Invited speaker: **Cristian ILAC**

Presentation: **Machine learning: Practical applications and stories from the trenches**

Abstract: We shall not be surprised the field of artificial intelligence (A.I.) is almost as venerable as the computer science field itself. The "computer" concept was born from the need to perform raw mathematical processing, yet the natural challenge for the programmable, universal compute is to model the human process of gaining knowledge and skills. Last decade advances in algorithms, faster computers, and access to large amount of data (in addition to "faster computers' often cited in AI advances is the newfound economic accessibility of provisioned processing power – it's the notion of democratizing access to processing power?) – have driven rapid progress on AI problems that prove elusive prior, such as computer vision or speech recognition. History demonstrates that technical advances of this nature are naturally followed by dissemination that result in broader impact across multiple technological fields. Indeed, in his most recent stakeholder letter, Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon stated that "much of what we do with machine learning happens beneath the surface. […] Though less visible, much of the impact of machine learning will be […] quietly, but meaningfully improving core operations". In this presentation I will exemplify this using real world examples from the practice of Seattle based Quantarium LLC.

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Short bio: Cristian Ilac graduated Technical University of Iasi as the valedictorian of the 1997 class. He completed his Masters degree in Computer Science shortly before joining Microsoft in 1998. While at Microsoft he specialized in computer security working as a software developer and software development manager in several teams like Operating System Security and Cryptography and Xbox Live Authentication Service. In 2011 he joined Amazon Web Services team as a manager for the Identity and Access Management Service. In these roles he has worked on well-known technologies like Kerberos, Bitlocker, AWS Security Token and AWS Key Management services and has co-authored over 30 patents in the field. His interest in artificial intelligence started in his 3rd year of college while learning that the Min-Max algorithm which is at the core of computer chess playing algorithms can be implemented in about 10 lines of code. Before graduating he joined in a small company in Iasi trying to predict directional evolution of the stock market. While this effort was ultimately unsuccessful he has come back to this field and in 2015 he became a senior member of the technical staff for Quantarium, a Seattle based company that specializes in machine learning and data science for real estate.