

Zishen Wan

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EDUCATION

Georgia Institute of Technology

Atlanta, GA

Ph.D., School of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE)

2024 (expected)

- Advisor: Prof. Arijit Raychowdhury
- Research Areas: VLSI, computer architecture, deep learning, robotics

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA

M.S., School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS)

2020

- Advisor: Prof. Vijay Janapa Reddi, Prof. David Brooks
- Research Areas: VLSI, computer architecture, deep learning, robotics
- GPA: 3.83/4 (Selected Courses: Computer Architecture, Edge Computing, Decision Theory, Computer Vision)
- Courses-registration at EECS Department, **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** (Machine Learning, VLSI, DL Hardware)

Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT)

Harbin, China

B.E. with High Honors, Department of Electrical Engineering (EE)

2018

- Overall GPA: 93.5/100 (3.95/4); Major GPA: 95.9/100 (4.00/4); Rank: 2/230 (top 1%)
- Exchange student at **National Tsing-Hua University** and **National Chiao-Tung University** in 2017, GPA 4.27/4.3

PUBLICATIONS

Conference

- Yu-Shun Hsiao*, **Zishen Wan***, Tianyu Jia, Radhika Ghosal, David Brooks, Gu-Yeon Wei, Vijay Janapa Reddi. “Micro Aerial Vehicle Fault Injection and Detection”, under review in *IEEE International Symposium on High Performance Computer Architecture (HPCA)*, 2021. (***Equal Contributions, listed based on alphabetical order**)
- Srivatsan Krishnan, **Zishen Wan**, Kshitij Bhardwaj, Paul Whatamough, Aleksandra Faust, Gu-Yeon Wei, David Brooks, Vijay Janapa Reddi. “Algorithm-Hardware Co-Design for Aerial Robots”, under review in *IEEE International Symposium on High Performance Computer Architecture (HPCA)*, 2021.
- Thierry Tambe, En-yu Yang, **Zishen Wan**, Yuntian Deng, Vijay Janapa Reddi, Alexander Rush, David Brooks, Gu-Yeon Wei. “Algorithm-Hardware Co-Design of Adaptive Floating-Point Encodings for Resilient Deep Learning Inference,” In *Design Automation Conference (DAC)*, 2020. (**Best Paper Award**)
- Srivatsan Krishnan*, Sharad Chitlangia*, Max Lam*, **Zishen Wan**, Aleksandra Faust, Vijay Janapa Reddi. “Quantized Reinforcement Learning (QuaRL)”, In *3rd Conference on Machine Learning and System (MLSys) Workshop*, 2020.

Journal

- Srivatsan Krishnan, **Zishen Wan**, Kshitij Bhardwaj, Paul Whatamough, Aleksandra Faust, Gu-Yeon Wei, David Brooks, Vijay Janapa Reddi. “The Sky is Not the Limit: A Visual Performance Model for Cyber-Physical Co-design in Aerial Autonomous Machines”, In *IEEE Computer Architecture Letters (CAL)*, Mar 2020, vol. 19, issue. 1, pp. 38-42.
- Peng Xie, Yu Wen, **Zishen Wan**, Yishan Wang. “Influences of Group Velocity Dispersion on Ultrafast Pulse Shaping in Time Lens,” In *Physica Scripta*, 94(12):125503, 2019
- Peng Xie, Yu Wen, Wenqiang Yang, **Zishen Wan**, Jiarui Liu, Xinyu Wang, Siqi Da, Yishan Wang. “Tunable Gallium Nitride-based Devices for Ultrafast Signal Processing,” In *Modern Physics Letter B*, 33(17):1950187, 2019
- Weiwei Li, Xueguang Zhang, **Zishen Wan**, Yini Zhao, Dianguo Xu. “Simplified Algorithm for Non-orthogonal Coordinate System SVM of Three-level Converter Considering Optimal Switching Sequence,” In *Transactions of China Electrotechnical Society*, 34(zk1): 181-188, 2019
- Peng Xie, Yu Wen, **Zishen Wan**, Xinyu Wang, Jiarui Liu, Wenqiang Yang, Xiaofeng Li, Yishan Wang. “Electrically Tunable Temporal Imaging in a Graphene-based Waveguide,” In *Japanese Journal of Applied Physics*, 58(5):050914, 2019
- **Zishen Wan**, Yadong Chen. “Development of Pressure Testing Instrument for High-Voltage Isolator,” In *Electric Power Science and Engineering*, 2017

Undergraduate Thesis

- **Zishen Wan**. “Modulation and Neutral Voltage Balance Control of NPC Three-level Converter (Best Undergraduate Thesis Award of Harbin Institute of Technology),” In *Proceedings of HIT Best Undergraduate Thesis*, 2018

