

# Yen-Chia Hsu

## Contact

Senior Research Programmer/Analyst  
CREATE Lab, Robotics Institute  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA

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## Biography

I am a researcher, engineer, and designer. I currently work as a Senior Research Programmer/Analyst (will be a Project Scientist from December 2018) in the CREATE Lab in the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. My research focuses on designing, implementing, and evaluating interactive systems that support community engagement and democratize scientific knowledge. Techniques that I apply include:

- **Citizen Science/Civic Engagement** to empower lay people and professionals to establish sustainable partnerships and produce impactful scientific knowledge.
- **Human Computation/Crowdsourcing** to engage diverse community members in collecting high-quality data over large geographical areas and long periods of time.
- **Interactive Data Visualization/Storytelling** to enable communities to explore the collected data, identify patterns, form hypotheses, and raise public awareness by sharing findings.
- **Machine learning/Computer Vision/Artificial Intelligence** to assist communities in organizing scientific knowledge and interpreting patterns in large datasets.

## Education

**Ph.D. in Robotics** 08/2014 – 08/2018  
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA  
Thesis Title: Designing Interactive Systems for Community Citizen Science [O4]  
Committee: Illah Nourbakhsh (advisor), Aaron Steinfeld, Jeffrey Bigham, and Eric Paulos

**Master of Tangible Interaction Design** 08/2011 – 12/2012  
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA

**Dual B.S. in Architecture and in Computer Science** 08/2005 – 05/2010  
National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan

## Experiences

**CREATE Lab, Robotics Institute, School of Computer Science, Carnegie Mellon University, USA**

Project Scientist 12/2018 –  
Senior Research Programmer 08/2018 – 11/2018  
Ph.D. Student Researcher 09/2014 – 07/2018  
Web Designer/Developer 10/2013 – 07/2014  
Research Associate 01/2013 – 07/2013

**Code Lab, School of Architecture, College of Fine Arts, Carnegie Mellon University, USA**

Master's Student 09/2011 – 12/2012  
Lab Assistant 09/2011 – 05/2012

**IA Lab, Department of Architecture, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan**

Research Assistant 09/2010 – 06/2011

## Awards and Honors

[A5] **Best Paper Honorable Mention Award (Top 5%)**. 2017. ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, USA. <https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=3025853>

[A4] **Webby People's Voice Award, Best Use of Video or Moving Image**. 2014. International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, USA. <https://www.webbyawards.com/winners/2014/web/website-features-and-design/best-use-of-video-or-moving-image/timelapse/>

