

In Memory of Bob Rau

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Abstract

This talk will follow the career of Bob Rau through over 25 years of dedicated and creative contribution in the fields of computer architecture, compilers, and automated computer design.

It is very sad that the life of a great talent and kind person has reached a sudden and early demise. But, it would be Bob's wishes that this commemorative should focus on positive and constructive lessons that can be observed from his life. This talk is about optimism. Creative talent and hard work were two great tools that Bob used throughout his career but optimism and vision really raised Bob's ability to the next level. Without his foresight and ability to pursue a steady course through difficult times, many of his successes would have never been achieved.

This talk is about technological research. Bob's chosen fields of study evolved out of a deep enthusiasm and curiosity for computer architecture. Computing was his passion and his playground. He pursued it to satisfy both professional and recreational needs. Bob was a scholar who lived and promoted the scientific research process. Bob understood the importance of studying prior work and he understood the importance of putting new research in proper perspective within a history of prior work.

For many years, the MICRO conference was very close to the center of much of Bob's enthusiasm. He deeply appreciated and contributed to the style of computer architecture that MICRO sponsored. MICRO provided a balance of forward-looking innovation and scientific method that helped to satisfy his curiosity about the future of computing.

Bob was a leader whose efforts influenced many people and organizations. Decades of technical leadership cultivated a deep respect among a large community of people who understood what he had already accomplished and what he might again accomplish in the future. This talk will provide an overview of a career of technical contribution and explain how talent, hard work, vision, and optimism can combine to provide broad and visible impact on a large community of research and product engineers.