

VENU GOVINDARAJU, PhD*Senior Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Development*

University at Buffalo, The State University of New York (SUNY)

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SUNY Distinguished Professor
 Computer Science and Engineering
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SUMMARY STATEMENT

With a decade of senior leadership experience at the helm of the University at Buffalo's research, innovation, and economic development enterprise, my accomplishments demonstrate proven effectiveness in my capacity to successfully drive initiatives and exceed institutional goals. This reflects a collaborative leadership style whereby colleagues seek counsel and partnership, resulting in my substantial contributions to research, enrollment, advancement, talent development, community engagement, and beyond.

As an educator and a scientist, I have mentored nearly 50 doctoral students as their major adviser, overseen six postdocs, and maintained continuous external funding totaling \$97 million, including serving as director and principal investigator of the \$20 million National AI Institute for Exceptional Education, one of only 29 National Science Foundation-designated AI institutes. As an AI pioneer and an advocate for AI for good, I champion the positive societal impacts of emerging technologies and the crucial role universities play in enabling groundbreaking discoveries.

This combination of institutional leadership, deep disciplinary expertise, and a proven ability to establish and lead forward-looking initiatives is especially relevant as AI integration becomes central to pedagogy, research, operational efficiency, and economic and workforce development. This distinct perspective, supported by an internationally recognized record of research and scholarship, provides a comprehensive understanding of how to advance higher education and generate meaningful impact for our students, campus, and community.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP, University at Buffalo, SUNY**11/25-Present Senior Vice President for Research, Innovation and Economic Development (SVPRIED)***An expansion of VP for Research and Economic Development role to include:*

- *Campus lead for emerging technologies:*
 - *Chief AI Officer: Established and leads Office of AI Innovation and Integration*
 - *Nexus for research, education, philanthropy, advocacy, and operations*

2023 – Present Director/PI, NSF National AI Institute for Exceptional Education (9 university consortium)

2020 – Present Operations Manager, SUNY Research Foundation for UB

2004 – Present Director, Center for Unified Biometrics and Sensors (CUBS)

2016 – 2025 Vice President for Research and Economic Development (VPRED)

2013 – 2015 Director, Computational Data Science and Engineering

2007 – 2015 Director, Strategic Strength in Information and Computing Technology

1994 – 2004 Associate Director, Center for Document Analysis and Recognition (CEDAR)

ACADEMIC POSITIONS, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, University at Buffalo, SUNY

2010 – Present SUNY Distinguished Professor

2008 – 2010 UB Distinguished Professor

2002 – 2010 Full Professor

2000 – 2002 Associate Professor

1992 – 2000 CEDAR Research Scientist, Senior Scientist (1994) and Principal Scientist (1996)

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEE CHAIR (at the behest of UB Provost)

2025 – Present	UB AI Advisory Committee to drive AI innovation and integration campus-wide
2023 – 2024	Research Administration Steering Committee, “How to reduce administrative burden on PIs”
2022 – 2025	Regional Economic Hub positioning (Build Back Better, Tech Hub, NSF Engines)
2022 – 2023	Storage, Security, and Access of Research Data Strategy
2020 – 2021	Disciplinary Excellence Initiative (recommendations for significant investments)
2018 – 2020	Safeguarding university faculty assets and interests from foreign interference

EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP

2025 – Present	Empire AI – Board Member and Operations and Finance Committees Member
2018 – Present	Buffalo 2020 Development Corporation – Chair
2014 – Present	Universities Research Association (URA) – UB President’s proxy
2020 – Present	Empire Discovery Institute (Drug Discovery Consortium) – Director
2023 – 2025	SUNY STRIVE Artificial Intelligence Task Force – Co-chair
2023 – 2024	AAU Task Force on Expanding U.S.-India University Partnerships – UB President’s delegate
2019 – 2025	SUNY-IBM Artificial Intelligence Research Alliance – Advisor
2018 – 2020	APLU Council on Research – Executive Committee Member
2015 – 2024	Hauptman-Woodward Research Institute – Board Member
2015 – 2016	IEEE Biometric Council – President
2014 – 2021	Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technologies (India) – Adviser

EDUCATION

1992	PhD, Computer Science, University at Buffalo, SUNY
1988	MS, Computer Science, University at Buffalo, SUNY
1986	BTech, Computer Science and Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur

AWARDS AND HONORS

- **Elected Member**, *Pan American Academy of Engineering (API)* – Recognized for distinguished contributions to engineering and innovation across the Americas (2025).
- **Person of the Year**, *Council of Heritage and Arts of India* – For outstanding global leadership in science and technology (2024).
- **President’s Medal**, *University at Buffalo* – The university’s highest honor, awarded for exemplary leadership in research and innovation (2024).
- **118th U.S. Congressional Recognition** – Presented by Hon. *Timothy M. Kennedy* for advancing AI and innovation leadership in New York State (2024).
- **New York State Assembly Citation** – Presented by Hon. *Karen M. McMahon* for excellence in research and public service (2024).
- **Office of the Erie County Executive Proclamation** – Presented by Hon. *Mark C. Poloncarz*, recognizing leadership in AI and regional economic development (2024).
- **Proclamation by Town Supervisor** – Presented by *Brian J. Kulpa, Amherst, NY*, for sustained contributions to science and education (2024).
- **Elected Fellow**, *Asia-Pacific Artificial Intelligence Association (AAIA)* – For sustained research impact in AI and data-driven systems (2022).
- **Elected Fellow**, *Andhra Pradesh Academy of Sciences (APAS)* – For distinguished contributions to computer science and engineering (2016).
- **Excellence in Graduate Student Mentoring Award**, *University at Buffalo* – For exceptional doctoral supervision and career development of graduate students (2016).
- **Elected Fellow**, *National Academy of Inventors (NAI)* – For innovations with significant societal and economic impact (2015).

- **ICDAR Outstanding Achievements Award**, *International Conference on Document Analysis and Recognition* – “For pioneering contributions to pattern recognition” (2015).
- **Distinguished Alumnus Award**, *Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur* – For leadership and innovation in AI research (2014).
- **Elected Fellow**, *SPIE – The International Society for Optics and Photonics* – “For contributions to biometrics” (2013).
- **Elected Fellow**, *AAAS – American Association for the Advancement of Science* – “For outstanding contributions in biometrics and document retrieval” (2010).
- **IEEE Technical Achievement Award**, *IEEE Computer Society* – “For pioneering contributions to handwriting systems” (2010).
- **Elected Fellow**, *ACM – Association for Computing Machinery* – “For contributions to handwritten document image analysis, recognition, and retrieval” (2009).
- **SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Scholarship and Creative Productivity** – In recognition of exceptional academic and research accomplishments (2007).
- **Elected Fellow**, *IEEE – Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers* – “For contributions to handwriting recognition” (2006).
- **Elected Fellow**, *IAPR – International Association of Pattern Recognition* – “For contributions to advances in handwriting recognition” (2004).
- **MIT Global Indus Technovator Award**, *MIT Indian Business Club, Cambridge, MA* – “For pioneering endeavors at the frontiers of technological innovation” (2004).
- **Elected Fellow**, *IETE – Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers* (2002).
- **IAPR/ICDAR Outstanding Young Investigator Award** – “For visibly demonstrating the utility of pattern recognition algorithms and for outstanding scientific productivity” (2001)