<p><b>Awards and Honors</b> (Continued)</p>	<p>[A3] <b>Best New Artist</b>. 2009. The National Golden Award for Architecture, Taiwan. <a href="http://www.yestaiwan.com.tw/page06_5.html">http://www.yestaiwan.com.tw/page06_5.html</a></p> <p>[A2] <b>Third Prize, National Country House Design Competition</b>. 2008. Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan.</p> <p>[A1] <b>Outstanding Student Academic Achievement</b>. 2005, 2006, 2007. Department of Architecture, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan.</p>
<p><b>Referred Conference Papers</b></p>	<p>[C3] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>, Paul Dille, Jennifer Cross, Beatrice Dias, Randy Sargent, and Illah Nourbakhsh. 2017. Community-Empowered Air Quality Monitoring System. In Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2017). ACM. (Best Paper Honorable Mention Award, Top 5%)</p> <p>[C2] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>, Tay-Sheng Jeng, Yang-Ting Shen, and Po-Chun Chen. 2012. SynTag: A Web-based Platform for Labeling Real-time Video. In Proceedings of the ACM 2012 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW 2012). ACM.</p> <p>[C1] Yang-Ting Shen, Tay-Sheng Jeng, and <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>. 2011. A "Live" Interactive Tagging Interface for Collaborative Learning. International Conference on Cooperative Design, Visualization and Engineering (CDVE 2011). Springer.</p>
<p><b>Referred Posters and Works-in-Progress</b></p>	<p>[P2] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>, Jennifer Cross, Paul Dille, Illah Nourbakhsh, Leann Leiter, and Ryan Grode. 2018. Visualization Tool for Environmental Sensing and Public Health Data. In Proceedings of the 2018 ACM Conference Companion Publication on Designing Interactive Systems (DIS 2018 Companion). ACM.</p> <p>[P1] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>, Paul Dille, Randy Sargent, Christopher Bartley, and Illah Nourbakhsh. 2015. A Web-based Large-scale Timelapse Editor for Creating and Sharing Guided Video Tours and Interactive Slideshows. IEEE Information Visualization Posters, 2015.</p>
<p><b>Other Publications</b></p>	<p>[O4] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>. 2018. Designing Interactive Systems for Community Citizen Science. Ph.D. Dissertation. Technical Report CMU-RI-TR-18-29. Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.</p> <p>[O3] Emiliano Huet-Vaughn, Nicholas Muller, and <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>. 2018. Livestreaming Pollution: A New Form of Public Disclosure and a Catalyst for Citizen Engagement. No. w24664. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2018.</p> <p>[O2] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>. 2018. SimArch: A Multi-agent System For Human Path Simulation In Architecture Design. arXiv preprint arXiv:1807.03760.</p> <p>[O1] <b>Yen-Chia Hsu</b>. 2016. Industrial Smoke Detection and Visualization. Technical Report CMU-RI-TR-16-55. Robotics Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.</p>
<p><b>Selected Media and Books Coverage</b></p>	<p>[Featured.F7] <b>Environmental Health News</b>. Kristina Marusic. 2018. ER visits for asthma dropped 38% the year after one of Pittsburgh's biggest polluters shut down. <a href="https://www.ehn.org/shenango-coke-works-closed-asthma-dropped-2566777141.html">https://www.ehn.org/shenango-coke-works-closed-asthma-dropped-2566777141.html</a></p> <p>[Featured.F6] <b>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</b>. Ashley Murray. 2017. Carnegie Mellon Scientists Use App to Track Foul Odors in Pittsburgh. <a href="http://www.post-gazette.com/business/tech-news/2017/07/03/smell-pgh-app-carnegie-mellon-university-cmu-create-lab-foul-smell-pittsburgh/stories/201706300430">http://www.post-gazette.com/business/tech-news/2017/07/03/smell-pgh-app-carnegie-mellon-university-cmu-create-lab-foul-smell-pittsburgh/stories/201706300430</a></p> <p>[Featured.F5] <b>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</b>. Don Hopey. 2015. Regulators Reviewing Shenango Coke Works' Compliance with 2012 consent decree. <a href="http://www.post-gazette.com/news/environment/2015/11/19/Regulators-reviewing-Shenango-Coke-Works-compliance-with-2012-consent-decree/stories/201511190230">http://www.post-gazette.com/news/environment/2015/11/19/Regulators-reviewing-Shenango-Coke-Works-compliance-with-2012-consent-decree/stories/201511190230</a></p>

