

Tribute in memory of Dr. Abdelkader Abdessameud



Abdelkader Abdessameud was born in Blida, Algeria on November 30, 1973. He received his Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Institut National d'Electricité et d'Electronique, INELEC, Algeria, in 1995, his Master's degree in Robotics and Control from Ecole Militaire Polytechnique, Algeria, in 1999. From 2001 to 2007, he served as a teaching and research assistant in département d'Automatisation des procédés industriels, at the University of Boumerdes, Algeria. In 2007, he joined the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Western Ontario, from where he obtained his PhD degree in 2010. After that, he spent a few years as a postdoctoral fellow at Ryerson University and Western University, before joining the department of Electrical Engineering at Penn State university, Harrisburg, USA, as an Assistant Professor, in 2017. With his bright mind, charismatic personality, and strong academic abilities, he would have been a great asset to any university. Unfortunately, Abdelkader passed away on September 16, 2019, after a short battle with cancer. Abdelkader is survived by his wife and three children.

Although short, Abdelkader's academic career was rich with strong scientific contributions, which made him shine in the Control Systems and Robotics communities. He published one book and 54 journal and conference papers. Most of his journal publications appeared in the flagship journals (Automatica and IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control). He

was undeniably one of the emerging stars in Canada and Worldwide in the field of autonomous multi-agent systems where he made significant contributions and solved many challenging open problems. His research was always driven by a profound curiosity and a deep understanding of the fundamentals related to topics he would engage in. His elegant writing and his concise and rigorous mathematical proofs are trademarks of the many papers he wrote throughout his career. His influential work on the control of multi-agent systems, under communication constraints, with the multi-channel small gain approach, paved the way for many contributions in this field.

Abdelkader was a perfectionist with a strong sense of ethics, who would not hesitate to leave months-worth of hard work in his 'drawers' just because he felt that the contribution, of the problem that he elegantly solved, was not commensurate with his high standards. On one occasion, Abdelkader and I had to postpone the publication of an accepted Automatica paper because he had discovered a mistake in the proof when preparing the final version. Fortunately, the mistake was fixed, and the paper accepted after another round of review.

Abdelkader was a true professional and a gentleman till his last day. The Editor-in-Chief of the CSS Conference Editorial Board kindly shared with me Abdelkader's last email sent a couple weeks before his passing, stating that it was a pleasure and a privilege for him serving our community, and apologizing for his inability to carry on his duties as an Associate Editor for the coming American Control Conference due to a serious illness.

Those who knew Abdelkader can attest to his warmth, gentleness, modesty and great human values. He shared his knowledge with a great enthusiasm, enabling others to build on what they learned from him. Abdelkader was a true scholar and a role model for many that interacted with him. Abdelkader will be tremendously missed but long remembered.

Abdelhamid Tayebi,
September 20, 2019