VIRTUAL Celebration

ECE Undergraduate & Graduate Students Outstanding Achievements & Awards
Opening Remarks:
Dr. Narayan Mandayam, ECE Department Chair
Opening Remarks:
Dr. Thomas Farris,
Dean, School of Engineering
Introduction:
Dr. Wade Trappe, ECE Undergraduate Director
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Presenter:
Dr. Wade Trappe,
ECE Undergraduate Director
Samantha Cheng
Ambassador, Department Liaison

Samantha Cheng is graduating with a double major in Computer Engineering and English. She was the ECE department liaison for the engineering ambassador program as well as a peer mentor, and had a great time working with the ECE faculty and students. After graduation, she will be working at Akamai Technologies in their platform engineering rotation program.
Undergraduate Program Awards:
Leadership and Service

Presenter:
Dr. Chung-Tse Michael Wu
Undergraduate Program Awards:
Leadership and Service

Ariela Chomski
RU IEEE President

I am graduating from Rutgers University with a B.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE). During my time at Rutgers, I've been an active member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Student Branch at Rutgers. I attended Novice2Expert Coding Python classes and was involved with the VEXU Robotics team through IEEE. Last year, I served as the student branch's Treasurer and served as its President this past year. Despite the trying circumstances, Rutgers IEEE ran several new, successful initiatives like the ECE Faculty Coffee Chat series and a virtual hackathon. Our Discord server also saw tremendous growth, going from 500 members to over 1000 members. After graduation, I will be working as part of the Digital Design team at L3Harris in the Clifton, NJ office. I'm so thankful for all the opportunities I've had through the ECE department and IEEE and can't wait to apply what I've learned in my professional life.
Undergraduate Program Awards:
Leadership and Service

Presenter:
Dr. Hana Godrich
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Puru Saxena

Fishbowl Tutor

My name is Puru Saxena, I am a first year Master’s student in Software Engineering. I really like learning new skills and working with people from different walks of life, which I have been successful in doing in college. I am passionate about sustainability and also about teaching, which is where I want to be using my acquired knowledge.
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Tran Trong Tan Ngo

Fishbowl Tutor

I will be graduating from Rutgers with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Engineering in May 2021. I have a great passion for coding and building software that brings convenience to people. During my time at Rutgers, I have humbly achieved many accomplishments with tremendous support from many professors. I was on the Dean’s List for the Fall 2019, Spring 2020 and Fall 2021 semesters, and my team won 6th place among 57 teams for the ECE Capstone projects. In addition, to expand my network and stay out of my comfort zone, I applied and got accepted as a Research Assistant at Aresty Center to work on The Biomedical Engineering Department's project. Moreover, I was a Fish Bowl Tutor helping students struggling with their Electrical and Computer Engineering-related courses to get better understanding and eventually enjoy the courses more. I love Rutgers because it has provided me with many opportunities to grow professionally and personally, and the professors are terrifically patient and helpful. I am forever grateful and proud to be a Rutgers alumni.
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Natalie Kim
Fishbowl Tutor

Natalie is from Watchung, New Jersey, and is graduating this year with bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering and mathematics. While attending Rutgers, she served as a peer mentor, tutor, and Honors Academy Design Advisor. In her free time, she enjoys pursuing her interests in creative writing, music, and gardening.
Yang Bai
Fishbowl Tutor

Yang Bai is an alumni of Rutgers ECE department. During her study at Rutgers ECE, she was a TA for Intro to Computer Systems in both Spring 2019 and Spring 2020. In Fall 2018, she TAed Digital System Design. She was also graders for Cloud Computing and Introduction to Parallel and Distributed Programming in Fall 2020. At the meantime, she was a fish bowl tutor to support undergraduate students in a wide range of courses.
Undergraduate Program Awards:
Leadership and Service

Thorson Dai
Fishbowl Tutor
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Presenter: Kevin Wine
Amber Haynes

Federal Work Study

Amber Haynes is graduating with a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering (CE track) and a minor in Mathematics. She entered Rutgers in 2017 as an EOF student from Newark, NJ. In the past years she has completed a Software Engineering internship and Computational Neuroscience Research. She is currently a research assistant in Professor Jorge Ortiz’ Cyber-Physical Intelligence Lab, where she contributes data science and development work and has co-authored a paper accepted to an international conference. She plans to enter the industry as a Software Engineer, with plans to return to academia for a higher degree in the future.
Undergraduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Sukhjit Singh
Federal Work Study

