

Accolade for informatics pioneer

Prof Dewald Roode, former head of the Department of Informatics at the University of Pretoria, was recently honoured by the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) with the highest accolade for service, the Silver Core Award.

The event was the brainchild of Prof Carina de Villiers who took over the reigns as head of the Department of Informatics after Prof Roode's early retirement. Many former students who completed their doctoral studies under Prof Roode as mentor and former colleagues attended the ceremony at a guest house in Moreleta Park.

Prof Basie von Solms, IFIP's first Africa president and professor at the Academy of Information Processing at the University of Johannesburg, presented the award to Prof Roode. He thanked Prof Roode for his contribution and

said that the management of IFIP – the world's first multinational and apolitical organisation in information and communication technology and science, unilaterally voted to honour Prof Roode for his 'enormous contribution' to the discipline.

Prof Roode served two terms as the chairperson of the IFIP committee, which focuses "on all aspects related to information systems that simplify the management and organisation of business enterprises." In 2003 and 2005 he was also part of the organising committee of the Worldwide Technology Information Forum (WITFOR) conferences. His contribution was of particular value in the use of new information technology in developing countries.

Prof Roode has had particular impact in the arena of the South African computer world. His contribution dates back to the early days of computer technology in the country. In 1971, he was appointed professor at the newly founded Department of Computer Science at the former Rand Afrikaans Universiteit (RAU). He was also director of the Computer Users Council of South Africa, where he

was responsible for the development and implementation of the first national standards for education and training for the South African computer industry. In 1983, he entered the business sector with the founding of his business enterprise. In 1988, he was appointed as head of the newly formed Department of Informatics at the University of Pretoria.

In 1995, he accepted the position as Director of Information Technology at UP, while continuing to act as head of the Department of Informatics. In 1998, he was appointed as the first director of the new School of Information Technology at UP. He still serves in various councils, is active in the private sector and helps with the training of students.

In his acceptance speech, Prof Roode said that his involvement with the IFIP stemmed from his conviction that people in the computer field should interact with each other to stay on top of the latest developments. Prof Carina de Villiers described Prof Roode as a "big inspiration" and said that he reads widely and has the necessary insight to guide his doctoral students. 🌟

→ Presenting the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) Silver Core Award to Prof Dewald Roode, former Head of the University's Department of Informatics (left) is the president of the IFIP, Prof Basie von Solms.

