



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:

Alessandro Cimatti (Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Italy)

Xuelong Li (Chinese Academy of Sciences, China)

Nathan R. Sturtevant (University of Denver, USA)

This honor was announced at the recent AAAI-17 Conference in San Francisco. 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 2017 AAAI Award Winners!

Rao Kambhampati, AAAI President, Tom Dietterich, AAAI Past President and Awards Committee Chair, and Yolanda Gil, AAAI President-Elect, presented the AAAI Awards in February at AAAI-17 in San Francisco.

Classic Paper Award

The 2017 AAAI Classic Paper Award was given to the authors of the paper deemed most influential from the Sixteenth National Conference on Artificial

2017 Feigenbaum Prize Awarded!



AAAI is delighted to announce that Yoav Shoham (Stanford University, Google), has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 AAAI Feigenbaum Prize. Shoham is being recognized in particular for high-impact basic research in artificial intelligence — including knowledge representation, multiagent systems, and computational game theory — and translating the basic research into impactful and innovative commercial products.

The AAAI Feigenbaum Prize was established in 2010 and is awarded biennially to recognize and encourage outstanding Artificial Intelligence research advances that are made by using experimental methods of computer science. The associated cash prize of \$10,000 is provided by the Feigenbaum Nii Foundation.

Intelligence, held in 1999 in Orlando, Florida, USA. The 2017 recipient of the AAAI Classic Paper Award was:

Monte Carlo Localization: Efficient Position Estimation for Mobile Robots.
Dieter Fox, Wolfram Burgard, Frank Dellaert, Sebastian Thrun

Fox and his coauthors were honored for pioneering the application of particle filtering to provide an effective and scalable method for robot localization. Dieter Fox presented an invited talk during the conference in recognition of this honor.

Dieter Fox is a professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Washington. He grew up in Bonn, Germany, and received his Ph.D. in 1998 from the Computer Science Department at the University of Bonn. He joined the UW faculty in the fall of 2000. His research interests are in robotics and artificial intelligence, with a focus on state estimation and perception. He

heads the UW Robotics and State Estimation Lab (RSE-Lab). Fox is a Fellow of the AAAI and IEEE, and he received several best paper awards at major robotics, AI, and computer vision conferences.

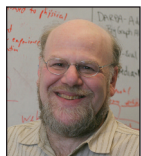
A Classic Paper Honorable Mention was also given to the following two papers:

Combining Collaborative Filtering with Personal Agents for Better Recommendations. *Nathaniel Good, J. Ben Schafer, Joseph A. Konstan, Al Borchers, Badrul Sarwar, Jon Herlocker, John Riedl*

Good and his coauthors were honored for developing an effective way to combine collaborative filtering and content filtering to provide better recommendations to users.

Dr. Nathan Good is Principal of Good Research and Lecturer at UC Berkeley's Ischool's Master of Data Science program. A fundamental goal of his work is create devices, models services and user experiences that are sim-

AAAI Distinguished Service Award



The 2017 AAAI Distinguished Service Award recognizes one individual for extraordinary service to the AI community. The AAAI Awards Committee is pleased to announce that this year's recipient is James A. Hendler (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA). Hendler is being recognized for his outstanding contributions to the field of artificial intelligence through sustained service to AAAI, other professional societies, and government activities promoting the importance of Artificial Intelligence research.

Jim Hendler is the Director of the Institute for Data Exploration and Applications and the Tetherless World Professor of Computer, Web and Cognitive Sciences at RPI. One of the originators of the "semantic web," Hendler was the recipient of a 1995 Fulbright Foundation Fellowship, is a former member of the US Air Force Science Advisory Board, and is a Fellow of the AAAI, BCS, the IEEE, the AAAS and the ACM. He is also the former chief scientist of the Information Systems Office at the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and was awarded a US Air Force Exceptional Civilian Service Medal in 2002. Hendler is also the first computer scientist to serve on the Board of Reviewing editors for Science. In 2010, Hendler was named one of the 20 most innovative professors in America by Playboy magazine and was selected as an "Internet Web Expert" by the US government. In 2012, he was one of the inaugural recipients of the Strata Conference "Big Data" awards for his work on large-scale open government data, and he is a columnist and associate editor of the Big Data journal. In 2013, he was appointed as the Open Data Advisor to New York State and in 2015 appointed a member of the US Homeland Security Science and Technology Advisory Committee and in 2016, became a member of the National Academies Board on Research Data and Information.

that simultaneously learns the semantic lexicon and the extraction patterns.