**Selected  
Media and  
Books  
Coverage  
(Continued)**

- [Featured.F4] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. Don Hopey. 2015. Shenango Channel Keeps an Eye on the Neville Island Sky. <http://www.post-gazette.com/local/west/2015/11/16/Shenango-Channel-keeps-an-eye-on-the-Neville-Island-sky/stories/201511160007>
- [Featured.F3] **TIME**. Jeffrey Kluger. 2013. Timelapse: Landsat Satellite Images of Climate Change. <http://world.time.com/timelapse/>
- [Featured.F2] **Ars Technica**. Sean Gallagher. 2013. How Google built a 52-terapixel time-lapse portrait of Earth. <https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2013/06/how-google-built-a-108-terapixel-time-lapse-portrait-of-earth/>
- [Featured.F1] **Google Earth Engine**. 2013. Earth Timelapse. <https://earthengine.google.com/timelapse/>
- [M37] **Hack The Grid**. Andrea Polli. 2018. Carnegie Museum Of Art. <https://www.ideabooks.nl/9780880390613-andrea-polli-hack-the-grid>
- [M36] **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (TribLIVE)**. Theresa Clift. 2018. Allegheny County Health Department defends air quality efforts and plans stricter coke plant rules. <https://triblive.com/local/allegheny/13878930-74/allegheny-county-health-department-defends-air-quality-efforts-plans-stricter-coke-plant>
- [M35] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. Don Hopey. 2018. Air advocates read “scroll of smells” at health board meeting. <http://www.post-gazette.com/news/environment/2018/07/19/allegheny-county-air-quality-complaints-environmental-advocates-citizen-smells/stories/201807180177>
- [M34] **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (TribLIVE)**. Theresa Clift. 2018. Environmental groups pressure Allegheny County officials to crack down harder on polluters. <https://triblive.com/local/allegheny/13863417-74/environmental-groups-pressure-allegheny-county-officials-to-crack-down-harder-on-polluters>
- [M33] **ProMarket**. Emiliano Huet-Vaughn, Nicholas Z. Muller, and Yen-Chia Hsu. 2018. Livestreaming Polluters to Enforce Environmental Policy: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Pittsburgh. <https://promarket.org/livestreaming-polluters-enforce-environmental-policy-evidence-natural-experiment-pittsburgh/>
- [M32] **PublicSource**. Teake Zuidema. 2018. Will Pittsburgh flourish as a hub of eds and meds or gas and petrochemicals? Can we have it both ways? <https://www.publicsource.org/will-pittsburgh-flourish-as-a-hub-of-eds-and-meds-or-gas-and-petrochemicals-can-we-have-it-both-ways/>
- [M31] **NEXTpittsburgh**. Melissa Rayworth. 2018. Once again, Pittsburgh air ranks among the worst. Here's what you can do about it. <https://www.nextpittsburgh.com/latest-news/american-lung-associations-new-air-quality-report-points-areas-pittsburgh-must-improve/>
- [M30] **Allegheny Front**. Kara Holsopple. 2018. Turns Out Air Pollution Makes for Good Listening. <https://www.alleghenyfront.org/turns-out-air-pollution-makes-good-listening/>
- [M29] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. Rachel Filippini. 2018. Allegheny County must crack down on odor emissions violations. <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/letters/2018/02/22/Allegheny-County-must-crack-down-on-odor-emissions-violations/stories/201802210024>
- [M28] **PC Magazine**. Michelle Donahue. 2018. Citizen Science: Do Try This at Home. <https://www.pcmag.com/article/360317/citizen-science-do-try-this-at-home>
- [M27] **StateScoop**. Jason Shueh. 2017. A whiff of citizen engagement powers Pittsburgh's new air pollution app. <https://statescoop.com/app-helps-pittsburghers-report-hazardous-pollution>
- [M26] **PSFK**. Zack Palm. 2017. A New Platform in Pittsburgh Lets Citizens Report Foul Smells. <https://www.psfk.com/2017/07/a-new-platform-in-pittsburgh-lets-citizens-report-foul-smells.html>