I have recently graduated with a B.S. in Electrical & Computer Engineering with a focus in Electrical Engineering and Minor in Computer Science. Throughout my time at Rutgers I participated in many research projects ranging from robotics to bio sensors and worked on many projects in the ECE department as a Federal Work Study (FWS) student. My favorite projects from these included designing an 8-Bit Breadboard Computer and designing the Transistor Radio project for the Electronic Devices Lab course. My favorite part of working in the department was presenting these projects to incoming freshman to get them excited about studying Engineering at Rutgers in the ECE program. As I now leave Rutgers, I will be working as a Software Engineer for Verizon Wireless in their NJ headquarters. I am grateful to receive this award and thank the ECE department for providing me with mentorship and the opportunity to learn and apply new skills to various projects.
Hi, I'm Piotr Zakrevski, but you can just call me Peter. I was born in Minsk, Belarus, but grew up here locally in Edison, New Jersey. I am graduating Rutgers with a major in Computer Engineering and a minor in Computer Science. During my time in Rutgers, I was part of the Honor's Academy and worked here in the ECE department. I also had a brief stint as a dining hall worker during my sophomore year. I was working about 40 hours a week then!

But.... I might be better known for being the crazy bike man (my main mode of transportation, rain or shine, was biking to college as a commuter), or as the guy who goes and gets lost in the woods every other day. Outside of school I have been most involved in a sport called orienteering! It combines map reading skills with trail esque running and is something I have been doing since I was a kid. I got the chance to represent the US in the junior world championship multiple times, and was even selected to represent Rutgers in the World University Championships last year; unfortunately, a lot of things were cancelled last year.

After graduating Rutgers, I will be moving near Madison, Wisconsin, to work as a software developer at Epic Systems. My time at Rutgers was a blast, and I am thankful I got to work at such a wonderful department! Don't miss me too much ;}
Undergraduate Program Awards:
George and Ilsa Goubau Memorial Awards:
Academic Excellence and Strength in Electromagnetics

Presenter:
Dr. Chung-Tse Michael Wu
Andrew Simon

My four years spent on the banks were some of the best years of my life. The experiences I had, the people I met, and the lessons I learned helped me grow as a student, an engineer, and a person. The bonds I have made with my peers and inspiration I have found from my professors will last for the rest of my life. I will forever be a scarlet knight. Go RU!
Undergraduate Program Awards:
George and Ilsa Goubau Memorial Awards:
Academic Excellence and Strength in Electromagnetics

Peter Wu
Crystal D’Souza
Naomi Popo
Ashok & Yehovalli Sethu
Electrical and Computer Engineering
Annual Scholarship

Presenter:
Dr. Wade Trappe,
ECE Undergraduate Director
Undergraduate Program Awards:
Ashok & Yehovalli Sethu Electrical and Computer Engineering
Annual Scholarship

Jakub Vogel

Jakub is a third-year undergraduate studying Electrical and Computer engineering, with a concentration in computer engineering, and a minor in business administration. He is also a member of the Honors College on the College Avenue campus. In his free time, he likes to play volleyball on the Rutger's Men's Club Volleyball team and also serves as the treasurer. When he graduates, he plans on pursuing a master's degree at Rutgers, with a focus on software engineering. Jakub was an intern at General Motors this past summer as a controls engineer and will be returning this summer to work on database integration. He aspires to combine his engineering and business knowledge to create intuitive software that has the potential to benefit millions of people.
Yati Patel

Yati Patel is a junior studying computer engineering and computer science. She is currently a research assistant working under a mechanical and aerospace engineering lab at Princeton University. Her work focuses on predicting time-series data of complex physical systems. Outside of class, she likes to get involved with Rutgers communities such as Rutgers Formula Racing and Society of Women Engineers.
Introduction:
Dr. Yingying Chen, ECE Graduate Director
Graduate Program Awards: Academic Achievement

Presenter: Dr. Zoran Gajic
Intessar Al-Iedani received her B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees from the Department of Computer Engineering, University of Basrah, Iraq, in 2003 and 2006, respectively. She worked as an assistant lecturer at the Department of Computer Engineering, University of Basrah, Iraq, from 2007 to 2012. After receiving a Graduate fellowship from the Higher Committee for Education Development in Iraq (HCED) in 2012, she started pursuing her PhD study at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Rutgers University, from which she received her Ph.D. degree in 2021, under the supervision of Professor Zoran Gajic. Intessar was the recipient of a Graduate Fellowship from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Rutgers University, for the three consecutive academic years, 2017-2020. She also received Dr. Puri Scholarship Award for two consecutive years, 2019 and 2020. She is currently working as an assistant lecturer at the Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Basrah, Iraq.

