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Dr. Rory A. Cooper received B.S. and M.Eng. degrees in electrical engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in 1985 and 1986, respectively. He received a Ph.D. degree in electrical and computer engineering with a concentration in bioengineering from University of California at Santa Barbara in 1989.

He is FISA & Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) Professor and Distinguished Professor of the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, and professor of Bioengineering, Mechanical Engineering, Physical Medicine & Rehab, and Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Cooper is Founding Director and VA Senior Research Career Scientist of the VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Center of Excellence in Pittsburgh.

Dr. Cooper serves or has served on the editorial boards of several prominent peer-reviewed journals in the fields of rehabilitation and bioengineering. Cooper has authored or coauthored over 350 peer-reviewed journal publications. He has nearly 20 patents awarded or pending. He is the author of two books: "Rehabilitation Engineering Applied to Mobility and Manipulation" and "Wheelchair Selection and Configuration", and co-editor of "An Introduction to Rehabilitation Engineering", "Care of the Combat Amputee", "Warrior Transition Leader Medical Rehabilitation Handbook" and, most recently, "Warrior Resilience and Reintegration". Dr. Cooper has been an invited lecturer at many institutions around the world to include National Academies of Sciences Distinctive Voices Lecture, ACC Distinguished Lecturer, Smithsonian Institute ADA 25th Anniversary Festival Speaker, Young Lecture at the Royal Military College of Canada, and inaugural AAAS-Lemelson Foundation Invention Ambassador, and was awarded Honorary Professor at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and both Honorary Professor and an Honorary Doctorate at Xi'an Jiatong University.

In 1988, Cooper was a bronze medalist in the Paralympic Games, Seoul, Republic of Korea. He was on the steering committee for the 1996 Paralympic Scientific Congress held in Atlanta, GA, and the Sports Scientist for the 2008 U.S. Paralympic Team in Beijing, China. Cooper is a U.S. Army veteran with a spinal cord injury and a Director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America Research Foundation.