Ellen Riloff is a professor in the School of Computing at the University of Utah. She received her Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Massachusetts in 1994. Her primary research area is natural language processing, with an emphasis on information extraction, sentiment analysis, semantic class induction, and bootstrapping methods that learn from unannotated texts. She has served on the NAACL Executive Board, Human Language Technology (HLT) Advisory Board, Computational Linguistics Editorial Board, Transactions of the Association for Computational Linguistics program cochair for the NAACL HLT 2012 and CoNLL 2004 conferences.

For more information about nominations for AAAI 2018 Awards, please contact Carol Hamilton at hamilton@aaai.org.

AAAI-17 Program Committee Awards

AAAI-17 Program Cochairs Shaul Markovitch and Satinder Singh recognized the following members of the AAAI-17 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

Thomas Eiter (Vienna University of Technology, Austria)

Jussi Rintanen (Aalto University, Finland)

Sven Koenig (University of Southern California, USA)

Outstanding Program Committee Members

Luis Ortiz (University of Michigan - Dearborn, USA)

Aris Filos-Ratsikas (University of Oxford, UK)

Ingo Pill (Graz University of Technology, Austria)

Miquel Ramírez (University of Melbourne, Australia)

Christer Bäckström (Linköping University, Sweden)

ple, secure and respectful of people's privacy. On the commercial side, Dr. Good has codeveloped technologies and designs for privacy protection products that have grown to millions of users, and has worked with fortune 100 firms to develop privacy and security solutions. He is a coauthor of the UC Berkeley web privacy census, and contributing author to books on privacy and the user experience of security systems. He has published extensively on user experience studies, privacy, and security related topics and holds patents on software technology for multimedia systems and event analy-

sis. Prior to Good Research, Nathan was at PARC, Yahoo and HP research labs. At Berkeley, he worked with TRUST and was a member of the 2007 California SOS Top-to-Bottom Review of Electronic Voting Systems. His research has been reported on in the *Economist*, *New York Times*, CNN and ABC and he has testified on his research before Congress and the FTC.

Learning Dictionaries for Information Extraction by Multi-Level Bootstrapping. *Ellen Riloff and Rosie Jones*

Riloff and Jones were honored for introducing a mutual bootstrapping technique for information extraction

Richard Valenzano (University of Toronto, Canada)

AAAI-17 Outstanding Paper Awards

This year, AAAI's Conference on Artificial Intelligence honored the following two papers, which exemplify high standards in technical contribution and exposition by regular and student authors.

AAAI-17 Outstanding Paper Award

Label-Free Supervision of Neural Networks with Physics and Domain Knowledge. *Russell Stewart and Stefano Ermon*

AAAI-17 Outstanding Student Paper Award

The Option-Critic Architecture. *Pierre-Luc Bacon, Jean Harb and Doina Precup*

2017 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 2017 winners are as follows:

Large-Scale Occupational Skills Normalization for Online Recruitment. *Faizan Javed, Phuong Hoang, Thomas Mahoney, Matt McNair*

Phase-Mapper: An AI Platform to Accelerate High Throughput Materials Discovery. *Yexiang Xue, Junwen Bai, Ronan Le Bras, Brendan Rappazzo, Richard Bernstein, Johan Bjorck, Liane Longpre, Santosh K. Suram, Robert B. van Dover, John Gregoire, Carla P. Gomes*

Special Computing Community Consortium (CCC) Blue Sky Awards

AAAI-17, 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

Congratulations to the 2017 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-17 in San Francisco, California.



Ronen I. Brafman (Ben-Gurion University, Israel)

For significant contributions to algorithms, representation, and theoretical foundations of automated decision making in the areas of preference handling, planning under uncertainty, multiagent planning, and privacy.