Intessar’s research focuses on the order reduction of large-scale wind energy systems using the balancing and singular perturbation methods.
Graduate Program Awards:
Academic Achievement

Presenter:
Dr. Laleh Najafizadeh
Ali Haddad

*Computational Methods for Probing the Spatio-Temporo-Rhythmic Characteristics of the Task-Associated Brain Functional Networks via Electroencephalography*

Graduated January 2021. Advisor: Dr. Laleh Najafizadeh

Ali received his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees, in 2003 and 2006, respectively, from the Department of Computer Engineering, University of Basrah, Iraq, where he has been working as an assistant lecturer since 2007. After receiving a Graduate fellowship from the Higher Committee for Education Development in Iraq (HCED) in 2012, he joined the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Rutgers University, from which he received his Ph.D. degree in 2021, under the supervision of Professor Laleh Najafizadeh. Ali was the recipient of the ECE Research Excellence and the ECE Student Development Awards in 2016 and 2018, respectively, and the School of Graduate Studies Conference Travel Award in 2018.

Ali’s research focuses on developing mathematical models and computational algorithms for probing the spatio-temporo-rhythmic characteristics of the dynamic functional connectivity in the brain, through different functional monitoring modalities, and employing the acquired information in brain-computer-interfacing.
Graduate Program Awards: Academic Achievement

Guangyuan Li

Magnesium Zinc Oxide Dual Gate Thin Film Transistor-Based Biosensor for Monitoring the Biofilm Formation
Graduated May 2021. Advisor: Dr. Yicheng Lu

Guangyuan Li, an ECE Ph.D. student working with Professor Yicheng Lu. His research focuses on semiconductor material growth using MOCVD and its corresponding characterizations to improve the performance of Thin Film Transistors (TFTs) for various applications, including biosensors, photovoltaics, and wireless communications. He has received his MS degree at Rutgers in May 2017, and is to receive his Ph.D. degree in May 2021.
Graduate Program Awards: Academic Achievement

Presenter: Dr. Bo Yuan
Graduate Program Awards:
Academic Achievement

Siyu Liao

Structured Deep Neural Network with Low Complexity
Graduated October 2020. Advisor: Dr. Bo Yuan

Siyu Liao received his BE degree from Hefei University of Technology in 2014 and his MPhil degree from City University of New York in 2018. He received his PhD degree from the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering at Rutgers University in 2020. He is now an Applied Scientist at Amazon and his research interests include deep learning algorithm and hardware co-design, natural language processing and AI fairness.
Graduate Program Awards: Academic Achievement

Presenter: Dr. Dario Pompili
Vidyasagar Sadhu

*Real-Time Autonomic Decision Making Under Uncertain Environments for UAV-Based Search-And-Rescue Missions*

Graduated October 2020. Advisor: Dr. Dario Pompili

Vidyasagar Sadhu is currently employed as Advanced Computer Scientist (Autonomy) in Artificial Intelligence Center at SRI International, Menlo Park, CA. He has completed his PhD under the guidance of Dr. Dario Pompili from Electrical and Computer Engineering department of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. His PhD thesis is on real-time autonomic decision making under uncertain environments for UAV-based search-and-rescue missions. His research interests include applied Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Machine Learning (ML) and related domains, with a special focus on Multi-Agent Deep Reinforcement Learning (MADRL), Multi-Modal Time Series Modeling and Deep Generative Modeling for Computer Vision (CV). Vidyasagar has received several awards, one being a National Science Foundation (NSF) Student Travel Grant of $1,500 to attend and present his research findings on context verification for mobile computing at the 2019 IEEE PerCom conference in Kyoto, Japan. Also, together with his four-member multi-university team, he has been awarded the NSF Student Research Project Grant of $6,000 towards conducting student-led research in distributed machine learning. At Rutgers, he has been awarded multiple times the ECE PhD Research Excellence Award and Teaching Assistant—Graduate Assistant—Professional Development Fund (TA-GA-PDF) Award. He stood first among 28 research posters presented during the ECE Research Day in 2016. He has also been awarded the “Best Demo Award” at the 2019 IEEE SECON conference, Boston, MA. In 2015, he—along with his colleague Xueyuan Zhao—was selected as one of 35 finalist teams for the highly competitive Qualcomm Innovation Fellowship (QInF) out of 146 eligible teams from entire United States. With about 160 citations, Vidyasagar has an h-index of 8 and an i10-index of 6 (Google Scholar, May 2021).
Graduate Program Awards:
Academic Achievement

