New Fellow
Robert A. Willis, Jr.

Robert A. Willis, Jr. has been named Fellow of the Virginia Academy of Science. He has been an active member of the Virginia Academy of Science and the Association of Departments of Computer, Information Science/Engineering at Minority Institutions (ADMI) for nearly fifteen years.

He has made many contributions to the Academy over the past fifteen years. The Computer Science Section of the Virginia Academy of Science was founded by Robert Willis and Gregory Cook in 1991. Bob was the first Chairman of that section and he served in that capacity for several years. He has contributed to that Section at the annual meetings by presenting papers, coauthoring papers with students, and sponsoring undergraduate and graduate computer science students from Hampton University and other ADMI colleges. He provided leadership as an officer in that section for several years as Chairman, Editor and Councilor. For example, in 1995 he brought four undergraduate students to present papers at the Computer Science Section meeting, which is not only significant in numbers for such a small section, but also in diversity since he and his students are African American. He has continued to bring students to the Annual Meeting and to encourage Hampton University faculty involvement in the Academy. Bob was named Councilor for the Computer Science Section in 1996, a position he has held for ten years.

In 1997, at the Annual Meeting held at Virginia Tech, Bob Willis was elected to serve on the Executive Council as Treasurer for 1997-98. He was named Editor of the Academy's Newsletter, *The Virginia Scientist*, in May 1998 and served in that capacity until July 2005 when his health and the time demands to maintain accreditation of his computer science program could no longer support the workload as editor. He was elected to the positions, President-Elect for 2000-2001 and President of the Virginia Academy of Science for 2001-2002. Robert Willis is the

first African American scientist to become President of the Virginia Academy of Science. He has also served on the Nominations and Elections and on the Publications committees for the Academy.

After a career in the Air Force, Robert Willis earned his Master of Science degree and completed additional post-graduate study in computer science at the College of William and Mary. He joined the faculty in the department of computer science at Hampton University in 1986. Bob has helped educate and train minority scientists in the computer and information science fields through his leadership roles in organizations and as the chairman of the department of computer science at Hampton University. He was awarded the Lindback Distinguish Teacher's Award, Hampton University's highest award for teaching, in 1990 and named to Who's Who Among America's Teachers five times in the past ten years.

Bob served on the Board of the Association of Department of Computer, Information Science/Engineering at Minority Institutions (ADMI) from 1997 to 2000 and as the Vice-President of Programs from 2000 to the present. In his various capacities in ADMI he has organized meetings to provide opportunities for minority students in computer science and engineering to present scientific papers and to network with other students and institutions. These institutions include several Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the Commonwealth of Virginia, in addition to others in the Southeast. He has also served as the Project Director for the HBCU Graduate Fellowship and HBCU/MI Summer Faculty Research Programs for the Office of Naval Research and has helped students and faculty from Virginia schools participate in these programs. He has made a significant impact on the education of minority students in preparing them for advanced degrees and research opportunities and on the research participation of computer and science and engineering faculty in the Virginia through those programs.