**Selected  
Media and  
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Coverage  
(Continued)**

- [M25] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. Anna Garner. 2017. The Smell PGH app helps track air pollution. <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/letters/2017/06/27/The-Smell-PGH-app/stories/201706270077>
- [M24] **Lawrenceville United**. David Breingan. 2017. Joint Comments from LU and LC on Draft Operating Permit for McConway and Torley. <http://www.lunited.org/tag/allegheeny-county-health-department/>
- [M23] **NEXTpittsburgh**. Amanda Waltz. 2017. CREATE Lab clears the air with improved Smell PGH app and new website. <https://www.nextpittsburgh.com/environment/create-lab-clears-the-air-with-improved-smell-pgh-app-and-new-website/>
- [M22] **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (TribLIVE)**. Matthew Santoni. 2017. California Towns Adapt Carnegie Mellon's Smell Pittsburgh App. <https://triblive.com/local/allegheeny/12632255-74/california-towns-adapt-carnegie-mellons-smell-pittsburgh-app>
- [M21] **Grantcraft**. Philip Johnson. 2017. Using Low-Cost Technology to Democratize Data and Protect Public Health. <http://www.grantcraft.org/blog/using-low-cost-technology-to-democratize-data-and-protect-public-health-cas>
- [M20] **Fast Company Co.Design**. Mark Wilson. 2017. Does Your City Literally Stink? There's An App For That. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90133143/does-your-city-literally-stink-theres-an-app-for-that>
- [M19] **Carnegie Mellon University News**. Byron Spice. 2017. Smell PGH App Helps Pittsburghers Report Foul Odors. <https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2017/june/smell-something-say-something.html>
- [M18] **TechCrunch**. John Biggs. 2017. Smell PGH Lets You Report Weird Smells in Pittsburgh. <https://techcrunch.com/2017/06/22/smellpgh-lets-you-report-weird-smells-in-pittsburgh/>
- [M17] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. Stephen Riccardi and Beatrice Dias. 2017. Smelly air? There's an app for that. <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/Op-Ed/2017/03/26/Smelly-air-There-s-an-app-for-that/stories/201703260122>
- [M16] **Greenapps&web**. Judit Urquijo. 2017. Smell Pittsburgh, an example of app to report pollution by foul odors. <https://www.greenappsandweb.com/en/android-en/odor-pollution-report/>
- [M15] **NEXTpittsburgh**. Amanda Waltz. 2017. What it was like "Living Downwind" of Shenango Coke Works. <https://www.nextpittsburgh.com/environment/what-it-was-like-living-downwind-of-shenango-coke-works/>
- [M14] **90.5 WESA**. Julie Grant. 2017. Life Smells Better After Shenango. <http://www.wesa.fm/post/life-smells-better-after-shenango#stream/o>
- [M13] **Toxic News**. Gwen Ottinger. 2017. Lessons Learned from an Experiment in Infrastructuring. <https://toxicnews.org/2017/05/16/lessons-learned-from-an-experiment-in-infrastructuring/>
- [M12] **The Glassblock**. Adam Shuck. 2016. If You Smell Something, Say Something: CMU Launches Mobile App Smell PGH. <http://theglassblock.com/2016/09/29/smell-something-say-something-cmu-mobile-app-smell-pgh/>
- [M11] **Allegheny Front**. Lou Blouin. 2016. You Can Now Report Terrible Air in the Burgh with this New App. <https://www.alleghenyfront.org/you-can-now-report-terrible-air-in-the-burgh-with-this-new-app/>
- [M10] **Group Against Smog and Pollution**. 2016. A Change in the Air After the Closure of the Shenango Coke Plant. <https://gasp-pgh.org/wp-content/uploads/hotline-2016spring-web.pdf>



