual AAAI members in the spring. This year, the membership will elect one individual to serve a two-year term as president-elect, followed by two years as president, and finally, two years as immediate past president. In addition, members will elect four new councilors to serve three-year terms on the AAAI Executive Council.

The online voting system is expected to close on June 26. Please note that the ballot will be available via the online system only. If you have not provided AAAI with an up-to-date e-mail address, please do so immediately by writing to membership20@aaai.org.

existing disciplines. For complete information on proposal requirements, please see [aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/fss20.php](http://aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/fss20.php). Please submit your symposium proposals to the EasyChair submission site ([easychair.org/conferences/?conf=fss20](http://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=fss20)) no later than April 30. General inquiries regarding the symposium series should be directed to AAAI at [fss20@aaai.org](mailto:fss20@aaai.org).

## AAAI Executive Council Meeting Minutes

The AAAI Executive Council Meeting was held November 26, 2019, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM via teleconference.

*Attending:* Yolanda Gil, Bart Selman, Rao Kambhampati, David E. Smith, Yiling Chen, Cristina Conati, Eric

Eaton, Eugene Freuder, Maria Gini, Ashok Goel, Judy Goldsmith, Ayanna Howard, Charles Isbell, Chad Jenkins, David Leake, Claire Monteleoni, Ariel Procaccia, Francesca Rossi, Cynthia Rudin, Peter Stone.

*Not Attending:* Brian Scassellati, Matthijs Spaan.

AAAI President Yolanda Gil opened the meeting at 10:00 AM, and thanked everyone for their participation. The minutes of the July 10, 2019 meeting were approved.

## Standing Committee Reports

*Education:* Eric Eaton gave a report on recent activities of the Education Committee. He noted that AAAI has formed an alliance with Technovation, which runs a large education program for children and adults. Technovation is forming the AI Founding Mentors Alliance, which will work with mentors in industry, who meet with students over a 12-week period to apply AI to a community problem. In addition to lending the AAAI name to the group, AAAI will assist in identifying volunteers to help students to apply AI in some way to a local community problem. It is hoped that mentors will receive funding to attend EAAI-20 through a grant from the National Science Foundation. Technovation will run a program offsite in connection with AAAI-20. Eric also noted that Jim Boerkoel and Memo Ergezer have launched the first AAAI Undergraduate Consortium and have received over 70 submissions. EAAI-20 will include a New and Future Educators Program, targeted at assistant professors, postdocs, and senior PhD students. Support from NSF will also enable these individuals to attend EAAI in New York.

*Awards:* Rao Kambhampati reported that the Fellows Selection committee had submitted initial recommendations for the nominations received. They were also in the process of reviewing the nominations for Senior Member status. Other awards being considered included the Classic Paper Award and the Distinguished Service Award. He noted that the first nominations for the AAAI/ACM Dissertation Award had been received. Bart Selman, who is the chair for the subcommittee to review the nominations, noted that

each nomination requires considerable time, so an announcement may not be made in time for AAAI-20. He asked for volunteers to assist with the reviewing process, especially members of the Education Committee. The Council agreed that a special committee, charged only with the review of these nominations, was needed. Each reviewer could review no more than two nominated dissertations, and the committee as a whole would review the top 5. Selman plans to use the ACM model of review. Gil gave an update on the Squirrel AI Award. Involvement by CAAI and EurAI is still pending, and details regarding a financial guarantee are under discussion. It is hoped that a Call for Nominations will be available at AAAI-20, or at least an announcement of when nominations will be due.

*Finance:* David Smith reported on the financial health of the organization, noting that AAAI has \$12.5 million in its operating reserve as of the end of September. AAAI's policy is to keep 65 percent of the reserve in stock mutual funds, and 35 percent in bond mutual funds. Smith may need to make some adjustments in coming months to achieve this balance. The accepted endowment practice is to spend up to 3-4 percent of the operating reserve each year, so AAAI could spend \$375-500K at the present time. Gil noted that there are many worthy projects that AAAI could consider, and suggested that committees submit proposals during the next month, which will then be voted on by the Council. Several items were discussed, including additional scholarship support, diversity program support, hiring a communications professional, and several initiatives already proposed as a result of the Blue Ribbon Panel in March 2019. Discussions and voting will take place via e-mail. Smith asked that the current budget in front of the Council be approved as is to enable the organization to move forward with 2020 plans. Cristina Conati so moved, and Charles Isbell seconded. The 2020 budget passed unanimously.

*Conference:* Gil announced that Peter Stone has stepped down as the Conference Committee Chair, and Sven Koenig has agreed to serve in this capacity. She thanked Stone for his

service. Francesca Rossi, General Chair for AAAI-20, thanked the Conference Committee for its guidance on special issues that have arisen during the preparations for AAAI-20. Gil noted that Rossi is only the second General Chair for a AAAI conference — Ken Forbus was the General Chair for 2006 — and has stayed abreast of all issues, as well as helping with the recruitment of subchairs for the many programs. Many of the issues facing the program chairs involved reviewing procedures and ethics violations, such as plagiarism, double submissions, and suspected collusion. Some papers were summarily rejected as a result of these violations. The Council agreed that more education about all paper submission, review and publication issues is required as the AAAI community grows and changes. Rossi and the program chairs hope to pass along all procedures to 2021 chairs. She also noted that better coordination with AIES is required regarding their submission deadline.

