



*Dwight Look College of*  
**ENGINEERING**  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## Computer science graduate student awarded dissertation fellowship

JANUARY 11, 2013

By: **Kathy Flores**



Manoj Prasad, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at Texas A&M has received the Texas A&M University 2012-2013 Dissertation Fellowship from the Office of Graduate Studies.

The dissertation fellowship will last from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. It is designed to support awardees while they are concluding the investigation of their research topics and writing their dissertations.

The dissertation fellowship consists of a stipend in the amount of \$15,000 plus an additional tuition payment. During the fellowship period recipients also receive reimbursements for their student health care up to \$2,469. Prasad is one of six Texas A&M students to receive this award.

Prasad's dissertation research has two parts: how to use tactile medium for communicating with users and how to use haptic interfaces for navigation. For the first part of the dissertation, he has built a three by three matrix of vibro-factors and is going to study the usability of the array for perceiving information in the form tactile shapes. For the second part, he and a group of undergraduate students in the Sketch Recognition Lab have built a haptic vest. They are applying the haptic vest to different navigation scenarios (for example, pedestrian navigation).

Prasad became a Graduate Teaching Academy (GTA) Fellow in Spring 2011 and continues to work with GTA as an assistant director of technology. In the fall of 2011 he was awarded a Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning Teaching-as-Research

fellowship to perform research on the effectiveness of teaching ethnography in the computer-human interaction course. He is a co-author of "iCanDraw? — Using Sketch Recognition and Corrective Feedback to Assist a User in Drawing Human Faces," which was presented at the 2010 ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. He is also a co-author of "GeoTrooper: A Location-Aware System for Rapid Team Assembly." This project was presented at Texas A&M's Student Research Week in March 2011.

Prasad's research interests are sketch recognition, touch and haptic interfaces. He is a student of Dr. Tracy Hammond, associate professor in the Department of of Computer Science and Engineering and director of the **Sketch Recognition Lab** at Texas A&M. Prasad earned a Bachelor of Engineering degree in computer science from Birla Institute of Technology and Science in India in 2007.