

Introducing the 2014 RAS Student Activities Committee

By Lauren Miller

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the new leadership of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society (RAS) Student Activities Committee (SAC). My name is Lauren Miller, and I will be serving as the SAC chair for 2014–2015 with Cochairs Arash Ajoudani, Jory Denny, and Patrick Wensing. Before introducing the new SAC, I would like to thank the Outgoing Chair Laura Margheri and Cochair Douwe Dresscher and acknowledge their hard work in managing the SAC. We appreciate all that they have done and hope to live up to their excellent example.

The opportunity to serve as chair is an honor, and I could not be more excited to have the chance to represent the RAS SAC. I am a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate at Northwestern University, working in the Neuroscience and Robotics Laboratory (Figure 1). My research is focused on adaptable algorithms for optimal search and information acquisition. As an RAS student member, I have had the opportunity to attend several RAS-sponsored conferences and participate in various lunches and social events. I have rarely found myself feeling as motivated and inspired as when surrounded by the innovative research, passionate individuals, and exhibits of cutting-edge technology at RAS events. As the chair of the SAC, I am excited to share my enthusiasm with others and enable RAS students to get involved in the community of active industry and academic researchers.

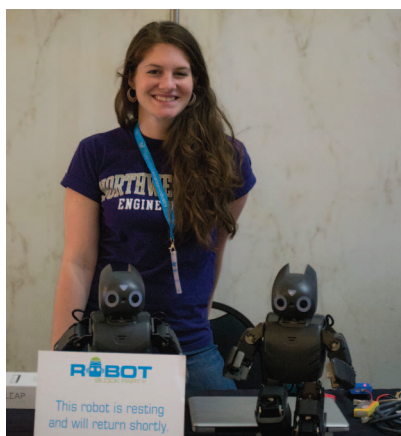


Figure 1. RAS SAC Chair Lauren Miller participating in National Robotics Week at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. See her Web page at <http://nrx.northwestern.edu/people/laurenmiller>.

With Cochairs Arash, Jory, and Patrick, profiled in this column, we have a great team and will be working hard to keep the former SAC projects going and initiate some new ones.

The SAC provides an avenue for students to connect with each other and with established researchers and acts as a bridge between the RAS student body and the Administrative Committee. In addition to organizing social and professional events at the flagship conferences, the IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA), the IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS), and the IEEE Conference on Automation Science and Engineering, the SAC is involved in organizing the Young Reviewers Program, a Webinar series, recruiting student members, and coordinating with local Chapters.

We are working on plans for IROS 2014 in Chicago, Illinois, and ICRA 2015 in Seattle, Washington. We look forward to SAC-organized events, such as the Lunch with Leaders, as well as a new series of social events to promote student networking and collaboration. I am particularly excited that the upcoming IROS 2014 will be taking place on my home turf in Chicago, and I am looking forward to showing off what the city has to offer.

Be sure to check the SAC Web site at <http://www.ieee-ras.org/member-communities/students> for information on new programs, conference events, and ways to get involved. Follow the SAC on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ieeerassac> and join the SAC mailing list (ras_students@googlegroups.com) for announcements and updates. Volunteers are always welcome, and we would love to hear from students with questions, ideas, and feedback. Finally, I want to encourage interested students to join us at the SAC meeting at IROS in September. We look forward to hearing from you.

Cochair Arash Ajoudani

Arash Ajoudani is a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate in the Humanoids and Human Centered Mechatronics Lab, Advanced Robotics Department, Italian Institute of Technology and Centro E Piaggio, University of Pisa, Italy (Figure 2). He is a winner of the Best Student Paper Award at the IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Biomimetics (ROBIO) 2013 and a finalist for the Best Manipulation Paper Award at IEEE

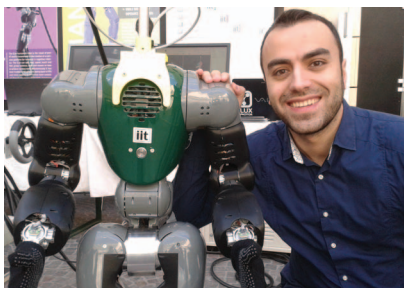


Figure 2. RAS SAC Cochair Arash Ajoudani working on the COMAN robot in the European Robotics Forum 2014. See his Web page at <http://www.iit.it/en/people/arash-ajoudani.html>.

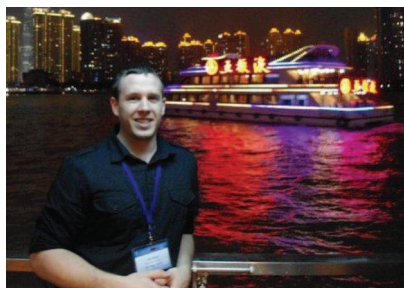


Figure 3. RAS SAC Cochair Jory Denny in Shanghai for ICRA 2011. See his Web page at <https://parasol.tamu.edu/~jdenny>.



Figure 4. RAS SAC Cochair Patrick Wensing in Shanghai for ICRA 2011. See his Web page at www.ece.osu.edu/~wensingp.

ICRA 2012. He is the author or coauthor of several publications in international conferences and journals and is currently serving as an associate editor for the IEEE/RAS and Engineering in Medicine and Biology International Conference on Biomedical Robotics and Bio-mechatronics (IEEE BioRob) and as a reviewer for robotics journals, such as *IEEE Transactions on Mechatronics*, and international robotics conferences, such as ICRA and IROS. His main research interests are in physical human–robot interaction, impedance control, robust and adaptive control, rehabilitation robotics, and telerobotics.

Cochair Jory Denny 2014

Jory Denny (Figure 3) is a third-year Ph.D. student working with Prof. Nancy

Amato at Texas A&M University. His research is currently on robotic motion planning and multiagent systems with other interests in artificial intelligence, computer graphics, and computational geometry. He volunteered for the SAC to help increase student interest and participation in RAS. He is a recipient of a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and a finalist for the Computing Research Association's Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher Award in 2011.

Cochair Patrick Wensing

Patrick Wensing (Figure 4) is a fifth-year Ph.D. student at Ohio State University, working with Dr. David E. Orin. His research interests are broadly in the areas of model-based

control and optimization, with applications to legged robotics. More specifically, his Ph.D. work has developed new methods to enable robust high-speed humanoid locomotion. In his Ph.D., he greatly enjoyed the community that RAS provides through our high-quality conferences and workshops. For the past two years, he has also served as a cochair for the RAS SAC. He is excited for the opportunity to continue in this role and for our initiatives to support young researchers through conference activities, and a rejuvenation of our Student Reviewers Program.



moving?

You don't want to miss any issue of this magazine!

change your address

BY E-MAIL: address-change@ieee.org

BY PHONE: +1 800 678 IEEE (4333) in the U.S.A.
or +1 732 981 0060 outside the U.S.A.

ONLINE: www.ieee.org, click on quick links, change contact info

BY FAX: +1 732 562 5445

Be sure to have your member number available.