Washington University in St.Louis

Aaron Bobick named dean of School of Engineering & Applied Science

Aaron Bobick, PhD, professor and founding chair of the School of Interactive Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology, has been appointed dean of the School of Engineering & Applied Science at Washington University in St. Louis effective July 1, according to Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton.

Bobick will succeed Ralph S. Quatrano, PhD, who has served as dean since 2010 and announced this fall that he would be stepping down at the end of the 2014-15 academic year.

"I could not be more pleased that our search for the next dean of the School of Engineering & Applied Science has led us to Aaron Bobick," Wrighton said. "His many accomplishments as an educator and an innovator in his field make him extremely well suited for this position. I have no doubt he will bring an insightful and creative approach to our work in this critical academic arena.

"I also am deeply grateful to Ralph Quatrano for his years of service," Wrighton added. "It is thanks in large part to his strong leadership during the past several years that the school is poised to reach new heights in research and engineering education."

"After talking with the faculty, chairs, deans, the provost and chancellor, it is clear to me that the School of Engineering & Applied Science is rapidly expanding its scope and impact, with a strong emphasis on excellence in both education and research," Bobick said. "I cannot imagine a more attractive opportunity than becoming its dean. I look forward to our continued growth in influence — not only on the university, but also on the country and around the globe, from both the innovations we produce and the student leaders we graduate."

A member of the Georgia Tech faculty since 1999, Bobick's research primarily focuses on action recognition by computer vision, an area in which he was a pioneer. He has recently extended his research to robot perception for human-robot collaboration. Bobick served as director of the Georgia Tech Graphics, Visualization and Usability Center, an internationally known research center in computer vision, graphics, ubiquitous computing and human-computer interaction.

He also originated and helped develop Georgia Tech's computational media bachelor's degree program, which attracted some 300 majors within its first five years, and developed a variety of new courses that were introduced to the university's curriculum between 2000 and 2014.

"In addition to his distinguished academic record, Aaron Bobick is also a great leader," said Provost Holden Thorp, PhD. "His remarkable success as an administrator set him apart within an exceptionally strong pool of candidates. I am highly confident in his ability to set the tone, build momentum and lead the School of Engineering & Applied Science into its next chapter."

Wrighton and Thorp also expressed their appreciation to the search committee, which was chaired by Mahendra Gupta, PhD, dean of the Olin Business School and the Geraldine J. and Robert L. Virgil Professor of Accounting and Management.

Bobick is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he earned his bachelor's degrees in mathematics and computer science and his doctorate in cognitive science. Prior to joining the Georgia Tech faculty, he served as a member of the MIT Media Laboratory faculty, where he led the Media Lab Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) Video Surveillance and Monitoring Project, as well as its Dynamic Scene Analysis research effort.

He also has served as a senior area chair for numerous international computer vision conferences and as program chair for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition. He has founded a variety of successful startup companies, is a distinguished scientist of the Association for Computing Machinery and was elected a Fellow of the IEEE in 2014.

About Washington University in St. Louis

Washington University in St. Louis is a private research university located in St. Louis, Missouri, United States. Founded in 1853, and named after George Washington, the university has students and faculty from all 50 U.S. states and more than 120 countries.