Eduard H. Hovy (Carnegie Mellon University, USA)

For significant contributions to natural language processing, including text summarization, semantic analysis, entity/event coreference and sentiment analysis.



Tommi S. Jaakkola (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA)

For significant contributions to the fields of machine learning, computational biology and natural language processing.



Maurizio Lenzerini (Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza," Italy)

For fundamental contributions to knowledge representation, description logics, ontologies, and AI and databases, which have become mainstream in AI.



Fangzhen Lin (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong)

For significant contributions to formal theories of knowledge representation, in particular nonmonotonic logics, answer-set programming, and theories of action.



Dale Eric Schuurmans (University of Alberta, Canada)

For significant contributions to machine learning, including foundational methods for model selection, on-line learning, unsupervised learning and sequential decision making.



Munindar P. Singh (North Carolina State University, USA)

For significant contributions to multiagent systems, especially via seminal formalizations of the interactions, communications, trust, and commitments among intelligent agents and services.

2017 Robert S. Engelmores Memorial Lecture Award



This award was established in 2003 to honor Dr. Robert S. Engelmores extraordinary service to AAAI, AI Magazine, and the AI applications community, and his contributions to applied AI. The annual keynote lecture is presented at the Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence Conference. Topics encompass Bob's wide interests in AI, and each lecture is linked to a subsequent article published upon approval by AI Magazine. The lecturer and, therefore, the author for the magazine article, are chosen jointly by the IAAI Program Committee and the Editor of the *AI Magazine*.

AAAI congratulates the 2017 recipient of this award, David W. Aha, Naval Research Laboratory, who was honored for pioneering research contributions and high-impact applications in autonomous systems, machine learning, and case-based reasoning, and for extensive contributions to AAAI, including educating the broader AI community through AAAI doctoral consortia and video competitions. Aha presented his award lecture, "Goal Reasoning: Emerging Applications, a Foundation, and Prospects," at the Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence Conference in San Francisco.

David W. Aha (UCI 1990) is a member of NRL's Navy Center for Applied Research on AI. His group conducts basic and applied research on intelligent agents, ML, case-based reasoning, and related topics; their current projects concern goal reasoning or deep learning. He has mentored 12 postdocs, served on 20 PhD committees, was a AAAI Councilor, cocreated the AAAI AI Video Competition, and created the UCI Repository for ML Databases. Aha has co-organized more than 30 events (including AAAI-17 DC, ICCBR-17, IJCAI-17 Workshop on XAI), serves on several PCs, and led or leads the evaluation team for four DARPA or ONR Programs.

Minute Presentation and the Best Student Poster. Nineteen finalists in the Best Student 3-Minute Presentation category presented one-minute oral spotlight presentations during the second day of the technical conference, followed that evening by their poster presentations. Votes for the Best Student 3-Minute Presentation award were cast by senior program committee members and students, and all AAAI-17 technical registrants were eligible to cast their votes for the Best Student Poster Award. The winners were as follows:

Best Student 3-Minute Presentation

Fast Electrical Demand Optimization under Real-Time Pricing. *Shan He, Mark Wallace, Campbell Wilson, Ariel Lieberman*

Honorable Mention: Student 3-Minute Presentation

Robust and Efficient Transfer Learning with Hidden Parameter Markov Decision Processes. *Taylor W. Killian, George Konidaris, Finale Doshi-Velez*

Best Student Poster

Evolutionary Machine Learning for RTS Game StarCraft. *Lianlong Wu, Andrew Markham*

Honorable Mention: Student Poster

An Advising Framework for Multiagent Reinforcement Learning Systems. *Felipe Leno da Silva, Ruben Glatt, Anna Helena Reali Costa*

2017 AI Video Competition Winners

The eleventh annual AI Video Competition was held during AAAI-17 and several winning videos were honored during the awards presentation. Videos were nominated for awards in four categories, and winners will receive a "Shakey" award. Our thanks go to Charles Isbell and Scott Niekum for all their work on this event.

