Discussion on Richard Hamming’s “You and Your Research”

At a seminar in the Bell Communications Research Colloquia Series, Dr. Richard W. Hamming, a Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California and a retired Bell Labs scientist, gave a very interesting and stimulating talk, ‘You and Your Research’ to an overflow audience of some 200 Bellcore staff members and visitors at the Morris Research and Engineering Center on March 7, 1986. This talk centered on Hamming’s observations and research on the question “Why do so few scientists make significant contributions and so many are forgotten in the long run?” From his more than forty years of experience, thirty of which were at Bell Laboratories, he has made a number of direct observations, asked very pointed questions of scientists about what, how, and why they did things, studied the lives of great scientists and great contributions, and has done introspection and studied theories of creativity. The talk is about what he has learned in terms of the properties of the individual scientists, their abilities, traits, working habits, attitudes, and philosophy.

Chris Winstead received the B.S. degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Utah in 2000, and the Ph.D. degree from the University of Alberta in 2005. He is currently with the ECE Department at Utah State University, where he holds the rank of Associate Professor. Dr. Winstead’s research interests include low-power and fault-tolerant VLSI circuits, implementation of error-correction algorithms, modeling and design principles for stochastic circuits in electronics and synthetic biology, and mixed-signal design for reliable wireless communication. He has authored more than 40 technical articles, and received the NSF Career award in 2010. Dr. Winstead is a Senior Member of the IEEE and is a member of the Tau Beta Pi engineering honor society.