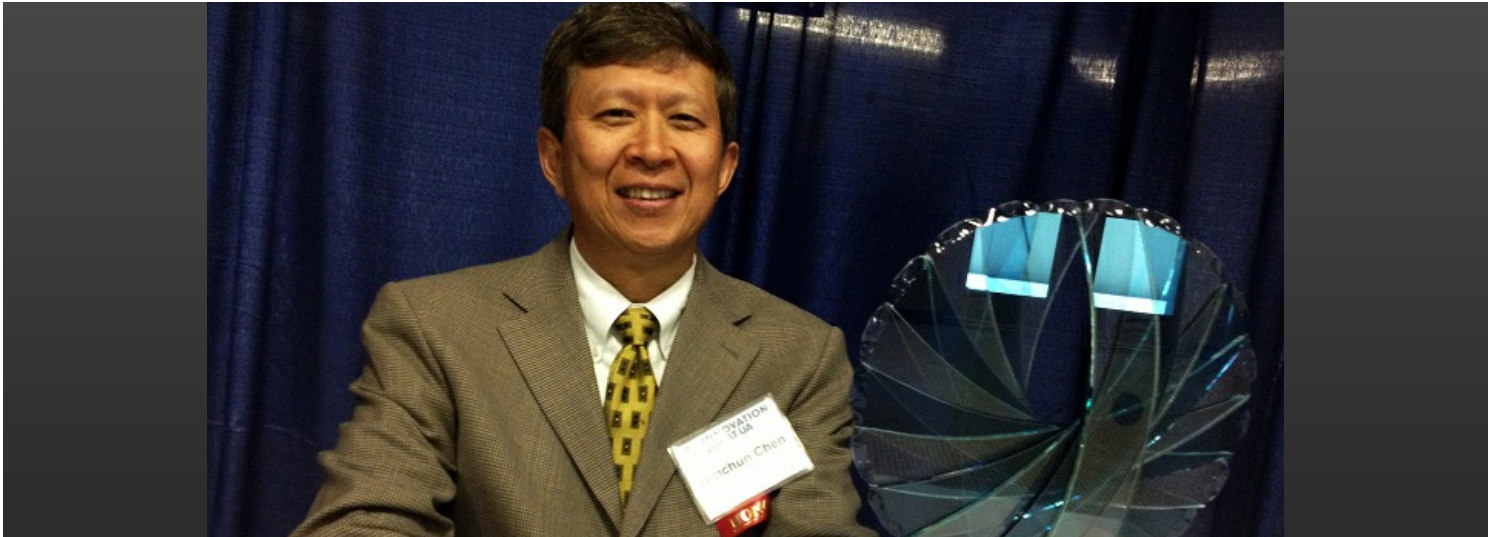


Hsinchun Chen Caps Off Year of Achievement with Regents' Professor Designation

■ Featured Story

by Eller College - Jun 5, 2013

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By Liz Warren-Pederson

Hsinchun Chen, professor of MIS, has been named a Regents' Professor by the Arizona Board of Regents Academic Affairs Committee.

The title is reserved for faculty members with exceptional achievements that have brought them international distinction. Only three percent of UA faculty may hold this distinction at any given time. Chen is the second Eller faculty member to hold the title; MIS department founder and former head **Jay Nunamaker** is also a Regents' Professor.

The news comes on the heels of other significant achievements for Chen: in March, he was awarded the **Thomas R. Brown Chair in Management and Technology**, and then he was named the **UA Innovator of the Year**.



Hsinchun Chen, Professor of MIS, UA Regents' Professor, Thomas R. Brown Chair in Management and Technology, and Director, Artificial Intelligence Laboratory.
Photo by Thomas

He recently made a significant gift to the Eller College.

"It's my way of saying thank you to the university that's allowed me to grow," he said, describing what he called a positive cycle: "I have been able to develop my research, then commercialize it, where I had some success, and so the third piece in the cycle is philanthropy."

Chen joined the Eller College after completing his doctoral studies at New York University in 1989. "I knew that Arizona would be my home," he said. "It was the most technical **MIS department** in the country, and Jay [Nunamaker] spearheaded an innovative agenda."

Nunamaker hired Chen, who was developing artificial intelligence tools for analyzing, categorizing, and visualizing extremely large amounts of data – he was researching "big data" for 20 years before the topic became a critical research area and an industry buzzword.

"I didn't know it would become such a big field," Chen said. Initially, he was focused on artificial intelligence for information retrieval in a library context, through which he became involved in the National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded **Digital Library Initiative**. It was the first NSF grant of many to come. "NSF grants were unusual for business school faculty," he said, "but Jay set a good model to emulate."

He continued to work on major NSF projects, and then in 1997, he connected

Photo by Thomas Veneklasen.

with a student who was also a [Tucson Police Department](#) officer. "We became interested in whether the technology could be applied to law enforcement," Chen said, "like a Google for cops."

The result was the crime-fighting product [COPLINK®](#), which allows law enforcement agencies to draw information from multiple databases and identify associations between crimes. Chen commercialized the technology, which was ultimately acquired by IBM.

In addition to COPLINK, Chen's [Artificial Intelligence Lab](#) developed the [Dark Web project](#) to track terrorism online. And now he has set his sights on healthcare informatics. "We're starting diabetes, looking at ways to improve patient care and contain costs," he said. "What we need to start is a large amount of data, and we finally have that from Taiwanese hospitals, their digital medical records are about ten years ahead of the U.S."

Chen has mapped out a ten-year plan for this strain of research. "I'm patient, but ambitious," he said. "Hopefully this will create another positive link over time. As a professor, I want to work on innovations that have high-impact applications for society."

Top photo courtesy [Startup Tucson](#).



COPLINK allows law enforcement to search for tactical leads using a web browser on mobile devices. Photo courtesy IBM.



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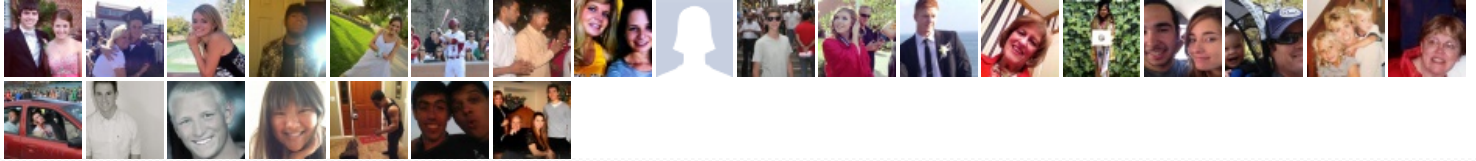
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