The winners of the four awards were as follows:

Best Video

HEALER: Using AI to Raise HIV Awareness among Homeless Youth. *Amulya Yadav, Eric Rice, Robin Petering, Jai Craddock, Bryan Wilder, Milind Tambe*

Best Robot Video

Aquatic Micro Air Vehicles. *Robert Siddall, Alejandro Ortega, Raphael Zufferey,*

the research community to pursue new directions, such as new problems, new application domains, or new methodologies. The recipients of the 2017 Blue Sky Idea travel awards, sponsored by the CCC, were the following:

The AI Rebellion: Changing the Narrative. *David W. Aha, Alexandra Coman*

Moral Decision Making Frameworks for Artificial Intelligence. *Vincent Conitzer, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, Jana Schach Borg, Yuan Deng, Max Kramer*

Getting More Out of the Exposed Structure in Constraint Programming Models of Combinatorial Problems. *Gilles Pesant*

AAAI-17 Best Technical Demonstration Award

Two technical demonstrations were

honored as part of the AAAI-17 Technical Demonstration Program. Votes for these awards were cast by all AAAI-17 technical registrants. The winners were as follows:

Best Technical Demonstration Award

Arnold: An Autonomous Agent to play FPS Games. *Devendra Singh Chaplot, Guillaume Lample*

Honorable Mention: Technical Demonstration

Deep Music: Towards Musical Dialogue. *Mason Bretan, Sageev Oore, Jesse Engel, Douglas Eck, Larry Heck*

AAAI-17 Student Abstract Awards

Two awards were presented to participants in the AAAI-17 Student Abstract Program, including the Best Student 3-

Talib Al-Hinai, Mirko Kovac

Best Student Video

HEALER: Using AI to Raise HIV Awareness among Homeless Youth. *Amulya Yadav, Eric Rice, Robin Petering, Jai Craddock, Bryan Wilder, Milind Tambe*

Most Entertaining Video

How to Cut Cake Fairly. *Jack Fisher, Marcus Strom*

The organizers would like to thank these and all the authors of the nominated videos for their participation in the 2017 AI Video Competition. Other nominated videos included the following:

Top Drone. *Philip Moore, Michael Floyd, Justin Karneeb, David Aha*

Using Constraint Programming on a Single-Arm ABB Robot. *Mathieu Collet, Arnaud Gotlieb, Inger Karoline*

Active Video Summarization: Customized Summaries via On-line Interaction with the User. *Ana Garcia del Molino, Xavier Boix, Joaquim Bellmunt*

Congratulations to all!

ICWSM-17 Registration Now Available!

The Eleventh International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media will be held at the Hyatt Regency Montreal in Montreal, Canada from May 15–18, 2017. This interdisciplinary conference is a forum for researchers in computer science and social science to come together to share knowledge, discuss ideas, exchange information, and learn about cutting-edge research in diverse fields with the common theme of online social media. This overall theme includes research in new perspectives in social theories, as well as computational algorithms for analyzing social media. ICWSM is a singularly fitting venue for research that blends social science and computational approaches to answer important and challenging questions about human social behavior through social media while advancing computational tools for vast and unstructured data.

ICWSM-17 will include a lively program of technical talks and posters, invited presentations, and keynote talks by Laurie Faith Cranor (Carnegie Mellon University), Hilary Mason

(New York University), and Matthew J. Salganik (Princeton University). The ICWSM Workshop program will continue in 2017 with 4 half-day and four full-day workshops, and the Tutorial Program, comprising 2 half-day and 2 full-day tutorials, will run in parallel. Both will be held on the first day of the conference, May 15. For complete details about these programs, please see icwsm.org/2017/.

Registration information is available at the ICWSM-17 website (www.icwsm.org/2017/attending/registration). The early registration deadline is March 31, and the late registration deadline is April 21. For full details about the conference program, please visit the ICWSM-17 website (icwsm.org) or write to icwsm17@aaai.org.

