



IST Distinguished Lecture Series

Monday, April 3 | 2:30 – 3:45 p.m. | 113 IST Building (Cybertorium)

Judy Olson

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Going to school on a robot: Using telepresence robots to let homebound children go to school



ABSTRACT:

Children who are homebound because of medical conditions like cancer treatments or immune deficiency are normally offered tutoring for 4-5 hours a week. This tutoring may help them keep up academically, but it does nothing for their friendships or social learning. Recently, technology has created the opportunity to bring these students to school using telepresence robots, units that pair videoconferencing with a remote controlled robot. How do these students fare? Do they feel “present” in school? How do teachers and classmates accommodate these students? The telepresence robots were designed for use by adults in offices and hospitals; what features should be changed to accommodate children going to school? What other kinds of students might benefit from the robot?

BIO:

Judith Olson is the Donald Bren Professor Emerita of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of California Irvine. Previously, she was at the University of Michigan where she was a professor in the School of Information, the Business School, and the Psychology Department. She got her Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Michigan then held a postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford University before returning to Michigan as a faculty member. Her research focuses on the technology and social practices necessary for successful distance work, encompassing both laboratory and field studies along with agent based modeling. In 2001, she was one of the first seven inductees into the CHI Academy. She and her husband/collaborator Gary were awarded the 2006 CHI Lifetime Achievement Award. She is an ACM Fellow and in 2011 she was awarded the ACM-W Athena Lecture (equivalent to woman of the year in computer science).