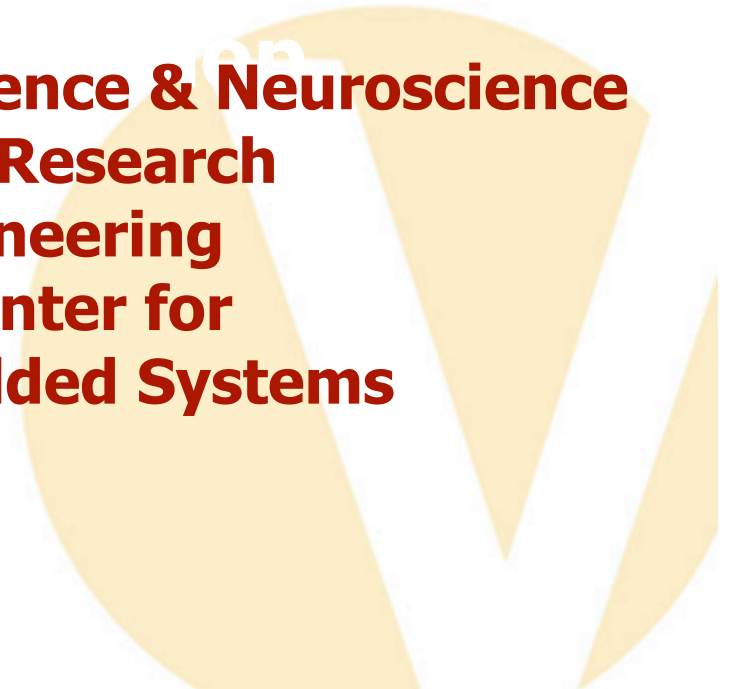


**Maja J. Matarić**

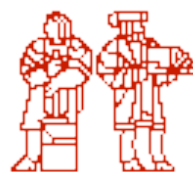
**Professor of Computer Science & Neuroscience**  
**Senior Associate Dean for Research**  
**USC Viterbi School of Engineering**  
**Founding Director, USC Center for**  
**Robotics and Embedded Systems**



**USC Viterbi** A bit about me  
School of Engineering



- Born in Yugoslavia (“old country”)
- Moved to US, not a sweet 16...
- HS in Wichita KS, “a misfit”
- Undergraduate at KU
- MS & PhD at MIT
- First academic job at Brandeis University
- Second academic job at USC (11 yrs ago)
- Assistant professor, difficult chairman, 1<sup>st</sup> child
- Promoted to associate professor, 2<sup>nd</sup> child



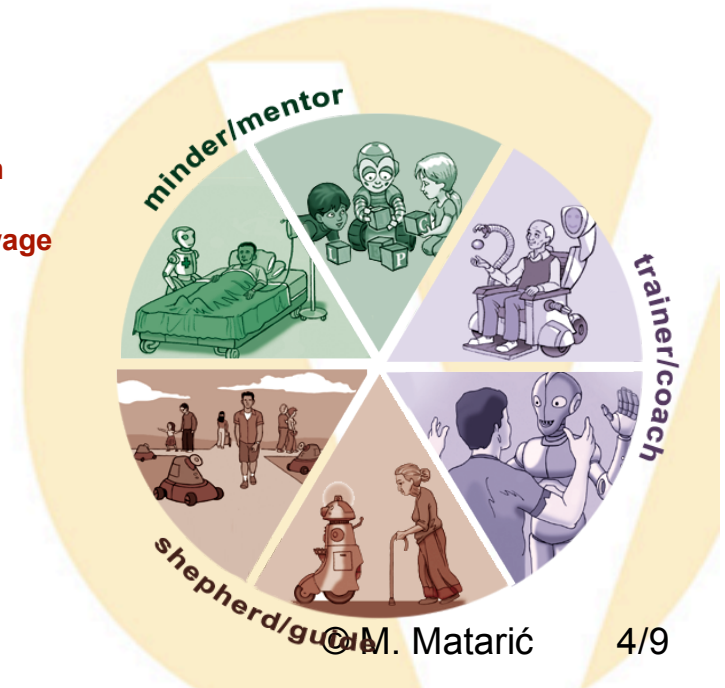
- Started a robotics center at USC ([cres.usc.edu](http://cres.usc.edu))
- Headed a BIG interdisciplinary center proposal to NSF (2.5 years of work, not funded)
- On the Provost's Strategic Planning Committee, Mentoring Steering Committee, Trustee Academic Affairs Committee, Senate Executive Board
- Promoted to full professor, chaired Women in Science & Engineering
- Elected Academic Senate President (theme: research, but also health care, parenting)
- Appointed Sr. Associate Dean for Research in VSoE
- Wrote a textbook (for K-12 outreach)
- Lead & manage a large research lab



