

Georgia Tech Dean of the College of Computing, Dr. Charles Isbell, Honored with the 2023 Richard Tapia Achievement Award

The Tapia Award is presented to a distinguished computational scientist, computer scientist, or computer engineer each year.

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*said Dr. Valerie Taylor, CEO
and President CMD-IT*

People with Disabilities in IT ([CMD-IT](#)) honors Dr. Charles Isbell, The John P. Imlay Dean of the College of Computing at The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), as the 2023 recipient of the Richard A. [Tapia](#) Achievement Award for Scientific Scholarship, Civic Science, and Diversifying Computing. The awards ceremony will take place during the CMD-IT/ACM Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computer Conference, held in Dallas, Texas, Sept. 13-15, 2023. Last year, more than 2,000 attendees, including students from more than 250 colleges and universities, attended the conference.

Each year, the Richard A. Tapia Achievement Award for Scientific Scholarship, Civic Science, and Diversifying Computing is presented to a distinguished computational scientist, computer scientist, or computer engineer who is making significant contributions to computing and civic areas, including teaching, mentoring, advising, and building and serving diverse communities. The award winner represents extraordinary leadership in computing scholarship and CMD-IT's mission to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in computing.

“We are proud to honor Dr. Charles Isbell, The John P. Imlay Dean of the College of Computing at Georgia Tech, as this year's recipient of the prestigious Tapia Award,” said Dr. Valerie Taylor, CEO and President CMD-IT. “Throughout his career, Dr. Isbell is a visible and exceptional role model with significant contributions in the areas of AI and autonomous agents, as well as broadening participation in computing.”

“I am both proud and humbled to receive the Tapia Award,” said Dr. Charles Isbell. “I believe that bringing in everyone into the conversations around computing is essential for creating solutions

for many social and technical problems. Doing so will not only lead to more opportunities for those who are brought in, but will lead to a field that does a better job of serving everyone.”

Dr. Isbell is currently The John P. Imlay Dean of the College of Computing at Georgia Tech. It was recently announced that he will join the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s leadership team as the next Provost, effective August 1. Throughout his career, Isbell has contributed to broadening participation in computing, including serving as the founding Executive Director for the Constellations Center for Equity in Computing. Dr. Isbell takes a data-driven approach to bring about his vision of broadening participation in computing. This approach provided motivation for launching the LEAP Alliance. Further, he continues to make it known his persona in the hip-hop community as The Homeboy from hell and his pfunk research group in AI.



Dr. Charles Isbell

Isbell’s varied research interests are unified by the theme of using machine learning to build autonomous agents who engage directly with humans. His work has been featured in the popular press, congressional testimony, and in several technical collections. In addition, Dr. Isbell has pursued reform in computing education, including as the chief architect of Threads, Georgia Tech’s structuring principle for computing curricula. He also led the creation of Georgia Tech’s first-of-its-kind MOOC-supported M.S. in Computer Science, now the largest in the country.

Dr. Charles Isbell is a Fellow of the Association for the Advancement of AI (AAAI), a Fellow of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), and an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Isbell has received multiple awards for his efforts to diversify computing, including the recent Computing Research Association’s A. Nico Habermann Award. He received his bachelor’s degree in Information and Computer Science from Georgia Tech, and his M.S. and Ph.D. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s AI Lab. Upon graduation, he worked at AT&T Labs/Research. In 2002, he returned to Georgia Tech to join the faculty as an Assistant Professor, where he has served many roles since.

The TAPIA Conference is the premier annual event to acknowledge, promote, and celebrate diversity in computing. Each year, the conference brings together undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, researchers, and professionals in computing from all backgrounds and ethnicities to celebrate the diversity that exists in computing and tech. The annual conference presents an opportunity to connect with others and to create communities that extend beyond

the event.

For more information about the Tapia Conference, please visit the CMD-IT/ACM Tapia Conference website.

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