



Sue Numrich Receives 2020 Goodpaster Award for Excellence in Research

ALEXANDRIA, VA (May 2021) — S. K. Numrich (Sue), an adjunct research staff member in the Joint Advanced Warfighting Division (JAWD) at a Federally Funded Research and Development Center operated by IDA, was presented with the Goodpaster Award for Excellence in Research.

The award is named in honor of former IDA president and trustee Andrew J. Goodpaster and is given annually in recognition of intellectual leadership within the IDA community.

“Sue’s accomplishments during her 15 years with IDA are the latest in a long research career in the field of national security,” says Norton Schwartz, IDA president. “Since joining IDA in 2005, she has led or contributed significantly to cutting-edge research ranging from experiments on future warfare concepts to assessments of the global war on terrorism.”

Numrich has built a legacy of intellectual excellence and dedicated leadership, while profoundly impacting others along the way. Throughout her career, Numrich has been an intellectual leader and mentor to the wider research community.

“This prestigious award reflects Sue’s extraordinary contributions and body of work at IDA and beyond,” says Daniel Chiu, director of JAWD. “In addition to Sue’s numerous accomplishments and accolades as a researcher, her most important contribution will most assuredly be the impact she has on the next generation of researchers, especially the young women navigating careers in scientific and defense research,” says Chiu.

As a mentor to early career staff and counselor for many others at IDA, Numrich enjoys the challenge of finding ways around problems and alternative perspectives on situations. “To lead is to enable,” says Numrich. “When I lead a project my role is to draw out of the participants the very best they can give personally and intellectually,” she says. “If I can pass on something I know or help someone understand a topic or circumstance, I consider myself fortunate.”

Numrich has dedicated more than a half century of effort to advancing the role of women in national security. She was the first chair of the Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation, and Education Conference (IITSEC) Tutorial Board, which offers tutorials on a range of topics for members of the modeling, simulation, and testing community. To date, she is the only woman to have been named an IITSEC Fellow, a recognition she received in 2018. “My advice to other women is to always do your very best, give of yourself to help others, ask for advice from someone who seems to have it all together, and never give up,” Numrich says.

Numrich overcame challenges every step of her journey. Early in her career she was one of only a few female scientists working in her field. After having served as a research physicist at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory from 1967 to 2005, she joined IDA, where she has led or provided significant contributions to projects across a wide array of subjects. Her most impactful IDA work falls into two categories: analysis in support of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and application of modeling and simulation in support of complex and emergent national security challenges.

Numrich has also been a teacher and lecturer at Trinity College and Catholic University. “I taught part time for 20 years at Catholic University and have always loved seeing the light bulb go off in a student’s mind when a concept gets through,” she says.



Reflecting back on her accomplishments, Numrich's goal has always been to do the very best she can in any endeavor. "The Goodpaster Award is certainly one of my proudest accomplishments. To be recognized by an organization so full of excellent researchers is more meaningful than the Exceptional and Meritorious Civil Service Awards I have received," she says.

Outside of IDA, Numrich is a member of the National Training & Simulation Association. In addition to being an I/ITSEC Fellow, she is an Acoustical Society of America Fellow in the Washington, D.C., chapter, and served as the society's president from 1992 to 1993. She is also a member of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Honor Society. Numrich served as president of the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory Sigma Xi Chapter from 1989 to 1990.

Numrich earned her bachelor's degree in physics from Trinity Washington University in 1967, her master's degree in physics from the Johns Hopkins University in 1970, and her doctoral degree in physics from American University in 1979. Numrich also earned a postgraduate certificate in mechanical engineering from Cambridge University in 1986.

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