

**Candidate for Member-at-Large**  
**(1 July 2026 – 30 June 2030)**



**Holly Yanco**

Distinguished Professor of Computer Science  
Distinguished Professor of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, MA  
U.S.A.

**BIOGRAPHY**

In September 2025, Holly Yanco joined the faculty at the University of Massachusetts Amherst after 24 years at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Yanco is leading the expansion of robotics at UMass Amherst as a Distinguished Professor of Computer Science and of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering. Yanco is the founding director of the New England Robotics Validation and Experimentation (NERVE) Center, now growing to a second location.

For more than 25 years, Yanco has developed and led a wide range of interdisciplinary collaborations to solve open problems in robotics and AI. Her research interests include human-robot interaction, evaluation metrics and methods for robot systems and AI, and the use of robots in K-12 education to broaden participation in computer science.

Yanco is currently the Chair of the ACM Doctoral Dissertation Award Committee after joining the committee in 2023. She was General Chair of the 2012 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction. As co-chair of its steering committee from 2013 to 2016, she co-led the creation of the ACM Transactions on Human-Robot Interaction. Yanco is a member of the DARPA ISAT Study Group (2024-2027) and has served on AAI's Executive Council (2006-2009) and the CRA Computing Community Consortium (2020-2025).

Yanco is a Fellow of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Yanco earned her BA in Computer Science and Philosophy from Wellesley College and her MS and PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

## **STATEMENT**

Computing continues to rapidly evolve, especially with recent advancements in AI. While exciting, it also brings challenges to our ACM community. In academia, AI is being taught across the university, not just in CS where we ensure that technical depth is provided. People without a CS background can produce code that once required a high level of proficiency; while broadening access is powerful, people without CS training may not learn about the ACM Code of Ethics. Conferences are experiencing tremendous pressure with skyrocketing numbers of submissions, asking more of people who volunteer to serve as organizers and program committee members.

Rather than react to each issue in small groups, our community needs to proactively determine how we want to shape the future together. I am honored to have been nominated as a candidate for Member at Large of the ACM Council. With over 30 years of experience serving the community, my goal is to help ACM lead the global dialogue about the development, evaluation, and societal integration of computing technologies for the benefit of all.

I am particularly interested in exploring how ACM can grow by embracing interdisciplinarity, particularly as AI expands. The International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction has been jointly run by ACM and IEEE since 2006, bringing together several communities. As a Member at Large of the ACM Council, I will identify and advocate for interdisciplinary collaborations that will not only increase ACM's impact but will also allow us to lead the discussions about how we intersect with other fields.