

TAKE THE [SYMPTOM SURVEY](#) DAILY | TAKE THE [TARTAN TEST](#) WEEKLY | All of us share [A Tartan's Responsibility](#).

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## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

### — Allen Newell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research Award

*This award is presented annually by SCS, recognizing undergraduate research that exemplifies the scientific process, rigorous analysis and deep impact.*

#### **Winner:**

**Ramgopal Venkateswaran** for his thesis "Two Problems in Quantum Computing and Quantum Information Theory: Quantum Approximate Counting with Non-adaptive Grover Iterations, and The Quantum Union Bound Made Easy"

Advisor: Ryan O'Donnell

#### **Runners-up:**

**Rhea Jain**, "An Exploration of Approximation Algorithms for Steiner Forest"

Advisor: Anupam Gupta

AND

**Cayden Codel**, "An Exploration of the Divide and Distribute Fixed Weights Stochastic Local Search Algorithm"

Advisor: Marijn Heule

### — SCS Alumni Award for Undergraduate Excellence

*This award recognizes technical excellence in research and development by a graduating senior participating in the thesis research program.*

#### **Winners:**

**Rachel Cleaveland**, "Formal Verification of Next-Generation Airborne Collision Avoidance System with Adversarial Intruder Behavior"

Advisor: André Platzer

AND

**Varsha Kumar**, "Visual Odometry in Darkness for Planetary Micro-Rover Autonomy"

Advisor: William "Red" Whittaker

## SCS NEWS + AWARDS

— Don't be fooled by the cuteness: OtterTune uses [machine learning to viciously optimize databases automatically](#), improving performance and efficiency. The company announced a commercial version of its service and \$2.5 million in seed funding last week. [OtterTune](#) is based in Pittsburgh and full of CMU talent: seven of its 12 employees are either CMU faculty or alumni.

— The American Statistical Association (ASA) presented its 2021 Statistical Partnerships Among Academe, Industry and Government ([SPAIG Award to Ryan Tibshirani and Roni Rosenfeld](#)) – and their Delphi Research Group [COVIDcast](#) partners – for their "commitment to the theory and practice of epidemic tracking and forecasting through building and modeling unique public health data streams."

— SCS assistant professors [Henny Admoni and Fei Fang are among eight CMU faculty members to receive](#)

[Career Development Chairs](#) to support their continued research and teaching. Admoni was named the A. Nico Habermann Assistant Professor in the Robotics Institute (RI) and Fang was named the Leonardo Assistant Professor in the Institute for Software Research (ISR). Congratulations!

— People serving time in U.S. jails and prisons are almost constantly monitored. A [new study](#) from Cylab [explores people’s understanding, attitudes and reactions to such surveillance](#). The research received an Honorable Mention award at last week’s [Association for Computing Machinery \(ACM\) Computer-Human Interaction](#) conference (CHI 2021).

— Also from CHI 2021, researchers in the ISR intend to improve privacy regulations that often determine who has access to what data and how. Their [recent study explores the notion of “meaningful privacy control”](#) – privacy choices that are both desirable to users and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the California Consumer Privacy Act.

— [Students worked on cross-disciplinary teams to explore light as art](#), interactive design and programming in the minicourse “Interaction and Expression Using the Pausch Bridge Lighting” – the 10th time a bridge lighting course was taught.

— Huanchen Zhang, who earned his Ph.D. from SCS in 2020, has [won the 2021 ACM SIGMOD Jim Gray Doctoral Dissertation Award](#) for his work on methods to reduce the memory overhead on search trees in database management systems. [The award](#) recognizes the previous year’s best [dissertation](#) in the database field. Huanchen’s thesis advisers were Computer Science Department faculty members Andy Pavlo and David Andersen. Pavlo won the same award in 2014 for the dissertation he completed at Brown University.

## **FOR FACULTY**

— SCS Partnerships will hold virtual office hours tomorrow, 1 - 2 p.m. [Join Dan Jenkins via Zoom](#).

Until next week,  
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## **REMEMBER YOUR RESOURCES**

Connect with a [Dean’s Advisory Committee](#) if you have questions or concerns you want to share.

Connect with a representative leader from [SCS Council](#) if you’d like to submit a topic for Council to consider.

Coronavirus [Updates & Information](#) and [FAQ](#) | CMU [Health Services](#), 412-268-2157

[SCS Alerts & Resources](#) | [For Students](#) | [For Staff](#) | [For Faculty](#) | [For Researchers](#)