SIGCSE News in Brief

Summer is almost here! We preview some of the great upcoming summer events, including the ICER (p. 3), ITiCSE (p. 4) and RESPECT (p. 7) conferences.

Spring is a busy time for SIGCSE-related activities. The SIGCSE technical symposium was last month and we give an overview the business meeting (p. 8; conference report next issue). Looking to next spring, the 2017 chairs hope to make the SIGCSE symposium review process even better. They are proposing a revised review structure and are looking for feedback (p. 5). We also review the SIGCSE award winners (p. 2), including the member spotlight with one of the winners, Jan Cuny (p. 6). Finally, 2016 is also a SIGCS Board election year, so don’t forget to vote (p. 2).

Finally, you may have noticed a few changes in the Bulletin delivery and access. In 2015, we standardized the hosting so that it is independent of the editor(s). The Bulletin is now hosted on the SIGCSE website and can be accessed for one year after its publication date. Bulletins are always available through the ACM Digital Library. The ACM Digital Library is the official repository for the SIGCSE Bulletin and can be used for searching prior issues. Additionally, SIGCSE does receive income when the Bulletin is accessed through the ACM Digital Library.

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**SIGCSE Award Winners**  
*By Maureen Doyle, SIGCSE Bulletin co-editor*

The SIGCSE Symposium includes the presentation of SIGCSE’s two major awards. The SIGCSE Award for Lifetime Service to the Computer Science Education Community was awarded to Barbara Boucher Owens, Emeritus Faculty from Southwestern University.

Barb presented an *inspirational talk* titled “Service as Rent” at the First Timer’s luncheon. The SIGCSE Award for Lifetime Service to the Computer Science Education Community is given to a computer science educator with a long history of volunteer service to the computer science education community. This award was initiated in 1997.

The SIGCSE Award for Outstanding Contribution to Computer Science Education was awarded to Jan Cuny, National Science Foundation. Jan gave a plenary address on Friday, March 4th at the SIGCSE Symposium. This award, initiated in 1981, is given to computer science educators who have had a long lasting impact on and made significant difference in computing education.

Jan Cuny is featured in our spotlight section. Barbara Boucher Owens was interviewed in the April, 2013 bulletin. You can revisit Barb’s interview at the ACM Digital Library.

The SIGCSE board selects the award winners from all nominations provided by the SIGCSE community. You can find information on how you can nominate a member of our community for one of these SIGCSE awards at the award website.

**VOTE! 2016 is Election Year for SIGCSE**  
*By Renée McCauley*

Every three years we elect a new SIGCSE Board. The Board drives all SIGCSE activities, which includes approving conference locations and leaders, special projects and speaker funding, budget expenditures, and much more. We are fortunate to have a fabulous slate of dedicated SIGCSE members, who have offered their services to our community for the next three years.

Your input on the selection of the members of this Board is very important. Visit the election page for a list of candidates. Look for detailed election information (with biographies and candidate statements) in your mailbox in early May. The strength of any SIG is in its members. Please vote!
ICER Preview
By Judy Sheard, Brian Dorn, Donald Chinn and Josh Tenenberg

The 12th annual ACM International Computing Education Research (ICER) conference this year will be held September 9-11, 2016, down under in Melbourne, Australia.

Attending ICER is a wonderful opportunity to visit Melbourne—a lively, multicultural city with many attractions for visitors. The conference venue will be in downtown Melbourne and we are planning to hold the conference dinner at the Melbourne Zoo. Melbourne is located on a large bay on the southern coast of Australia, providing easy access to many fine beaches. The downtown area is situated on a river and surrounded by parklands, with many eating, entertainment and shopping venues. When planning a trip to ICER, make sure you allow time to visit areas near Melbourne. For example, the scenic coastline along the Great Ocean Road and the Mornington Peninsula, the Australian wildlife at the Healesville Sanctuary, the penguins at Philip Island, and the wine and food areas of the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges. More information is at: http://www.visitmelbourne.com/

ICER is now well established as the premier computing education research conference. At ICER you will have the opportunity to meet leading computing education researchers and get feedback on your work. We will continue the ICER conference single track format and will allow time for good discussion of each paper presented. In addition to research papers, we will have posters and 3-minute lightning talks, which may be accompanied by a poster. The deadline for both of these proposal submissions is June 17.