AAAI/EAAI 2017 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 public) about AI. AAAI is pleased to announce the 2017 award is being given to Sebastian Thrun (Udacity, KittyHawk, Stanford University, Georgia Tech) for his pioneering efforts on the creation of high-quality, widely available, and affordable online courses, including seminal artificial intelligence courses, and for demonstrating the excitement of AI research in self-driving cars and navigation. This award is jointly sponsored by AAAI and the Symposium on Educational Advances in Artificial Intelligence.

Sebastian Thrun pursues research on robotics, artificial intelligence, education, and human computer interaction. He founded Google's self driving car team, after winning the DARPA Grand Challenge. Together with Peter Norvig, he also developed the very first global MOOC with 160,000 students enrolled. His company, Udacity, has educated over 5 million students, and has been valued at more than one billion dollars. Google Scholar ranks Thrun's publication h-index #14 worldwide in all of computer science. Thrun also founded Google X, where he founded Google Glass among many other projects. He was elected into the National Academy of Engineering and the German Academy of Sciences at age 39. Fast Company named Thrun the fifth most creative person in business, and Foreign Policy touted him Global Thinker #4. He won numerous awards, including the prestigious Max Planck Research Award.

Interesting in Hosting ICWSM-19?

AAAI, in cooperation with the ICWSM Steering Committee, is currently seeking proposals for a host city for the Thirteenth International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM-19). The conference is typically held Monday - Thursday during the timeframe of mid-May through mid-June. Final selection of a site will be made by August 2017. For more information about proposal requirements, please write to icwsm19@aaai.org.

Note: ICWSM-18 will be held at Stanford University in Palo Alto.



Courtesy, iStock

Join Us in New Orleans for AAAI-18!

The Thirty-Second AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-18) and the Thirtieth Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence (IAAI-18), will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, February 4-10. The technical conference will continue its 3-1/2 day schedule, followed by the workshop and tutorial programs. AAAI-17 will arrive in New Orleans just prior to Mardi Gras and festivities will already be underway. Enjoy legendary jazz music, the French Quarter filled with lively clubs and restaurants, world-class museums, and signature architecture. New Orleans' multicultural and diverse communities will make your choices and experience in the Big Easy unique. The 2017 Call for Papers will be available soon.

Please join us in 2017 in New Orleans for a memorable AAAI!

www.aaai.org/aaai18

AIIDE-17 to be Held in Snowbird, Utah

Please join us for AIIDE-17, to be held October 5-9, 2017 at the Cliff Lodge at Snowbird in Little Cottonwood Canyon, Utah, USA. AIIDE-17 is the next in an annual series of conferences showcasing interdisciplinary research on modeling, developing, and evaluating intelligent systems in entertainment. AIIDE-17 provides a meeting

place for academic AI researchers and professional software developers to discuss the latest advances in entertainment-focused AI. The conference has a long-standing history of featuring research on artificial intelligence in computer games. We also invite researchers, developers, and digital artists to share ideas on topics at the intersection of all forms of entertainment and artificial intelligence broadly. AIIDE-17 will feature invited speak-

ers, paper sessions, workshops, tutorials, playable experiences, panels, posters, the Starcraft AI Competition, and a doctoral consortium.

This year, the AIIDE conference will feature a special topic of "Beyond Games." In addition to general topics of interest in game AI, we welcome submissions featuring innovative forms of interactive digital entertainment, including but not limited to human-robot interaction, computer music, generative art, physical computing, procedural animation, and digital improvisation. The special topic will also connect to keynote speakers, panels, paper sessions, and other aspects of the conference program.

Submissions for all programs are due May 25, 2017. For more information, please visit www.aiide.org, or write to aiide17@aaai.org.

Join Us in Quebec City for HCOMP-17

The Fifth AAAI Conference on Human Computation and Crowdsourcing will be held October 24 – 26, 2017 at the Hilton Regency Quebec in Quebec City, Canada. HCOMP-17 will be colocated with the User Interface Software and Technology (UIST). HCOMP is the premier venue for disseminating the latest research findings on crowdsourcing and human computation. While artificial intelligence (AI) and human-computer interaction (HCI) represent traditional mainstays of the conference, HCOMP believes strongly in inviting, fostering, and promoting broad, interdisciplinary research. This field is particularly unique in the diversity of disciplines it draws upon, and contributes to, ranging from human-centered qualitative studies and HCI design, to computer science and artificial intelligence, economics and the social sciences, all the way to digital humanities, policy, and ethics. We promote 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.