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Harvard University – Edge Computing Lab

Cambridge, MA

Graduate Researcher; Advisor: Prof. Vijay Janapa Reddi

Jan.2019-Present

Agile System Design Flow for End-to-End (E2E) Learning-Based Aerial Autonomous Machine

- Proposed a framework to automate algorithm-SoC co-design for aerial robots. Built a systolic array-based simulator to conduct SoC-level design space exploration. Implemented ML (Bayesian Optimization/Reinforcement Learning) methods to automate DSE. Explored architectural optimizations like per-layer DVFS and Non-Volatile Memory technologies.
- Used the Catapult HLS tool to generate Verilog RTL from SystemC/C++ source code, and evaluated the PPA results of E2E models for robot tasks. Run the ASIC flow of place-and-route and generated a layout of the floor-planned accelerator.
- Proposed a roofline model to determine the role of compute on the efficiency of aerial robots. Characterized E2E models on Nvidia Xavier, TX2, Intel NCS, RasPi and Google Coral. Applied analytical models to streamline the DSE of accelerators.

Comprehensive Quantization Study on Reinforcement Learning

- Conducted the first comprehensive study that quantifies the effects of quantization on various deep reinforcement learning policies. Applied post-training quantization and quantization-aware-training to a spectrum of reinforcement learning tasks and training algorithms (PPO, A2C, DDPG, and DQN). Deployed a quantized RL based navigation policy to RasPi-3b.

Harvard University – VLSI and Architecture Lab

Cambridge, MA

Graduate Researcher; Advisor: Prof. David Brooks, Prof. Gu-Yeon Wei

Jan.2019-Jul.2020

Algorithm-Hardware Co-design of Various Datatypes for Resilient Deep Learning Inference

- Implemented AdaptivFloat, a numeric for resilient deep learning inference. Performed quantization experiments on integer, AdaptivFloat, block FP, float point and posit encodings across a diverse set of CNN, RNN and Transformer models with Pytorch. AdaptivFloat demonstrates much greater resiliency at low precision and higher energy efficiency.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA

Graduate Researcher; Advisor: Dr. Peng Xie

Aug.2018-Dec.2018

Design Analysis Algorithms and Simulation Models for Nano-Scale Systems

- Implemented system algorithms for analyzing light and matter interactions based on Runge Kutta method. Built simulation models for nano-scale device design, group velocity dispersion, third-order dispersion based on the finite element method.

Harbin Institute of Technology – Power Electronics Lab

Harbin, China

Undergraduate Researcher; Advisor: Prof. Xueguang Zhang, Prof. Dianguo Xu

Dec.2016-Jun.2018

Modulation and Optimal Control Strategy for Multi-Level Converter

- Proposed a neutral voltage balance control method and a simplified optimal switching sequences method for nonorthogonal space vector modulation of three-level converter. Established mathematical and simulation models in MATLAB. Built a DSP-based multi-level grid-connected experimental platform and verified the feasibility of the proposed methods.

SELECTED COURSE PROJECTS

Computer Architecture / VLSI Field:

Project 1: Image Pre-processor for Robust DNN Resistant to Adversarial Attacks (Best Project Award)

Instructor: Prof. Vivienne Sze. **Course:** Design and Analysis of Digital Integrated Circuits (MIT)

Sep.2018-Dec.2018

- Proposed and designed an image pre-processor with three different image filtering algorithms for robust DNN resistant to adversarial attacks. Performed RTL synthesis, layout, place and route using Cadence 90nm technology.
- Exploited various optimization methods to reduce computation and increase throughputs, such as data reuse, parallelism and approximations. Explored various trade-offs in designing with voltage scaling analysis and different architecture comparisons.

Project 2: AutoX: Automating Algorithm-SoC Co-design for Aerial Robots (Best Project Award)

Instructor: Prof. Vijay Janapa Reddi. **Course:** Edge Computing: Autonomous Machines (Harvard)

Sept.2019-Dec.2019

- Proposed an agile HW-SW co-design flow for aerial robots. The front-end is to design and validate end-to-end models for robot tasks, and the back-end is to synthesize hardware accelerators for processing the model efficiently based on the SystemC +HLS approach and C++-to-RTL flow. The PPA results are measured on post-HLS Verilog RTL using 16nm technology.

Project 3: Study of Posit Numeric in Speech Recognition Neural Inference

Sep.2018-Dec.2018

Instructor: Prof. David Brooks. **Course:** Advanced Topics in Computer Architecture (Harvard)

- Studied the impact of various precisions and datatypes on speech-to-text neural inference. Implemented Python and C++ modules for Posit numeric operations and converting in all directions among float, fixed-point and Posit.

- Implemented SystemVerilog adder and multiplier modules for floating-point, fixed-point and Posit. Performed RTL synthesis, layout, place and route to compare the hardware power, performance and area results for different encodings.