Associated with ICER are two other events which aim to foster the development of computing education research. A doctoral consortium led by prominent leaders in the computing education research community will be held the day before ICER. Doctoral consortium participants will also present their work at ICER. Doctoral Consortium submissions are due May 20.

A Works in Progress Workshop will give participants an opportunity to gain critical and in-depth feedback on their research ideas or projects. The Work in Progress workshop applications are due by June 17.

In addition to the scheduled events, we invite proposals for other activities which could be held prior to or after ICER.

Please contact Judy Sheard (judy.sheard@monash.edu) if you have an idea for an activity that you would like to propose.

We look forward to welcoming you to Melbourne in September.
ITiCSE
By Alison Clear

It’s now only three months away; this year, for the first and maybe only time out of Europe, ITiCSE will be in Arequipa, Peru, July 11-13, 2016.

The conference is hosted by San Pablo Catholic University in the beautiful city of Arequipa, which is also known as the “White City” due to the many buildings built from the white volcanic rock surrounding the city. Arequipa is the second largest city and is situated in southern Peru. Although it is winter in Arequipa in July, the daytime temperature will be approx. 20 °C (70 °F) and the weather will be fine.

There are eight working groups, 56 papers, 9 tips and techniques, and 26 posters, so it will be a full, exciting conference. The keynote speakers are Mehran Sahami (Stanford, USA), speaking on Statistical Modeling to Better Understand CS Students and Mats Daniels, speaking on Professional Competencies for Real? A Question about Identity!

The conference dinner on Tuesday, July 12th will be at the Santa Catalina Monastery, the main colonial monument of the city, built in the 16th century. There are also two Tuesday afternoon excursions: a walking tour which will start in the famous Plaza des Armas or a bus tour of the city and surrounds. After the conference there are two tours organized so that delegates can have the opportunity to see at least two of the famous parts of Peru. The first is a two day, one night, tour to the Colca Canyon. Tony and I did this tour on one of our visits to Peru and it comes highly recommended. You will get up early on the second day to see the famous condor fly – a magnificent experience. The second tour is Machu Picchu. For this tour you fly or take the overnight bus to Cusco and then join the tour to Machu Piccu. Just remember that Cusco is high so you need to walk slowly, so no marathon running until you get acclimatized. If you don’t wish to do these tours but still wish to see more of Peru we can recommend Lake Titicaca or the tropical jungle.

If you decide to stop in Lima on the way, our recommended hotel is Faraona Grand Hotel in Miraflores. It is an easy walk to the cliffs where there are fabulous shopping and dining opportunities. I have done this walk on my own in the evenings and always felt safe.

If you have any queries about going to Peru, please don’t hesitate to ask one of the conference chairs, Ernesto (ecuadros@ucsp.edu.pe), or Alison Clear (aclear@eit.ac.nz). Both are happy to share experiences, where to go, accommodation, or answer any questions about health, safety, etc. Now for a pisco sour…
An Improved Process for the SIGCSE Technical Symposium
By Michael Casperson, SIGCSE 2017 Symposium Co-Chair

Most conferences have a Program Committee (PC) with personally invited members (typically in the range of 25-50 people). The setup for the SIGCSE Technical Symposium is radically different with a huge pool of ~1,000 volunteers serving as reviewers.

In general, the setup with voluntary reviewers works great; in particular, it allows for many people to contribute in an inclusive way and thus increases the community's sense of ownership of the Symposium. However, there are also (well-known) flaws in the setup. There is a lot of variation in (1) the quality of the reviews, (2) the amount of work that reviewers put into making reviews, and (3) the reviewers' background, experience, and interests. The latter is addressed by topic-based matching of reviewers to submissions, but only partly.

Various attempts have been made to improve the state of affairs, the latest being the introduction of associate program chairs (APCs) to conduct meta-reviews and provide recommendations to the program chairs. The introduction of APCs is a great improvement. However, we can make a significantly larger improvement by taking the idea of APCs one step further.

