Dr. Richard Ladner Presents Samuel E. Kelly Distinguished Faculty Lecture

SEATTLE – Over 100 faculty, staff, students and community members attended the UW Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity’s sixth annual Samuel E. Kelly Distinguished Faculty Lecture presented by Dr. Richard Ladner on Thurs., April 22, at Johnson Hall.

Dr. Ladner is a Boeing Professor of Computer Science and Engineering and an adjunct professor in the Electrical Engineering and Linguistics departments. His lecture was entitled “Designing and Building Technology to Empower People” and focused on new directions in accessible computing – software and hardware solutions that make computers and other aspects of life more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Opening remarks were made by Dr. Sheila Edwards Lange, Vice President for Minority Affairs and Vice Provost for Diversity, and Dr. Hank Levy, Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. Two sign language interpreters were at the event, as well as a close captioned typist. Programs printed in Braille were also provided.

The son of two deaf parents, Dr. Ladner opened his lecture by talking about his family and his experiences growing up. He also shared some examples of accessibility research that included MobileASL (a mobile video phone service that allows deaf people to communicate in sign language), the ASL-STEM Forum (a social networking site where deaf students and scientists can share signs for scientific terms) and the MobileAccessibility project where blind people can download applications to their cell phones that allow them to capture barcodes and give them the names of products.

Inaugurated in 2005, this annual lecture is named in honor of Dr. Samuel E. Kelly, the first Vice President (1970) of the UW Office of Minority Affairs. The lecture series is dedicated to acknowledging the work of distinguished faculty research focusing on diversity and social justice.

Click here for a photo gallery from the event.