

CI LEADERSHIP PANEL



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WHO AM I?



LEADERSHIP-CLASS COMPUTING FACILITY

- ▶ Head of Texas Advanced Computing Center at UT-Austin (~180 full time CI people).
- ▶ Principle Investigator for LCCF, Frontera, Stampede-2

A BIT ABOUT MY JOURNEY HERE

LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE, BECOMING A CI LEADER WAS MOSTLY AN ACCIDENT

- ▶ Undergrad (91), MS(93), EE, Clemson University
- ▶ Master's project – designing hardware for cool embedded multi-processor satellite telemetry systems for NASA. I happened to also end up as the one with root on all our Sun workstations.
 - ▶ Got hooked up with original Beowulf project in 1993, at NASA Goddard.
- ▶ PhD project (CompE) – Problem Solving Environments for Supercomputers, with a particular focus on Electromagnetics.
- ▶ Somewhere in there, started teaching a bunch of courses in a short-handed ECE department (like 3 per semester).
- ▶ Won an MRI project for a big set of clusters near the end of my PhD, at Clemson, stayed a few more years as the Pre-CI-CI person for the films and fibers center, genomics institute, and electromagnetics group (at this point I was still the primary sysadmin, though I started hiring).
- ▶ In what deceptively seemed like a diversion, became an AAAS Science Policy Fellow in 2003 stationed at NSF.
- ▶ HPC Center head at Arizona State, 2004-2009.
- ▶ Joined TACC as Deputy Director 2009, became Exec Director 2014.

A COUPLE OF NOTES ALONG THE WAY

- ▶ The skills for managing and leadership are the skills for managing and leadership, and totally independent of anything you may know about CI.
 - ▶ Good communication is the Most. Important. Skill.
 - ▶ Good communication is not about fancy slides – it's about understanding what your audience needs to know, and tailoring your response to that (not so much public, as VPR, Faculty, President, Program Officer, etc.).
- ▶ It helps to know something about CI.
- ▶ It helps more to actually understand the research context, including not just the science but the process, funding, etc. – what are your user's constraints?
- ▶ Understand the role of research computing to a campus/organization as a scientific instrument – you can't just be another competing cost.
- ▶ Understand the policy context – lab, university, state, national.
- ▶ People first. Fixing computers is easy.