



## OnQ Blog



# IEEE recognizes Qualcomm's milestone achievement in wireless technology [video]

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Few forces have proven more transformative to the world than the mobile revolution. From the digitalization of mobile communications to data-rich 3G wireless standards to the powerful 5G networks to come, few companies have contributed more to this revolution than Qualcomm.

Today, one of Qualcomm's foundational mobile innovations is being recognized as a landmark technical achievement by The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the world's largest professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity.



Qualcomm Technologies EVP of Engineering and Chief Technology Officer Jim Thompson kicks off the event.

IEEE presented Qualcomm with a Milestone in Electrical Engineering and Computing award for its work developing Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), which became the basis of the major 3G networks and would eventually be included in billions of mobile phones. This pioneering digital cellular radio system helped define the modern mobile era and is arguably more responsible than any other technology for untethering the data-rich internet.

"The IEEE Milestones program honors significant technical achievements in all areas associated with IEEE," said Karen Bartleson, IEEE President and CEO. "We congratulate Qualcomm for its work in CDMA which has helped transform the way that people communicate around the world."

The decision to present the Milestone award today is significant in that it was exactly 28 years ago that Qualcomm demonstrated a digital cellular radio system based upon CDMA.

## November 1989; Qualcomm prepares for CDMA demo

To mark this feat of engineering, IEEE presented Qualcomm with a Milestone award plaque during a ceremony at the company's Morehouse Campus in San Diego. The plaque will reside permanently just outside the company's main lobby, mounted to a tailored concrete pillar and bench.



**The IEEE Milestone Award at Qualcomm's main campus.**

The event featured Qualcomm Technologies EVP and CTO Jim Thompson and San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, as well as a panel discussion moderated by Matt Grob. The panel included Qualcomm Founders Dr. Irwin M. Jacobs and Dr. Andrew Viterbi and some key technical players from the company's early years including Roberto Padovani, Ed Tiedemann, Butch Weaver, and Chuck Wheatley. The city of San Diego also designated November 7, 2017 as "Qualcomm's Mobile Leadership Day" in the city.

The occasion concluded with the Qualcomm Inventor Awards, given to Qualcomm employees who are pioneering new invention areas, contributing inventions in key segments or new to the Company and immersing themselves in Qualcomm's invention culture with impressive results. The 2017 Qualcomm Inventor Awards went to Juan Montojo, a senior director of engineering who's led a number of Qualcomm's 5G NR initiatives, and Tom Richardson, a VP of engineering, one of the world's foremost experts on iterative decoding.

"We are honored to receive this prestigious award from the IEEE today, exactly 28 years ago to the day that our founders led the first demonstration of CDMA and pioneered the transformation of the wireless industry," said Qualcomm CEO Steve Mollenkopf in a company press release. "Qualcomm has and continues to focus on solving the most complex system-level problems facing the industry."



(Left to right) Qualcomm Technologies EVP of Engineering and Chief Technology Officer Dr. Jim Thompson, IEEE Region 6 Director Dr. Kathleen Kramer, IEEE Region 6 Milestone Coordinator Brian Berg, and Qualcomm Senior Staff Engineer Kathy Herring Hayashi.

Just as 3G and 4G marked a new era for data-centric mobile-computing, 5G will mark a new era facilitating high-bandwidth data-rich connections for not just billions of people around the world, but

for a global network of semi- and full-autonomous machines, including everything from drones to self-driving cars to everyday household projects.

The IEEE Milestone program was established in 1983 to honor significant technical achievements, each recognized with a plaque to be placed at a location associated with the technical breakthrough. To date, more than 180 plaques have been awarded around the globe, including notable events like the publication of Benjamin Franklin's "Experiments and Observations on Electricity" in 1751, the first electronic quartz wrist watch in 1969, and the first trans-Atlantic fiber optic cable in 1988.

Following is some footage captured at the event, including unveiling of the award by a drone! Speakers include Dr. Thompson, IEEE Region 6 Director Dr. Kathleen Kramer, IEEE President of Vehicular Technology Society Dr. Javier Gozalvez, and Mayor Faulconer:

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