



NEWS

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IHMC SCIENTIST RECOGNIZED WITH TOP HONOR

~ Dr. Yorick Wilks named ACM Fellow: One of 47 new Fellows among 97,000 members ~

San Francisco –At its annual awards banquet held Saturday, the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) honored Dr. Yorick Alexander Wilks, Senior Research Scientist at the Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC) as an ACM Fellow for his fundamental contributions to the field of computing and computer science. The ACM Fellows selection is the most prestigious recognition of the Association, assigned to the top one percent of its membership for outstanding accomplishments in computing and information technology. Known internationally for his substantial work in the area of artificial intelligence, Dr. Wilks was specifically honored by the ACM for his research on meaning-based understanding of natural language by computers.

“This is indeed a great honor, for me and for IHMC, and I hope it will add to the visibility of our new research program in Ocala” commented Wilks after the award was presented.

The ACM was founded in 1947 to advance the science, development, construction, and application of the new machinery for computing, reasoning, and other handling of information. Since its establishment, the ACM has evolved into a widely respected international scientific and educational organization dedicated to advancing the art, science, engineering, and application of information technology – at the highest professional and ethical standards. As the world’s largest educational and scientific computing society, the Association boasts a membership of over 97,000 from over 100 countries. The ACM Council established the prestigious Fellows Program in 1993 authorizing that the designation of ACM Fellow be conferred on those members who have distinguished themselves by exceptional technical and professional achievements in information technology. This prized distinction is awarded to an elite number of ACM members on an annual basis whose extraordinary accomplishments have set them apart from peers. ACM Fellows hail from the world’s leading universities, industries, and research labs and, together, are credited with significant advances in computer theory and practice which play a crucial role in driving international innovations necessary to sustaining competitiveness.

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FLORIDA INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN & MACHINE COGNITION

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Dr. Wilks joined the Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC) in May 2010 as Senior Research Scientist. Based at the new IHMC facility in Ocala, Florida, Wilks joins a growing team of highly respected scientists and engineers (in both Pensacola and Ocala) engaged in a wide range of research topics in the fields of artificial intelligence, robotics, human-centered computing, human/machine interfaces, and biologically-inspired approaches to cybersecurity to name but a few.

IHMC Director and CEO Dr. Ken Ford noted that “Dr. Wilks’ election as an ACM Fellow is the latest in a long string of well-deserved honors and his addition to our already exceptionally strong Artificial Intelligence group will be a key to our continued growth and success in our new Ocala facility.”

Dr. Wilks also maintains senior level academic and research affiliations at the University of Sheffield and the Oxford Internet Institute at Balliol College – both in the United Kingdom. Wilks studied math and philosophy at Cambridge, England, was a researcher at the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in California, and then Professor of Computer Science and Linguistics at the University of Essex (England). In 1985, he was asked to lead the Computing Research Laboratory in New Mexico. In 1993, Wilks became Chair of Artificial Intelligence at the University of Sheffield, where he was also founding Director of the Institute of Language, Speech and Hearing. He is widely published in the area of artificial intelligence and has authored nine books. He is a Fellow of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, a member of the UK Computing Research Council, and on the boards of fifteen artificial intelligence-related journals. In 1997, he led the team that won the prestigious Loebner prize for his design of the dialogue system CONVERSE. In 2008, he was awarded the Zampolli Prize, as well as the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL) Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2009, he was awarded the Lovelace Medal by the British Computer Society.

About IHMC

The IHMC is a not-for-profit research institute associated with the Florida University System. IHMC has grown into one of the nation’s premier research organizations with world-class scientists and engineers investigating a broad range of topics related to human-centered computing, artificial intelligence, robotics, and computer science. IHMC researchers and staff collaborate extensively with industry and government labs to develop science and technology that can be enabling with respect to society’s broader goals. IHMC sponsors, partners, and collaborators have included: DARPA, NASA, NSF, Navy, Army, Air Force, Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, Honda, IBM, Nokia, Fujitsu, IDEO, Lockheed, Raytheon, and Boeing to name but a few. IHMC is headquartered in Pensacola, Florida and recently opened a new research facility in Ocala, Florida. For more information on IHMC go to **www.ihmc.us**.