Submissions are due May 4, 2017. For more information, please visit

humancomputation.com, or write to hcomp17@aaai.org.

2017 Fall Symposium Series

Mark Your Calendars! The 2017 AAAI Fall Symposium Series will be held Thursday through Saturday, November 9-11 2017, at the Westin Arlington Gateway in Arlington, Virginia, adjacent to Washington, DC. Proposals are due April 21, and accepted symposia will be announced in late May. Submissions will be due July 21, 2017. For more information, please see the 2017 Fall Symposium Series website (www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/fss17.php).

AAAI Executive Council Elections

Please watch your mailboxes for an announcement of the 2017 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 vote for four new councilors, who will each serve three-year terms. The online voting system is expected to close on June 16. Please note that the ballot will be available via the online system only. If you have not provided AAAI with an up-to-date email address, please do so immediately by writing to membership17@aaai.org.

Member News: In Memoriam

Adele Howe

AAAI deeply regrets to report the sad news of Adele Howe's passing on January 20, 2017. Howe, a AAAI Fellow, was a professor of computer science at Colorado State University (CSU), and was named a Professor Laureate in the College of Natural Sciences at CSU in 2010. She attended The University of Pennsylvania and in 1983 received her B.S.E. in computer science and engineering. She then joined ITT's Artificial Intelligence Research Group. She completed her Ph.D. in Computer Science at the University of Massachusetts in 1992. While at the University of Mas-

sachusetts she did pioneering work on autonomous agents operating in complex environments, and simulated fire-fighting in Yellowstone National Park.

Howe's later research focused on autonomous agents, planning systems, human-centered computing, as well as search and combinatorial optimization. One of her many projects was helping to develop the first meta-crawler search engine for navigating the web (before there was Google). In 2000 and 2001 she served the United States as a member of the U.S. Defense Science Study Group, a selective and small group of academics charged with reviewing all branches of the military, and anticipating how changes spurred by advanced research will impact the military. She also helped to develop a satellite communication scheduling system for the U.S. Air Force.

In 2015, Howe was named a Fellow of AAAI, and was honored for her significant contributions to the theory, practice and evaluation of automated planning, scheduling and other AI technologies, as well as service to the AI community. In 2016, she was the inaugural recipient of the ICAPS (International Conference on Automated Planning and Scheduling) Distinguished Service Award.

Howe was a longtime volunteer for AAAI in a host of roles, and most recently served as the cochair for the Senior Member track at AAAI-17. Her commitment to fostering research in artificial intelligence and her passion for building diversity in the field of computer science and artificial intelligence will be sorely missed.

Ranan Banerji

AAAI also reports the passing of AAAI Fellow Ranan B. Banerji, professor of math and computer science at St. Joseph's University in New Jersey. Born in Kolkata, Banerji earned his undergraduate degree in physics at Patna University in Bihar, India, in 1947, and his doctorate in physics at the University of Calcutta in 1956. Before joining St. Joseph's, Ranan Banerji also held professorships at Case Western University in Ohio and Temple University in Philadelphia. At the time of his election as a AAAI Fellow, AAAI honored Banerji for his pioneering and contin-

uing work in the formal foundations of problem-solving, game-playing and machine learning. He conducted seminal early work in search, game playing, and game trees, and wrote widely, including five books, on artificial intelligence.

AAAI Executive Council Meeting Minutes

The 2016 AAAI Executive Council meeting was held November 28, 2016, via teleconference.

Attending: Subbarao Kambhampati, Tom Dietterich, Yolanda Gil, Ted Senator, Sonia Chernova, Vincent Conitzer, Boi Faltings, Steve Smith, Charles Isbell, Diane Litman, Jennifer Neville, Blai Bonet, Michela Milano, David Smith, David Leake, Ashok Goel, Carol Hamilton.