**Selected  
Media and  
Books  
Coverage  
(Continued)**

- [M9] **The Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)**. Gwen Ottinger. 2016. A Missing Link in Making Meaning from Air Monitoring? [http://www.4sonline.org/blog/post/a\\_missing\\_link\\_in\\_making\\_meaning\\_from\\_air\\_monitoring](http://www.4sonline.org/blog/post/a_missing_link_in_making_meaning_from_air_monitoring)
- [M8] **HuffPost**. Illah Nourbakhsh. 2016. A Community Advocacy Success Story. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/illah-Nourbakhsh/a-community-advocacy-succ\\_b\\_8859210.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/illah-Nourbakhsh/a-community-advocacy-succ_b_8859210.html)
- [M7] **Group Against Smog and Pollution**. 2016. A Change in the Air After the Closure of the Shenango Coke Plant. <https://gasp-pgh.org/2016/06/01/a-change-in-the-air-after-the-closure-of-the-shenango-coke-plant/>
- [M6] **Pittsburgh City Paper**. Ashley Murray. 2015. What you need to know about Pittsburgh news this week. <https://www.pghcitypaper.com/Blog/archives/2015/11/20/what-you-need-to-know-about-pittsburgh-news-this-week>
- [M5] **Carnegie Mellon University News**. Byron Spice. 2015. Shenango Channel Provides Online Resource For Sharing Images, Data About Coke Plant. <https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2015/november/tracking-coke-plant.html>
- [M4] **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**. 2015. Pollution cam: Now the public has an eye on Shenango, 24/7. <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/editorials/2015/11/21/Pollution-cam-Now-the-public-has-an-eye-on-Shenango-24-7/stories/201511300034>
- [M3] **Google Official Blog**. 2013. A picture of Earth through time. <https://googleblog.blogspot.com/2013/05/a-picture-of-earth-through-time.html>
- [M2] **Google Research Blog**. 2013. Building A Visual Planetary Time Machine. <https://ai.googleblog.com/2013/06/building-visual-planetary-time-machine.html>
- [M1] **Carnegie Mellon University News**. 2013. Robotics Institute Helps Make Stunning Satellite Imagery Easily Accessible. [https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2013/may/may9\\_timelapse.html](https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2013/may/may9_timelapse.html)

**Released  
Open Source  
Tools**

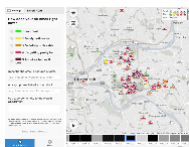
- [T10] CMU CREATE Lab. Earth Timelapse: An Interactive Display for Exploring Large-Scale Satellite Imagery and Global Situation Datasets. Computer software. <https://github.com/CMU-CREATE-Lab/data-visualization-tools>
- [T9] CMU CREATE Lab. A Mobile Application to Crowdsourcing and Visualize Pollution Odors. Computer software. <https://github.com/CMU-CREATE-Lab/smell-pittsburgh-rails>
- [T8] CMU CREATE Lab. Visualization Tool for Environmental Sensing and Public Health Data. Computer software. <https://github.com/CMU-CREATE-Lab/ehp-channel>
- [T7] CMU CREATE Lab. A Web-Based Interactive Viewer for Visualizing Large-Scale Timelapses. Computer software. <https://github.com/CMU-CREATE-Lab/timemachine-viewer>
- [T6] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A HTML/CSS Template for Building Projects or Personal Websites. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/project-website-template>
- [T5] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A JavaScript Library for Creating an Interactive Geographical Heatmap. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/geo-heatmap>
- [T4] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A JavaScript Library for Creating an Interactive Discrete Timeline. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/flat-block-chart>
- [T3] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A Wearable Shoe-Integrated Interaction Interface. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/SENSEable-Shoes>
- [T2] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A Multi-agent System for Human Path Simulation In Architecture Design. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/SimArch>
- [T1] **Yen-Chia Hsu**. A Web-based Platform for Labeling Real-time Video. Computer software. <https://github.com/yenchiah/SynTag>

## Projects



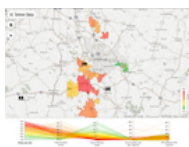
### **A Tool for Creating and Editing Interactive Stories on the EarthTime Timelapse [T10]** 2018

I worked in a team to develop a web-based tool that enables users to create, edit, and share stories about nature changes and human impact on EarthTime, visualizing the transformation of the EarthTime over three decades with images and datasets. (<https://earthtime.org>)



### **A Mobile Application to Crowdfund and Visualize Pollution Odors [F6, T4, T9]** 2017 – 2018

I worked in a team to develop Smell Pittsburgh, a mobile application for citizens to report pollution odors to regulators. A map visualizes the reports with air quality and wind data. A machine learning model predicts odors and sends push notifications. (<http://smellpgh.org>)