# A bit about my research

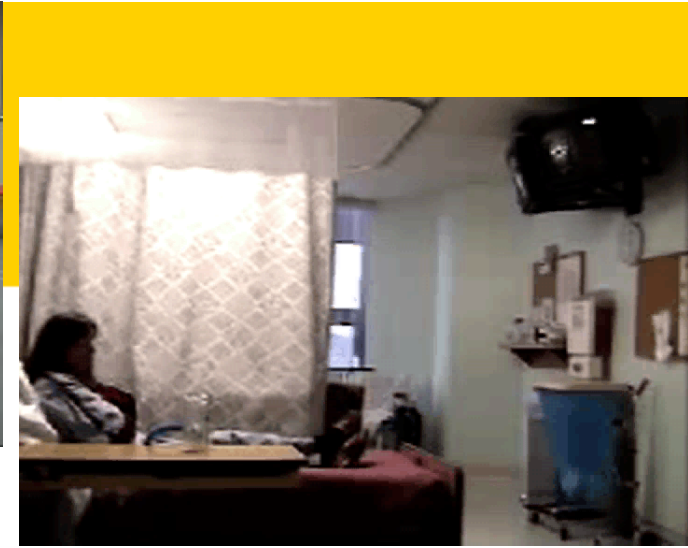


**Human-centered robotics technology:**  
working with people to help address societal needs





Hands-off stroke rehabilitation



Cardiac surgery recovery



Walking coaching



Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis and intervention



Combining physical and cognitive rehabilitation



Alzheimer's Disease and dementia care



- Find your core, what drives you, gets you out of bed, gives you strength, and then trust it and nurture it
- Take ownership and charge of your career
- Know your rights, responsibilities, and benefits
- Take the time to network (find a way that works, e.g., lunches)
- Use the relevant resources of your organization (support groups, mentoring forums, town halls, etc.)
- Get mentors everywhere and ask questions (chair, assoc. dean for academic affairs, senior faculty, provost...)
- Don't complain or focus on the negatives; if you don't like something, decide how hard you want to work to change it, and then invest your effort accordingly, in a proactive and positive way
- Be a good role model for students and colleagues

## Advice: being in an organization



- Read your organization's strategic plan/mission statement/etc. and know what you contribute to it
- Make sure others know what you contribute; do not boast but get the info out in an appropriate way (supervisors need to be reminded)
- Take the time to do/say things right
- Beware of email
- Prioritize
- Don't compromise on your principles (e.g., family time, anti-sexism)
- Don't take "no" for an answer but be subtle when it's called for
- Keep a polished and updated CV on the web and a polished and updated web site
- Be seen, be known, and be respected (better yet, be invaluable)

## Advice: moving up



- Figure out what you really want
  - What is the job you crave really like?
  - Are you willing to give up a lot of time?
  - Are you willing to travel a lot?
  - Are you willing to relocate?
  - Are you willing to give up research for management/administration?
- Look for opportunities: get on mailing lists, read memos, check job postings
- Get into management roles (assoc chair, center director)
- Do not take on sucker service roles but be a good citizen
- Spread the word that you (might) want to move up to those with power or influence or both
- Do not be negative about the current position & organization
- Connect with and talk to role models locally and beyond
- Get your name on the head-hunters lists, and then let your superiors (and others) know you are in demand



- “It’s lonely and cold at the top”
  - Some people will resent you
  - Some will work to undermine you
- Demand and hold authority
  - Be approachable but don’t be maleable
  - Be tough but not rude; pick your battles and learn to let go
- Manage the workload
  - You won’t be able to do everything you are asked or you would like to
  - Prioritize constantly
  - Delegate, then give credit but keep the ownership of the overall work
- Manage your health
  - Stress is bad and it compromises your performance and progress
  - Decompress: find what works for you, back to your core