



PRESS RELEASE

The VŠE awarded A. P. Dempster and G. Shafer honorary doctorate

The University of Economics, Prague awarded Mr. Arthur P. Dempster, research professor of theoretical statistics at the Harvard University, and Mr. Glenn Shafer, professor of accounting, business ethics and information systems at the Rutgers Business School – Newark and New Brunswick, an honorary academic title of the doctor of economic science “doctor oeconomiae honoris causa”. The ceremony was joined by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Mr. Jan Fischer.

Prague 8 October 2009

A. P. Dempster received a Ph.D. in Mathematical Statistics at the Princeton University (1956). In 1958, after a short period at the University of Toronto and in the Bell Telephone Laboratories, he became professor at the Department of Statistics at the Harvard University where he still works.

In 1966-68, he laid foundations of a so called expectation-maximization algorithm for calculation of maximally reliable parameter estimations, currently used in many statistical methods. In 1966, in article *New methods for reasoning towards posterior distributions based on sample data published in the Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, he laid foundations of the Dempster-Shafer theory of belief functions. In its core lies the Dempster combination rule, useful for distinguishing of various types of uncertainty, which appears often in practical (particularly economic-managerial) problems.

Also G. Shafer received a Ph.D. in Mathematical Statistics at the Princeton University (1973). After that he worked at the University of Kansas. In 1992, he joined the Rutgers Business School – Newark and New Brunswick where he is currently a professor, member of the Board of Governors, and faculty director of the doctoral program.

In 1976, he published *A Mathematical Theory of Evidence* in which the Dempster-Shafer theory of belief functions is formulated. Twenty years later, he published *The Art of Causal Conjecture* which deals with expert systems and causal models. In 2001, he, together with V.