Presenter:
Dr. Narayan Mandayam,
ECE Department Chair
Mohammad Yousefvand is a senior wireless systems engineer at Qualcomm in San Diego. He received his Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering from Rutgers University-New Brunswick, NJ, in 2021, where he was working under the supervision of Prof. Narayan B. Mandayam. He holds a master’s degree in computer engineering-networking from Amirkabir University of Technology (Tehran Polytechnic). His research interests include user association and resource optimization in wireless HetNets, beam management in mmWave networks, machine learning, game theory and prospect theory. He has published in several prestigious IEEE journals and conferences including IEEE transactions on wireless communications, IEEE ICC, and IEEE Globecom, while also serving as a peer reviewer for several IEEE publications. He is the recipient of several awards including the 2020 IEEE ComSoc Phoenix ISS award, 2018 Rutgers professional development fund, and 2014 NJIT Gary Thomas doctoral fellowship.
Graduate Program Awards:
ECE TA Award: Spring 2020

Presenter:
Dr. Zoran Gajic
Corey Norton

Corey is a two-time Rutgers graduate, having completed both his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He worked in Dr. Umer Hassan’s lab on the development of a point-of-care biosensor for sepsis monitoring and successfully defended his thesis in Spring 2020. During his time at Rutgers, Corey was also an active member of Engineers Without Borders, working on projects in Guatemala, Tanzania, and Camden, NJ. Corey has a passion for medical device development and is currently employed as a Project Engineer for Abbot Laboratories.
Faith Johnson

Faith Johnson graduated magna cum laude with her bachelor’s in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Rutgers University in 2019, where she was a member of the inaugural class of the Honors College. Now, Faith is pursuing her PhD in Computer Engineering with a focus on Computer Vision. She is currently researching how to implement socially aware navigation in robots under the SOCRATES NRT grant with her PI, Professor Kristin Dana.
Shiva Salsabilian

Shiva Salsabilian is a Ph.D. candidate at Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Rutgers University. She is advised by Prof. Laleh Najafizadeh at the Integrated Systems and Neuroimaging Lab. Her research interests lie in the area of signal processing, machine learning, and data analytics (specifically in neural signal processing). Shiva has received her M.Sc. degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering in the field of Communication Systems from Isfahan University of Technology, Iran in 2011. She is the recipient of Rutgers ECE PhD Student Research Excellence Award (2018) and Rutgers ECE TA/GA Professional Development Award (2019). She has recently received a one-year fellowship award for 2021 from Colgate Experiential Learning Grad Opportunity program and is working with the Data Science and Analytics team.
Graduate Program Awards:
ECE TA Award: Fall 2020

Presenter:
Dr. Yicheng Lu
Anastasios Dimas received his Diploma from the Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics, University of Patras, Greece, in 2013, his M.Sc. Degree in communications engineering from the Technical University of Munich (TUM), Munich, Germany, in 2015, and his Ph.D. from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Piscataway, NJ, in 2021. His Ph.D. research was funded through the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Fellowship. For the Fall 2020 semester, he received the best teaching assistant (TA) award in ECE. From 2014 to 2015, he was a Research Intern with the Fraunhofer Institute for Embedded Systems and Communication Technologies (ESK), Munich, Germany. In 2016, he was a Research Associate with the Visualization and Virtual Reality Group, the University of Patras, Greece. In summer 2019, he was a Research Intern with MathWorks, Natick, MA. From October 2019 to March 2020, he was a Co-op with Nokia Bell Labs, Murray Hill, NJ. Since March 2021, he is a Data Scientist at Creative Radicals, McLean, VA. His research interests include machine learning and reinforcement learning. He is a member of the IEEE and the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE).
Carolina Naim

Carolina Naim is Ph.D. candidate at Rutgers University in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department. She is working in the CSI lab under the direction of Prof. Salim El Rouayheb. Her research is primarily focused on the broad area of information theoretic privacy and security with applications in distributed computing and machine learning. Before coming to Rutgers, in 2017, Carolina received her B.S. in Communication and Computer Engineering from the American University of Science and Technology in Beirut.
Pei Peng

Pei Peng received his B.S. degree in information engineering from South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China in 2011, and the M.S. degree in electronics and communication engineering from Shanghai Institute of Micro-system and Information Technology, Chinese Academy of Science, Shanghai, China in 2014.

