Proposal:
Naming and Endowment of the
ISIT Student Paper Award

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Proposal

• Rename the ISIT Student Paper Award in honor of Jack and Toby Wolf.

• Launch a funding campaign to endow the award (with the idea of possibly increasing the amount of the award).

• Amend the bylaws accordingly.
Background

• Jack Wolf’s profound contributions to information theory and the IT Society have been recognized with some of our most distinguished awards:
  – IT Paper Award
  – Claude E. Shannon Award
  – Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award.

• Jack was also passionate about teaching and mentoring, as recognized by
  – UCSD Distinguished Teacher Award
  – IT Society Padovani Lectureship.
Motivation

• Jack was very proactive in creating mechanisms for recognizing and honoring student achievement.

• Examples:
  – Endowment of Shannon Graduate Fellowship (UCSD).
  – Contribution to Schultz Prize for Excellence in Graduate Student Research at UCSD.
  – Establishment of a number of scholarships and fellowships at UPenn.
  – Service on the original board of the Marconi Society Young Scholar Award.
Motivation (cont.)

• Jack and Toby were enthusiastic proponents and supporters of the establishment of the IT Society’s ISIT Student Paper Award.

• Renaming the ISIT Student Paper Award in honor of Jack and Toby would be a nice way to recognize the counsel, encouragement, and support they provided to generations of information theorists and electrical engineers.
Endowment

• Endowment of the award would ensure its funding in perpetuity.

• A target of, say, $100K should generate suitable payout to support the awards.

• There is a good chance of near-term success in the fund-raising.
  – Over $1M was raise in 5 months to support the establishment of the Jack Keil Wolf Endowed Chair in Electrical Engineering at UCSD last year.

• IEEE Foundation can manage the fund ($20K minimum)
Section 7. The International Symposium on Information Theory (ISIT) Student Paper Award shall be given annually for up to three outstanding papers at the ISIT for which a student is the principal author and presenter. This author must be a registered student at the time of paper submission to be eligible for this award. The criteria for the award shall include both content and presentation. The award consists of a $500 honorarium to be divided equally between all student authors of the paper, and a plaque for each such author.

The Awards Committee (AC) shall be responsible for selecting the winner(s) of this award, with the support of the ISIT Technical Program Committee (TPC). The ISIT TPC shall select between 8 and 12 eligible papers as finalists and notify the authors accordingly. These papers shall be scheduled by the TPC for presentation during the first three days of ISIT. The AC shall judge the presentations during the Symposium, select the award winner(s), and announce the winner(s) at the ISIT banquet (or other suitable occasion).
Next Steps

• BoG vote to approve the renaming of the award and the endowment campaign for funding it.

• Form ad hoc committee to address some issues:
  – Method to inform Toby and others
  – Timing and venue to publicly announce the naming
  – Identify fund-raising coordinator (I volunteer 😊)
  – Bylaw revision.