

Yifan Yang

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Computer Architecture, Accelerator for Sparse and Irregular Applications, HW/SW Co-design,
Domain-specific Accelerator, Graph Analytics, FPGA

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, EECS

Ph.D. in Computer Science

S.M. in Computer Science

Cambridge, MA

May 2021 - present

September 2019 - May 2021

- GPA: 5.0/5.0
- Thesis advisor: Prof. Daniel Sanchez and Prof. Joel Emer
- Thesis title: Architectural Support for Effective Data Compression In Irregular Applications
- Coursework: Computer System Architecture, Hardware Architecture for Deep Learning, Advances in Computer Vision, Theory of Computation

Tsinghua University, Department of Physics

B.S. in Mathematics and Physics

Beijing, China

August 2015 - July 2019

- GPA: 3.90/4.00
- Thesis advisor: Prof. Leibo Liu
- Thesis title: A Message Passing-based Graph Processing Framework on CPU-FPGA Heterogeneous System
- Selected coursework: Fundamental of Digital Logic and Processor, Digital Integrated Circuit Analysis and Design (English), Computer Organization and Architecture, Operating System, Principles and Practice of Compiler Construction, Distributed Computing, Principles of Analog Circuits, Data Structure, Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, Autonomous Driving

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant

MIT Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory

September 2019- present

Cambridge, MA

- Advisor: Prof. Daniel Sanchez and Prof. Joel Emer
- Worked on offering architectural support to accelerate irregular applications using data compression

Designed **SpZip**, specialized hardware support for traversing and generating compressed data structures in irregular applications

Proposed the Dataflow Configuration Language (DCL) for the SpZip programmable hardware

Evaluated SpZip using zsim simulation on a broad set of irregular applications, results show large performance gains and data movement reductions over prior systems

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Research Center for Mobile Computing, Tsinghua University

March 2017- August 2019

Beijing, China

- Advisor: Prof. Leibo Liu
- Worked on designing graph processing framework across the hardware software interface

Proposed the asynchronous Block Coordinate Descent (BCD) view of iterative graph algorithms to reveal the algorithmic and system trade-offs on achieving fast algorithm convergence

Designed **GraphABCD**, an asynchronous graph processing framework on heterogeneous system
Prototyped GraphABCD whole system in Verilog on Intel HARPv2 CPU-FPGA heterogeneous platform

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Berkeley Artificial Intelligence Research Lab (BAIR), UC Berkeley

July 2018 - September 2018

Berkeley, CA

- Advisor: Prof. Kurt Keutzer, collaboration with Kees Vissers and Michaela Blott from Xilinx Research Labs
- Worked on co-designing Convolutional Neural Network and its hardware accelerator

Designed **DiracDeltaNet**, a hardware efficient neural network targeting image classification task

Quantized DiracDeltaNet down to 4bit weight and 4bit activations with minor accuracy loss

Designed and implemented **Synetgy**: the hardware accelerator for DiracDeltaNet on embedded FPGA using HLS

PUBLICATIONS

1. **Yifan Yang**, Joel S. Emer, and Daniel Sanchez, "SpZip: Architectural Support for Effective Data Compression In Irregular Applications", in Proceedings of the 48th annual International Symposium on Computer Architecture (ISCA-48), 2021.
2. **Yifan Yang**, Zhaoshi Li, Yangdong Deng, Zhiwei Liu, Shouyi Yin, Shaojun Wei, and Leibo Liu, "GraphABCD: Scaling Out Graph Analytics with Asynchronous Block Coordinate Descent", in Proceedings of the 47th annual International Symposium on Computer Architecture (ISCA-47), 2020.
3. **Yifan Yang**, Qijing Huang, Bichen Wu, Tianjun Zhang, Liang Ma, Giulio Gambardella, Michaela Blott, Luciano Lavagno, Kees Vissers, John Wawrzynek, and Kurt Keutzer, "Synetgy: Algorithm-hardware Co-design for ConvNet Accelerators on Embedded FPGAs", in Proceedings of the 2019 ACM/SIGDA International Symposium on Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGA), 2019.

HONORS & AWARDS

- MIT Jacobs Presidential Fellowship Cambridge, 2019
- Chi-sun Yeh Nominee Prize (8%) Beijing, 2019
- CNPC Scholarship (5%) Beijing, 2018
- National Scholarship (1/91) Beijing, 2017
- Outstanding Award in the 35th Tsinghua 'Challenge Cup' (Top 6/381)
(Student Extracurricular Academic Science and Technology Works Competition) Beijing, 2017
- Zhang Mingwei Scholarship (10%) Beijing, 2016

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: C/C++, Python, Verilog, System Verilog, Vivado HLS, Unix/Linux, Golang, R, MATLAB, Assembly

Tools: Intel Pin, zsim, Intel(Altera) toolchain (Quartus, Qsys), Xilinx toolchain (Vivado, Vivado HLS, PYNQ), Modelsim, VCS, Pytorch