Not Attending: Mausam, Kiri Wagstaff, Qiang Yang.

Rao Kambhampati brought the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and thanked everyone for joining. He reviewed the documents in Google and Blue Jeans. In addition, he gave an update on recent activities in which he has been involved.

Presidential Issues

Kambhampati and Carol Hamilton initiated the AAAI Affiliates program, whereby all individuals who have served on AAAI conference program committees or attended AAAI conferences as nonmembers are automatically signed up as AAAI Affiliates. Affiliates do not have member privileges, but do receive the AI Alert and other announcements about AAAI activities. Currently, there are 3,541 affiliates, so there are as many people helping with and attending AAAI programs as there are members.

Kambhampati has also been working with the China Computer Federation to work out a Memorandum of Understanding that will be of mutual benefit to AAAI members and to the Chinese AI community, including mutual advertising and other cooperative efforts. Kambhampati sent a congratulatory note to the CCF upon their 40th anniversary. Tom Dietterich also spoke about AAAI in a recent meeting in Beijing.

Kambhampati, representing AAAI, will serve on the advisory board of the newly formed Partnership in AI, recently established to study and formulate best practices on AI technologies, to advance the public's understanding of AI, and to serve as an open platform for discussion and engagement about AI and its influences on people and society by drawers. He will join other industry leaders from Apple, Amazon, Facebook, Google, DeepMind, IBM, and Microsoft, as well as representatives from UC Berkeley, the ACLU, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Peterson Institute of International Economics. The first physical meeting will be February 3 in San Francisco.

Kambhampati is also investigating the possibility of a joint conference with ACM on AI ethics and will be following up on this with the Ethics Committee.

The AAAI office had to migrate their website quite unexpectedly in the past few weeks, and Kambhampati reported that the migration had been completed successfully, just in time for the submission of close to 800 AAAI-17 proceedings papers.

Finance Committee

Ted Senator reviewed the budget approval process for the upcoming year. The budget is officially approved by the Council prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year (the calendar year). Most of the work is done by the staff and most of the data is based on historical trends during recent years. However, where known, the unique costs associated with chosen venues for programs are incorporated into the budget. If new programs or activities have been requested by committees, those are also incorporated into the budget. Senator drew the Council members' attention to the line in the program that explains how much of the operating reserve will need to be used to support the current projections. He noted that as long as this number is in the 3-5 percent range, it is an acceptable amount. A full set of budget guidelines was circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

Senator also noted that the projection for 2016 is a surplus. 2017 will be a more expensive year due to the high-

er costs for the main conference. In addition, there will be a rehaul of the AAAI website, resulting in a one-time expense for the Association. Kambhampati added that he would like the association take on further commitments, given the current large surge in interest in AI, and would like to use the full 5 percent if opportunities arise to do so.

After some further discussion, Tom Dietterich moved to approve the budget, Senator seconded the motion, and the budget was approved unanimously.

In further financial news, Senator noted that he had circulated the tax return to the Council. This is a good practice required by our auditor to retain transparency in the process. Finally, Senator announced that he will be transitioning out of the Secretary-Treasurer position at the end of 2017, and in conjunction with other members of the AAAI Executive Committee, has worked out transition plan. David Smith, who has served on the Finance Committee for several years, will take over as Secretary-Treasurer upon his retirement from NASA, and noted that Smith will attend this and all future meetings during the transition period. Kambhampati thanked Senator for his 14 years of service as Secretary-Treasurer, as well as all his other service for the association.

Membership Committee

Kambhampati announced that Blai Bonet will be taking over as the Membership Committee chair. Bonet noted that he will be working with the committee on several issues, including how to develop the affiliates program. The committee will also be reviewing the current list of people who have applied for the Distinguished Speaker program, and will report on this at the February meeting. It is anticipated that a budget will have to be established to pay for some travel for the speakers. Kambhampati noted that we need to reach out to industry members more effectively, as several people have mentioned to him that they were not sure if AAAI is open to them.