Project 4: MIPS Processor Implementation and Software Optimization of Matrix Multiplication Jan.2019-May.2019

Instructor: Prof. David Brooks. **Course:** Advanced Computer Architecture (Harvard).

- Implemented a MIPS processor using SystemVerilog, C and Python, along with Xilinx FPGA implementations.
- Performed and examined TopDown analysis on linear algebra operations as implemented in Eigen and OpenBLAS libraries. Explored software optimization of matrix multiplication, such as tiling, reduced precision, sparsity, quantization, etc.

Deep Learning / Machine Learning Field:

Project 1: Generative Model for Human Pose Transferring Between Videos (Full Score Project) Sept.2018-Dec.2018

Instructor: Prof. Devavrat Shah, Prof. Suvrit Sra, Prof. David Sontag. **Course:** Machine Learning (MIT).

- Performed a human pose transfer using the generative model, video-to-video synthesis, Openpose and Densepose. Utilized a coarse-to-fine training process and achieved 10% performance improvement shown by Intersection Over Union.
- Proposed a face transfer method from ground truth to generated image, solving the problem of detail loss in generated face.

Project 2: Research on the Reliability of Autonomous Vehicles

Jan.2019-May.2019

Instructor: Prof. Vijay Janapa Reddi. **Course:** Special Topics in Computer Science (Harvard).

- Researched on the fault tolerance of perception system, compute system and control system of micro aerial vehicles, based on MAVBench, a framework for autonomous aerial vehicles. Explored the role of compute in autonomous vehicles.
- Performed hundreds of experiments using Unreal Engine, AirSim as environment simulator, Nvidia Jetson Xavier and TX2 as companion computer, under Robot Operating System (ROS).

Project 3: Wikipedia Web Traffic Time Series Forecasting

Jan.2019-May.2019

Instructor: Prof. Demba Ba. **Course:** Decision Theory (Harvard).

- Implemented Prophet, ARIMA, Encoder-decoder, GRU, LSTM, XGBoost, Kalman Filter and MCMC algorithms on approximately 145,000 Wikipedia articles to address the forecasting web traffic problem.

AWARDS

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| • Best Undergraduate Thesis Award of HIT (Top 1%) | Jun.2018 |
| • Top Ten Outstanding Graduates at HIT (Top 1%) | Jun.2018 |
| • Merit Student of Heilongjiang Province (Top 0.1%), Merit Student of Hebei Province (Top 0.1%) | Apr.2016 |
| • Second Prize (Team leader), The 11 th Undergraduate Academic Forum of HIT | Aug.2017 |
| • First Prize (Team leader), National Undergraduate Mathematical Contest in Modeling | Sept.2016 |
| • First Prize (Team leader), <i>TI Cup</i> Undergraduate Electronic Design Contest | Aug.2016 |
| • Honorable Mention (Team leader), America MCM/ICM Competition | Feb.2016/2017 |

SCHOLARSHIPS

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| • Chiang Chen Overseas Graduate Scholarship (10 of all undergraduates and graduates in China, \$50,000/person) | Jun.2018 |
| • China Telecom Scholarship (5 of all undergraduates and graduates in HIT) | May.2018 |
| • First Class of <i>Chunhui</i> Innovation Achievement Award (3 of all undergraduates in HIT, Highest Honor of HIT) | Apr.2018 |
| • Innovation and Entrepreneurship Scholarship, Ministry of Industry and Information, China | Nov.2017 |
| • First Class Academic Excellence Scholarship for Freshman & Sophomore & Junior, HIT (Top 3%) | Oct.2015/2016/2017 |
| • Siemens Academic Scholarship (30 of all undergraduates and graduates in HIT) | Oct.2016 |

TALKS AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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| • Modulation and Neutral Voltage Balance Control of Three-Level Converter, <i>Power Electronics Summit, HIT</i> | Jun, 2018 |
| • The Design and Implementation of Multi-Output Switching Power Supply, <i>11th Academic Forum, HIT</i> | Aug 2017 |
| • Optimization Mathematical Model for Mooring System, <i>National Mathematical Modeling Forum, HIT</i> | Nov, 2016 |
| • Teaching Assistant of undergraduate course: Digital Electronics Technology | 2018 |

SKILLS

- **Software & Hardware Language:** Python, C/C++, Verilog HDL, SystemC, MATLAB, SQL, LATEX, MIPS assembly
- **Tools:** Catapult, HSPICE, Xilinx FPGA, Cadence, Quartus, OrCAD, MultiSim, Proteus, Altium Designer, Unreal, AirSim
- **Machine Learning Framework:** Pytorch, TensorFlow, Keras, Caffe, Scikit-learn