

Prof. Ing. Jan Hlavička, DrSc.

Professor of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, CTU in Prague
Former Dean of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, CTU in Prague and
Former Vice-Rector of CTU in Prague



In 2004, the steering committee of DDECS has decided to start the tradition of awarding Jan Hlavička Prize to the best papers presented on DDECS workshop – to one paper from the area of design and one from the area of test. Jan Hlavička died in 2002, on September, 6th.

Prof. Hlavička was one of the most distinguished experts in the domain of computer architecture; he has achieved outstanding internationally recognized results in diagnostics and reliability of digital circuits.

After graduation at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague in 1964, Prof. Hlavička started his PhD studies at the Research Institute of Mathematical Machines (VÚMS) in Prague. After a successful defence of his PhD Thesis in 1969 he left for a two-year stay at Siemens, Munich where he worked as a programmer in the department of automated design of computers. When he returned back to Prague, his research interests were concentrated to diagnostics of digital circuits - a domain that was in its absolute beginnings in former Czechoslovakia at that time. With his book *Diagnostics of electronic digital circuits* (in Czech), which he prepared as a co-ordinating author, he established this domain in the country and got an important merit for accelerating both its theoretical development and practical industrial applications.

At VÚMS Prague he worked as a researcher, scientific and later leading scientific worker. He participated in the development of EC-1021, 1025, 1026 and 1027 Czechoslovak computers of the former JSEP series and presented his results at important international conferences. Since 1976 he started as an external lecturer at the Department of computer science and engineering (DCS&E) FEE CTU in Prague introducing a new course *Reliability and Diagnostics* supported by his new textbook. He taught the same course externally also at the Slovak University of Technology (STU) in Bratislava and as an intensive course in 1978 to 1980 at the TH Ilmenau, Germany. He was a member of jury for state exams at the FEE CTU in Prague, STU in Bratislava, successfully supervised diploma and doctoral theses of his students.

As a full-time teacher, he started at the DCS&E in 1984 and became responsible for another course - *Digital computers II* (now *Architecture of Computer Systems*), for which he designed new contents and wrote a textbook. In 1985, after becoming Associate Professor, he spent one semester at the Université de Montréal in Canada. In 1987, he defended his doctoral (DrSc.) dissertation and, in 1991, he obtained professorship at the CTU in Prague. He was the leading co-author of the first Czech book on fault-tolerant digital systems, which was devoted to actual problems of active control of computer systems reliability. Thanks to his personal abilities, exceptional professional capabilities, teaching talent and personal charisma he quickly gained recognition of his colleagues both from the department and the faculty. His students highly appreciated professional and pedagogical quality of his lectures, which demonstrated and spread his attraction for the domain.

In 1990, Prof. Hlavička was elected the first democratic Dean of the FEE and, in 1991, he was re-elected for a 3-year term. In this post, he managed the faculty in the years of demanding transformation of both the university and the whole Czech society. He had a decisive impact in the changes of teaching and research activities of the faculty aiming at a wider openness, higher student responsibility and extension of international co-operation of the academic staff. It was during this period when new, democratic principles were established for selection of faculty management bodies and department heads. Thanks to personal authority of Prof. Hlavička, all these changes were accomplished without anarchy and personal revenge. He also decisively contributed to the re-habilitation of those students and employees of the faculty who had been unfairly treated by the faculty during the totalitarian communist regime. Prof. Hlavička was also one of the founders and most active organisers of alumni organisation ELEKTRA.

Thanks to extensive international contacts and stays abroad, Prof. Hlavička was well aware of the irreplaceable role of international co-operation in both the pedagogical and research activities of the university. As a Dean, he aimed at matching the structure of study programs with what he had seen at leading European and world universities when introducing the faculty credit system. He started a systematic introduction of teaching in English, editing English textbooks and other materials, and supported international exchange of both staff and students. In 1994 - 1997, as a Vice-Rector for International Relations of the CTU he aimed at strengthening the prestigious position of the university in the international scale via establishing co-operation and partner links with most important universities in Europe, the USA, and other parts of the world. His gained a remarkable impact on introduction of the English track of study at all faculties of the CTU and on further intensification of international co-operation of the whole university.

Prof. Hlavička was a member of IEEE, in 1998 - 2001 the chairman of the Czechoslovak Section of IEEE, since 2002 a member of the Section Committee and a member of IEEE Region 8 Executive Committee. He was a member of other important institutions, as e.g. The Institution of Electrical Engineers and New York Academy of Sciences, the chairman and later a member of the Czech National Committee IMEKO, and many others. He was also honorary chairman and a member of Programme Committee of many international conferences. His important merits in research and teaching were appreciated by the Silver Felber Medal from the CTU (in 1996), the IEEE Millennium Medal (in 2000), the Medal of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the IEEE Certificate of Appreciation (in 2002).

In spite of a wide and intensive professional and organisational work, Prof. Hlavička was capable of devoting time to his cultural interests and personal hobbies. He liked music and was a very good guitar player himself. He was apt in using his extraordinary language abilities during the stays abroad to get acquainted with the local culture, geographical distinctions and social or political situation in the country he visited. He liked sports, was an excellent skier and an excited skiing instructor of his grandsons ... He demanded high working standards and was the first to fulfil these standards, but he was always ready to give help or advice at least. He never complained - his long-term health problems never served as an excuse to slow down, he was always full of optimism.

With the decease of Prof. Hlavička, the Czech science lost its prominent expert and organiser, the students lost their excellent teacher, and his colleagues lost a best friend, a person with a wide scope and precious character.