Rossi reported that the general structure for the AAAI-20 program has been examined with the hope of reducing parallelism and using the largest rooms available. An AI History Panel and AI Debate will be organized. Kevin Leyton-Brown will moderate the debate again.

Peter Stone reiterated that the most important issues facing the Conference Committee are the size of the conference, the submission and review schedule, and the ethical violations. In addition, program chairs for 2022 will need to be identified early to be on board for early involvement. Chad Jenkins noted that ethical issues are significant and are also being examined by the CCC. Cristina Conati mentioned the need to respect personal and family time in establishing the review schedule.

*Diversity and Inclusion:* Maria Gini reported that the recent initiative to expand diversity and inclusion at the AAAI-20 Conference resulted in twelve proposals, of which the following were selected:

Workshop on Diversity in Artificial Intelligence: Artificial Intelligence — Diversity, Belonging, Equity, and Inclusion (AIDBEI): Mentoring Students from Underserved Populations to discuss work at the nexus of inclusive AI education, education research pertinent to AI and underrepresented

groups of students, and AI for good as applicable to underserved students' own communities.

**AI – Its Purpose and Power. Humans – Our Purpose and Power**, a workshop to introduce the basics of AI and how to identify and address meaningful problems, aligned with the UN SDGs, using AI-based technologies

Try AI for high-school female students.

Undergraduate Workshop on AI-Powered Robotics, an activity for undergraduates interested in AI and intelligent robots.

The Black in AI and LatinX in AI Lunches.

The Women's Mentoring Breakfast.

DivinAI Hackfest: How Diverse are Top Artificial Intelligence Conferences? aiming to raise awareness on this issue by gathering data from top conferences and calculating their corresponding diversity index, in terms of gender, geographical location and presence of academia versus industry.

Promoting Deaf inclusion and Collaboration in Artificial Intelligence, an activity in which hearing participants of AAAI attempt to communicate specific computer science related topics to deaf participants using sign language; and the Mid-Career Diversity Tea and Cake, targeted to midcareer members of underrepresented communities.

Gini also noted that Visa has agreed to fund two women at \$2,500 each to attend the conference. Gil encouraged committees to make proposals to the Diversity committee throughout the year, and thanked Gini for all her work on this initiative.

**Ethics:** Ayanna Howard asked for volunteers for the Ethics Committee. She hopes to schedule the next meeting before AAAI-20. The committee will examine the current ethics policies, and in particular how to deal with reported violations. David Smith noted that a document was started that outlined a process for reviewing reported violations, but that enforcement was considered to be too onerous for the organization. Howard hopes to continue this discussion to better determine AAAI's role in the process.

**Government Relations:** Bart Selman reported on the recent work by Gil and himself with policy-making bodies

regarding the AI Roadmap. He is investigating possibilities for more direct proactive channels for AAAI to pursue, rather than just producing reports when needed. Gil reminded the group that a US policy mailing list has been established to reach people interested in these issues.

**Publications:** David Leake reported that approximately 1,883 papers will be included in the AAAI Proceedings, with over 15,000 pages of content. The proceedings will be published via the AAAI Digital Library. AAAI has entered into an agreement with the PKP Consortium to take over management and hosting of the OJS website, where the digital library is housed. This transition will keep the system updated and reduce the possibility of hacking. The digital library will now include all publications — those in the public domain and those available for purchase. Ashok Goel reported that the *AI Magazine* has a good line-up for all of 2020, including issues on AI at DARPA, Conversational AI, and AI and Society. A part-time editorial assistant with knowledge of AI has been hired to help Goel with administrative tasks. Goel is in the process of building the digital version of the *AI Magazine*, and will be seeking feedback during December and January. Gil thanked Goel for all his work on the magazine. In response to questions raised about the current camera-ready submission process and proceedings publishing practices, David Leake will follow up separately with Ariel Procaccia.

**International:** Gil reported that discussions are ongoing for a summer symposium series in China. She expressed the need to work with the CCF on a possible arrangement and venue. The local community would arrange for local arrangements and AAAI would take care of the program. The first day would include invited talks and the second day could involve technical paper presentations by AAAI-20 authors. The summer series would move to other regions in subsequent years, and proposals would be solicited.

## New Business

**Conflict of Interest Policy:** David Smith reported that he and Ted Senator had

worked on the AAAI Conflict of Interest Policy. The federal tax return asks if AAAI has such a policy, which is required for all new tax-exempt organizations. The policy covers both financial and professional conflicts of interest. He noted that councilors and officers are not required to disclose COI upfront, but should do so when a discussion is taking place that might present one. Smith asked the committee to read the document and a follow up vote on approval will be conducted by e-mail.

**President's Fellows Advisory Board (PFAB):** Gene Freuder reported that a President's Fellows Advisory Board has been established. Board working groups will produce white papers for review by the president of AAAI. The Board currently includes approximately twenty members. This initiative grew out of the Blue Ribbon Panel in March 2019. Possible topics for consideration include AAAI as both a scientific and professional membership organization, as a national vs an international organization, diversity and inclusion opportunities, and the future of the conference.

Gil thanked everyone for their work and participation, and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.