Since 2015, he is a Ph.D. candidate in electrical and computer engineering department in Rutgers University, NJ, USA. His research interests are coding and allocation in distributed computing systems, overt communication, machine learning.
Graduate Program Awards: Leadership and Service

Presenter: Dr. Hana Godrich
Graduate Program Awards:
Leadership and Service

Demetrios Lambropoulous
Capstone Assistant
Graduate Program Awards: 
Professor Narindra Puri Memorial 
Endowed Scholarship Recipients

Dr. Narendra Nath Puri was a professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Rutgers for 38 years. He was dedicated to excellence in Electrical Engineering and countless students, faculty and alumni have benefited from his efforts. Dr. Puri passed away on December 4, 2015 at the age of 82. Dr. Kamal Puri, the wife of Dr. Puri, has generously donated this scholarship in honor of her husband and his work. This year's award was given to three students in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Presenter:
Dr. Yingying Chen, 
ECE Graduate Director
Jeffrey Isaacs

Jeffrey Isaacs is an MS student working independently on global localization for indoor autonomous mobile robots. He received his undergraduate degree in computer engineering at Rutgers in 2019. His research focuses on 2D map processing, sensor fusion, and covariance tracking across multiple sensor modalities.
Graduate Program Awards:
Professor Narindra Puri Memorial Endowed Scholarship Recipients

Zhaoyi Xu

Zhaoyi Xu received his B.E at the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China (UESTC) in May 2018. He currently is a PhD student working with Dr. Athina Petropulu in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Rutgers University. His research focuses on the dual-function radar communication system and MIMO radar.
Graduate Program Awards:
Professor Narindra Puri Memorial Endowed Scholarship Recipients

Shounak Rangwala

I am a second-year Master's student specializing in Computer Engineering. My interests lie in software development incorporating principles of parallel computing and deep learning. I am grateful to all my professors, especially Prof. Shantenu Jha and Prof. Ivan Seskar, for giving me the opportunity of working on projects in these fields. I am currently working as a researcher, in WINLAB, on my project regarding the design of self-driving cars using ROS. My spare time is divided between watching football (GO CHIEFS!!) and working on pet web-application projects. My goal is to put my skills to use by joining the industry after I graduate.
Graduate Program Awards:
The Paul Panayotatos Endowed Scholarship Recipients

The Paul Panayotatos Endowed Scholarship was established in memory of Professor Paul Panayotatos who served for 30 years as a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. The Scholarship is awarded to graduate students demonstrating academic excellence and pursuing an advanced degree in the sustainable energy areas including renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy conversion or a related area.

Presenter:
Dr. Yingying Chen,
ECE Graduate Director
Graduate Program Awards:
The Paul Panayotatos Endowed Scholarship Recipients

Tahiya Chowdhury

Tahiya is a Ph.D. student working with Prof. Jorge Ortiz and a member of the Cyber-Physical Intelligence Lab. She received an MS in Computer Engineering from Rutgers University and a BS in Electrical Engineering from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Her current research focuses on developing deep learning-based models to analyze occupants’ behavior in buildings. Using the internet-of-things and machine learning, her work explores time series segmentation, occupancy detection, and activity recognition using limited data for dynamically changing physical environments.
Graduate Program Awards:
The Paul Panayotatos Endowed Scholarship Recipients

Murtadha Aldeer

Murtadha Aldeer is a Ph.D. student working with Professor Richard Martin and Professor Jorge Ortiz in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He is a member of WINALB and Prof. Jorge Ortiz’ lab – the Cyber-Physical Intelligence lab – where researchers focus on designing new low-energy systems and machine learning techniques on embedded sensors for connected health applications. One of the main application domains is in smart pill bottles for medication adherence monitoring and user identification.
Graduate Program Awards:
IEEE Communications Society
Phoenix ISS Awards

Presenter:
Dr. Narayan Mandayam,
ECE Department Chair
Tejashri Kuber

Tejashri Kuber graduated from the PhD program from the ECE Department at Rutgers University, under the guidance of Professor Mandayam and Ivan Seskar. She currently works in Dell Technologies as a 5G R&D Hardware Engineer in Toronto, Canada. Her research interests are in Wireless Communications and Machine Learning. Outside of work, she likes gardening and mystery novels.
Closing Remarks
Dr. Narayan Mandayam,
ECE Department Chair
Congratulations to all!

We are proud of your hard work and look forward to your future success!