Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Mark Smith

Smith, Mark J. T.

Alternative Names: Mark Smith;

Life Dates: May 17, 1956-

Place of Birth: New York, New York, USA

Residence: West Lake Hills, TX

Work: Austin, TX

Occupations: Electrical Engineer; Competitive Fencer;

Biographical Note

Professor of electrical and computer engineering and competitive fencer Mark J. T. Smith was born on May 17, 1956 in Jamaica, Queens, New York. After receiving his B.S. degree in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1978, Smith enrolled at the Georgia Institute of Technology and went on to graduate from there with his M.S. degree in 1979 and his Ph.D. degree in 1984. While at the Georgia Institute of Technology, Smith helped found the coalition Empowering Minority Engineering Scientists to Reach for Graduate Education (EMERGE).

In 1984, Smith joined the faculty at the Georgia Institute of Technology as a professor of electrical and computer engineering. His research focused on communications, digital filters, and the processing of images and signals. In addition to teaching and research, Smith's trained and competed in the sport of fencing. He was the National Champion of the United States in 1981 and 1983 and a two-time member of the U.S. Olympic Team in 1980 and 1984. Smith was one of the final runners carrying the Olympic Torch to the Opening Ceremonies in the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. In 2003, Smith was promoted to head Purdue's School of Electrical and Computer Engineering and was the first African American to hold the position. In 2009, Smith was named the Michael J. & Katherine R. Birck Endowed Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Dean of the Purdue University Graduate School.

At Georgia Institute of Technology, Smith received two teaching awards including the Georgia Tech Outstanding Teacher Award. He also authored over forty journal articles and is the co-author of four textbooks. Smith is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and

Electronics Engineers (IEEE). He was also awarded its Processing Society Senior Award in 1992. Smith has also received the IEEE's Distinguished Lecturer Award and has sat on their Signal Processing Society Board of Governors. In 2005, Smith received the International Society of Optical Engineers' Wavelet Pioneer Award; and in 2007, he served as president of the National Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association.

Mark J. T. Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 8, 2013.

Related Entries

Massachusetts Institute of Technology [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

> **B.S.**

Georgia Institute of Technology [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

> **M.S.**

Georgia Institute of Technology [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

> **Ph.D.**

General Electric Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1976 to 1976]

Atlantic Richfield R&D [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1979]

Georgia Institute of Technology [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1985 to 1990]

> **Assistant Professor**

Georgia Institute of Technology [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1990 to 1995]

> **Associate Professor**

Georgia Institute of Technology, Lorraine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1991 to 1993]

> **Associate Professor**

Georgia Institute of Technology [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1995 to 2003]

> **Professor**

Georgia Institute of Technology [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1997 to 2001]

> **Executive Assistant to the President**

Purdue University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2003 to 2009]

Michael J. and Katherine R. Birck Professor

Purdue University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2003 to 2009]

Head of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Purdue University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2009 to ?]

Michael J. and Katherine R. Birck Professor

Purdue University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2009 to ?]

Dean of Graduate School

Phi Beta Kappa Society [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

College of Engineering Leadership Team [MEMBEROF]
[from 1994 to ?]

Member

University of Michigan [MEMBEROF]
[from 19741109 to ?]

Member, EECS National Advisory Board

Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Vice President

Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

President

National Academies of Army Science and Technology [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) [MEMBEROF]
[from 1967 to ?]

Member

Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association [MEMBEROF]
[from 1972 to 1973]

Board Member

Carnegie Mellon Electrical and Computer Engineering Advisory Board [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]