The idea/proposal is as follows: by increasing the number of APCs (say from 12 to 36) we can achieve a more traditional setup similar to other conferences while maintaining the volunteer reviewers and the associated qualities. We can get the best of both worlds, so to speak.

With more APCs, we can have not just one but several APCs meta-review each paper. Also, we can let APCs be responsible for facilitating anonymous online discussions among reviewers and other APCs during the review process (hosted by the OpenConf submission system) and thereby achieve two things:

1) Improvement of reviews (short-term effect): reviewers would be encouraged to comment on other reviews of the same submission and potentially modify their own review to reflect an improved appreciation (or the opposite) of the submission.

2) Improvement of reviewer skills (long-term effect): the reading of other reviews and the anonymous discussions will help improve reviewer skills in a constructive and efficient way (in-process instead of out-of-process).

As it is current practice, APCs (PC members) are personally invited, and a fair percentage are renewed every year. Reviewers are still volunteers. Reviewers can indicate willingness to serve as APC (PC member) and are eligible if they demonstrate the ability to write, discuss, and refine reviews of high quality.

We hope the community welcomes this change, and we invite comments and ideas for further improvement of the Symposium review process. Please send your comments to mca@acm.org ASAP and no later than May 15th, 2016.

On behalf of:
Tiffany Barnes, NC State University
Dan Garcia, UC Berkeley
SIGCSE 2017 Program Co-Chairs

Steve Edwards, Virginia Tech
Michael E. Caspersen, Aarhus University
SIGCSE 2017 Symposium Co-Chairs
In this feature of the Bulletin, we highlight members of the SIGCSE community. In this issue, Bulletin co-editor Maureen Doyle interviewed ACM Outstanding Contribution to Computer Science Education Award winner Jan Cuny, National Science foundation.

MD: Your commitment to CS education ranges from broadening participation, equity, K-12 and approaching the study of CS education with professional rigor. Are you pleased with the changes in our community in the past ten years? Did you envision this when you joined the NSF or is your vision evolving?

JC: My vision is definitely evolved and is probably still evolving.

I was hired by the National Science Foundation in 2004 to work on broadening participation in computing. As part of that effort we funded—and I am happy to say still fund—large Alliances that, in aggregate, are sustained efforts that aim to have significant national impact across the entire pipeline, from K-12, through college and graduate school, to the academic or corporate workplace. We also funded many smaller projects that aimed to engage students from underrepresented groups.

What we discovered, not surprisingly, is that it’s easy to get kids—even very young kids—interested in computing. We have such great toys (robotics, e-textiles, animation systems, etc.). I worried though about the long term impact of these efforts. While many did a great job of engaging kids, few did any rigorous research. Without that research, when the projects ended, they were just over. They did not contribute to our understanding of how to better serve students going forward. As a result, we have been working much closer with social scientists and education researchers in our programs.

I was also influenced by a study that found that successful STEM programs needed to provide three things: engagement, capacity, and continuity. Capacity meant that it was important to increase the student’s understandings and skills, and continuity meant that the students must see a series of next steps that would put them on a path forward relevant to their lives. The capacity piece was easy to add, but it was harder to see how to provide continuity.

For that, I am indebted to conversations with Jane Margolis, who was working in the Los Angeles schools. Jane had found big disparities in the CS offered in those schools: high-resourced schools had strong CS programs but low-resourced schools (often those with high minority enrollments) had no CS classes at all. Jane convinced me that this was an equity issue.

Former Secretary of Education, Arnie Duncan, said that education was the “new civil rights.” Nowhere is that more true than in computer science education. Computing is everywhere—changing the way we communicate, work, and play—and computational skills are in high demand across the entire workforce. All students should have a basic understanding of computation and its relevance to their lives and interests. They don’t all need to be software engineers but they should all be able to “bend computation to their own ends.”

As a result, I came to see education, and particularly K-12 education, as key to broadening participation. In the CISE directorate at NSF, we merged our broadening participation efforts with our broadening participation efforts with our

1 (The Trilogy for Success: Engagement, Capacity, and Continuity by Eric Jolly)
education efforts and expanded their reach to K-12.

