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Three Indian American Professors Named Fellows of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

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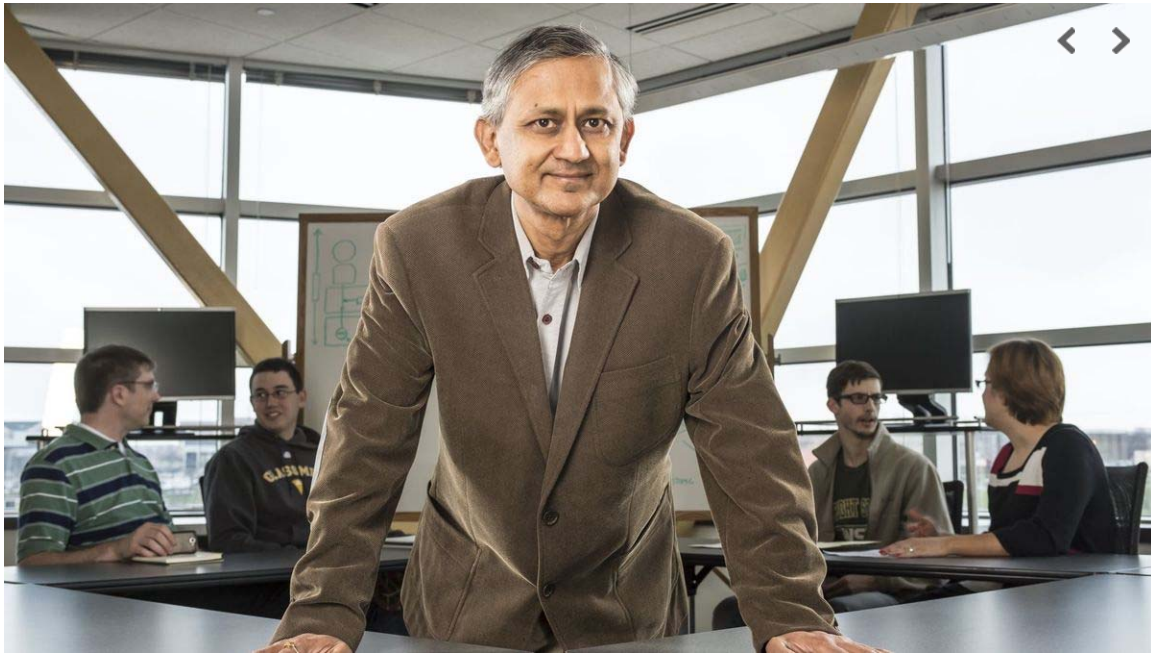
Amit Sheth of Wright State University was among three Indian American professors named 2018 Fellows by the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence. (wright.edu photo)

The Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Jan. 1 announced its 2018 Fellows, with Indian Americans Amit Sheth, Gaurav Sukhatme and Dinesh Manocha among the eight honorees.

Each year the AAAI recognizes a group of individuals who have made significant, sustained contributions to the field of artificial intelligence through the continuation of its Fellows program.

The AAAI Fellows Program, as originally chartered, honors a small percentage of the AAAI membership. Fellows are recognized as having unusual distinction in the profession, according to the AAAI website.

Usually only members who have made contributions to the field for a decade or more will be selected in any year. A Fellow may be recognized for individual technical contributions or for having performed significant extended service for the AAAI, it said.

Sheth, a professor at Wright State University, was honored "for significant contributions to

knowledge empowered AI techniques and semantic technologies."

Sheth moved to Wright State in 2007 as the LexisNexis Ohio Eminent Scholar, a professor of computer science and engineering, and the executive director of Kno.e.sis - Ohio Center for Excellence in knowledge-enabled computing.

His research has pioneered development and use of knowledge graphs to enhance AI techniques of Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing, and for making sense of Big Data, according to a university news release.

"Given the importance of AI and the selectivity of the AAAI Fellows program, Sheth's election as a Fellow of AAAI is a significant honor for our university and a recognition of the world-class research and intellectual property generation by our faculty," said Provost Tom Sudkamp in a statement.

Sheth received his B.E. from BITS-Pilani, India in 1981 and his doctorate in computer and information science from Ohio State University in 1985.

Sukhatme is the dean's professor and chairman in the University of Southern California's School of Engineering's Department of Computer Science. Additionally, the Indian American serves as the co-director of the Robotics Research Lab and the director of the Robotic Embedded Systems Lab, which he founded in 2000.

His research interests are in multi-robot systems and sensor/actuator networks, according to his university bio. He has published extensively in these and related areas, it said.

Sukhatme has served as principal investigator on numerous NSF, DARPA and NASA grants. He is a co-principal investigator at the Center for Embedded Networked Sensing, an NSF Science and Technology Center. He is a fellow of the IEEE and a recipient of the NSF CAREER award and the Okawa Foundation research award. He is one of the founders of the Robotics: Science and Systems conference. He was program chair of the 2008 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation and program chair of the 2011 IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Robots and Systems.

He received his undergraduate education at IIT Bombay in computer science and engineering, and M.S. and doctorate degrees in computer science from USC.

Manocha is currently Phi Delta Theta/Matthew Mason Distinguished Professor of Computer Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He received his B.Tech. degree in computer science and engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi in 1987 and a doctorate in computer science at U.C. Berkeley in 1992.

He has coauthored more than 420 papers in the leading conferences and journals on computer graphics, robotics, and scientific computing. Manocha has received numerous awards including an IBM Fellowship, Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship, NSF CAREER Award, Office of Naval Research Young Investigator Award, SIGMOD IndySort Winner, Honda Research Award, Hettleman Award at UNC Chapel Hill and 14 best paper awards at leading conferences.

He has served on the editorial board of 10 leading journals and program committees of more than 100 conferences in computer graphics, robotics, high performance computing, geometric computing and symbolic computation, according to his university bio.

Manocha has supervised dozens of M.S. and doctorate students over the last 23 years at UNC Chapel Hill. His research group has developed many well-known software packages for collision detection, triangulation, GPU-based algorithms, solid modeling and solving algebraic systems, the bio said.

These packages have been downloaded by more than 150K users worldwide and licensed to more than 55 industrial organizations including Intel, Microsoft, Disney, Ford, Kawasaki, Siemens, Phillips Labs, MSC Software, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, among others, it said.

AAAI will celebrate the newly elected Fellows — also including Nancy Amato, Regina Barzilay, Marie desJardins, Kevin Leyton-Brown and Joelle Pineau — at a Feb. 4 event in New Orleans.