Conference Committee

Carol Hamilton reviewed the major

differences between the 2016 conference and the 2017 conference. The conference technical program will be significantly bigger with close to 150 additional technical papers accepted for presentation, including the main track, special tracks, senior member, and demo tracks. Other activities will remain similar to 2016, although the robotics program will not be held. The other big difference will be budgetary, as San Francisco will be significantly more expensive than Phoenix. This was reviewed during the budget discussions. In addition, Yolanda Gil noted that plans were underway for an Industry Day event, comprising a series of accessible talks geared toward industry. Possible days for this event will be Sunday or Friday following the main conference. Gil also mentioned that it would be a missed opportunity to not reach out to industry, given that AAAI-17 is in the Bay Area. Gil has agreed to spearhead this, but is seeking volunteers to help design the best program and promotion strategy.

The committee discussed other programs or initiatives that would be of interest to industry, including the AI Job Fair, also scheduled for Sunday, IAAI-17, and highlighting workshops or tutorials that might be accessible. All agreed that good promotion will be important to reach beyond the normal attendees at AAAI. Further discussion revolved around possible fees for the event, the targeted audience, and the scope of the event. Gil said she would do some further investigation to clarify these issues. Kambhampati would like to establish a strong connection to industry and this could be the jumping board to do so.

Symposium

Carol Hamilton noted that Gita Sukthanker will be stepping down as Symposium Chair, and will be replaced by Christopher Geib. The committee is currently seeking a new cochair, and may seek a person outside North America. The Council agreed that international outreach is very important, and that the resulting slight increase in travel expenses was fine.

Government Relations

Steve Smith reported that the commit-

tee will be responding to an RFI from the British government, and had earlier put in a response to the OSTP about the challenges and risks of AI. The committee will be spending some time reflecting on what they can do during the new administration.

Publications

David Leake reported that Ashok Goel took over as editor of the magazine officially on October 1. Goel noted that he is just getting familiar with the full process, and that his workload associated with the magazine is greater than he thought it would be. He would like to spend some additional time during this familiarization period with the current publishing structure, including the web and digital versions. He will then tackle the electronic edition. He reviewed the plans for the upcoming issues, and noted that there is the possibility of an *AI Magazine*-sponsored panel at AAAI-17, which will be converted to an article in a future issue. He hopes to start a dedicated column for past presidents of AAAI, as well as AAAI Fellows. Leake thanked Goel on behalf of the Publications Committee for all his work and the energy that he is putting into the magazine.

International


Rao Kambhampati announced that Qiang Yang will serve as the new chair for the International Committee. He noted that Yang has been very helpful in making connections for AAAI in China, especially with the recruitment of program committee members for AAAI-17.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Ted Senator reported that he will be developing a Conflict of Interest policy statement and agreement for members of the Executive Council before the next meeting. He reviewed the three duties of care briefly, and noted that a COI policy is highly recommended for all nonprofits. It is a standard request from the AAAI auditor.

The IBM Watson AI XPrize

Kambhampati noted that he is on the steering committee for this event that challenges teams to attempt their own Moonshot achievements, demonstrat-



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It is the generosity and loyalty of our members that enable us to continue to provide the best possible service to the AI community and promote and further the science of artificial intelligence by sustaining the many and varied programs that AAAI provides. AAAI invites all members and other interested parties to consider a gift to help support the dozens of programs that AAAI currently sponsors. For more information about the Gift Program, please see write to us at donate17@aaai.org.

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ing AI-human collaboration to address humanity's Grand Challenges. Professional organizations will provide experts to help teams.

AIHub

Tom Dietterich reported that he is continuing to work with Sabine Hauert on the AI Hub project, a site that will provide one-stop shopping for AI-related items. The goal is still to create a cooperative effort among 4-5 different organizations who will each contribute \$15-20K each to support the venture.

Although he requested an initial \$5K to get the project off the ground, it was determined that Council approval was not needed for this amount and it will be considered separately as needed. Dietterich asked for volunteers to help with the development of the project, and will have an update at the February meeting.

Kambhampati thanked everyone for coming, wished everyone a happy holiday season, and the meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.