**MD**: How did you first get involved with the SIGCSE community? What made you want to join and caused you to stay with the community?

**JC**: I first got involved with SIGCSE when our broadening participation and education efforts merged. Since then, I have been impressed with the dedication and commitment of many attendees, and I am happy to count the attendees among the Principal Investigators on many of our projects.

**MD**: What is your vision for CS Education 10 or 20 years from now?

**JC**: In 20 years, I expect that the new national CS for All Initiative and complementary work at the undergraduate level will have completely changed the landscape for computing education. We will have eliminated underrepresentation. All kids will have the opportunity to see student-centered and inspiring CS in school as computing will be a routine part of K-12 education. Students will arrive at college understanding the role of computation in solving complex problems, and they will see computing as exciting, relevant to their lives, and empowering across their careers and interests. Universities will offer a broad range of courses that connect with a wide range of student aspirations and most college student will take some of these courses.

**MD**: What do you do when you aren’t working?

**JC**: What I most like to do is hike in the mountains of Central Oregon, but moving to Virginia has made opportunities to do that considerably less frequent.

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**Broadening Participation: Add RESPECT to Your Summer Plans**

**By Gloria Childress Townsend**

We invite you to join IEEE’s Special Technical Community on Broadening Participation in Computing ([stcbp.org](http://stcbp.org)) for the second annual conference on Research on Equity and Sustained Participation in Engineering, Computing, and Technology (RESPECT) in Atlanta, GA, August 11-13, 2016 ([http://respect2016.stcbp.org/](http://respect2016.stcbp.org/)). Submit research papers, experience reports (due April 17), posters and lightning talks (due June 3).

RESPECT provides an opportunity for researchers in the Broadening Participation in Engineering, Computing, and Technology (BPECT) community to share promising practices through presentations and publications. For the first time, there will be an entire conference devoted to BPECT issues that highlight the important work of the BPECT community. This year’s RESPECT conference will also allow members of the BPECT community to network and exchange ideas.

For examples of successful RESPECT contributions from last year, check out the Special Issue on the Best of RESPECT ([IEEE’s Computing in Science and Engineering](http://computingin.org)). We hope to see you all there.

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![RESPECT 2016 Banner](http://computingin.org/2016-Banner.png)
SIGCSE Business Meeting Report
By Judy Sheard, SIGCSE Board Secretary

The annual business meeting of the SIGCSE Board was held on March 4, 2016. The SIGCSE Board Chair, Susan Rodger, introduced the SIGCSE Board members. Susan thanked past, present and future Chairs of the Symposium, ITiCSE, and ICER. She also thanked the co-editors of the SIGCSE Bulletin and the new co-editors of ACM Inroads.

Amber Settle (SIGCSE Board Treasurer) presented the SIGCSE budget, announcing a profit for 2015 and a forecast for 2016. She reported that SIGCSE membership numbers are steady. Amber announced the recipients of the SIGCSE Speakers Fund and the SIGCSE Travel Grant for 2015.

Sue Fitzgerald (SIGCSE Board member) reported on the SIGCSE Special Projects, giving details of the projects. Sue also announced the formation of two new SIGCSE committees.

Alison Clear and Judy Sheard gave updates on planning for ITiCSE and ICER in 2016.

Susan sought feedback from the meeting on a proposal to change the Symposium leadership model and another proposal to hold SIGCSE conferences in locations other than the current traditional locations.

Renée McCauley (Chair of the SIGCSE Board nominating committee) announced the candidates for the forthcoming SIGCSE Board election.

Finally, Paul Tymann (SIGCSE Board Vice Chair) moved a vote of thanks to Susan for her wonderful leadership of SIGCSE over the past three years.

Deadline SIGCSE
Upcoming dates you won’t want to miss!

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<td>ICER – paper submission (abstracts due Apr 15)</td>
<td><a href="http://icer.hosting.acm.org/icer-2016/call-for-participation/">http://icer.hosting.acm.org/icer-2016/call-for-participation/</a></td>
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<td>May 15</td>
<td>ACM Special Project Grants</td>
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