### **Visualization Tool for Environmental Sensing and Public Health Data [P2, T5, T8]** 2017

I worked in a team to develop the Environmental Health Channel, an interactive web-based tool for visualizing health symptoms, particulate measurements, and personal stories from residents who are affected by oil and gas drilling development. (<http://envhealthchannel.org>)



### **Community-Empowered Air Quality Monitoring System [C3, O3, O1, F7, F5, F4, A5]** 2015 – 2016

I worked with a Pittsburgh community to develop an air quality monitoring system, which provides evidence with videos, air quality data, and smell reports. The system uses computer vision to generate a series of animated smoke images.



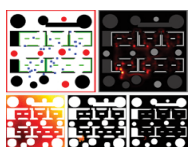
### **A Web-based Large-scale Timelapse Editor for Interactive Storytelling [P1, T7]** 2014

Based on the timelapse viewer, I developed a storytelling tool that operates along multiple dimensions: geolocation, time, and scale. Users can use it to create interactive slideshows or guided tours, and then embed or share them on social media for telling interactive stories.



### **Earth Timelapse Viewer Visualizing Landsat Satellite Imagery [F3, F2, F1, T7, A4]** 2013

I worked in a team to develop an Earth timelapse viewer, consisting of 33 cloud-free mosaics of the planet with billions of pixels from 1984 to 2016, released with Google and TIME. (<https://earthengine.google.com/timelapse/>, <http://world.time.com/timelapse/>)



### **SimArch: A Multi-Agent System for Human Path Simulation [O2, T2]** 2012

SimArch uses Markov Decision Process to build a behavior model. The model simulates mental states, target range detection, and collision prediction when agents behave in a museum. SimArch outputs the prediction of how likely a person will occur in a location after simulation.



### **SENSEable Shoes: Hands-Free and Eyes-Free Mobile Interaction [T3]** 2012

SENSEable Shoes is a platform for interaction designers to create applications. It recognizes low-level activities by measuring the weight distribution over the feet with sensors embedded in the shoe pad. A Support Vector Machine classifier identifies mobile activities and foot gestures.



### **Draw-o-lin: A Music Visualizer for Violin** 2011

What does music look like? Draw-o-lin is an interactive mobile robot visualizing music by drawing graphs on a paper according to various sound properties. Violin performers control the robot by playing various pitches, alternating the volume, and changing the tempo of the music.



### **SynTag: A Web-Based Platform for Labeling Real-time Video [C2, C1, T1]** 2010

Users can label Good, Question, and Disagree tags in real or non-real time with visualization of time-stamp video previews on an interactive timeline. SynTag creates thumbnails by using real-time tags for presenters to receive instant feedback and for others to retrieve videos.

<b>Professional Activities</b>	<b>Program Committee/Reviewer</b>	
	Taiwan Association of Computer-Human Interaction (TAICHI)	2017 – 2018
	IEEE Robotics and Automation Magazine	2015
	<b>Conference Presenter</b>	
	ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)	2017
	Air and Waste Management Association (A&WMA)	2017
	ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)	2012
	<b>Invited Talks</b>	
	Special Topics: Crowd Computing (05-899) Course, Carnegie Mellon University	Fall 2017
	Google Earth Engine User Summit, Mountain View	2015
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Invited Events</b>	
	Bloomberg Philanthropies New Tech & Urban Air Pollution Meeting, New York	2017
	<b>Department of Architecture, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan</b>	
	General Coordinator, Graduation Design Preparation Committee	2009
	Director of General Affairs, Student Committee	2008
<b>Teaching</b>	Class Representative	2007
	<b>Robotics Institute, School of Computer Science, Carnegie Mellon University, USA</b>	
	Teaching Assistant of 16-811 Math Fundamentals for Robotics	Fall 2015

(Last updated: September 24, 2018)