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ACM President's Salary Increased by 300%!

I HOPE THIS headline got your attention! Of course, as with all voluntary positions at ACM, the salary is \$0.00/year. However, you gain incalculably in satisfaction when you volunteer your time in any of the myriad opportunities afforded by the international ACM. Here's what ACM Past President Alain Chesnais says on his personal home page (<http://www.alainchesnais.com>): "I have been involved as a volunteer at ACM/SIGGRAPH for over 20 years. I started out by becoming a member of the Paris SIGGRAPH chapter in 1987, then volunteered to help set up a mailing list. In 1991 I was elected chair of the chapter and was appointed to the SIGGRAPH local groups steering committee. I've continuously held positions at SIGGRAPH and ACM ever since, including ACM SIGGRAPH president from 2002 through 2005. I currently serve as ACM past president."

I want to draw your attention to Chesnais' compelling essay on volunteerism (<http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1831408>) and to the importance and value of volunteer work for ACM. The options range from leading special interest groups and chapters, to helping edit and review publications, to service on the ACM Council or other councils sponsored by ACM. These positions represent opportunities to serve the computer science community, to engage in substantive ways with colleagues, to learn and exercise leadership, and to shape our discipline and its image in the public's mind.

A good example is USACM Council, which serves as an advisory panel on policy matters that concern computer science and the industry it has spawned. The head of the USACM Council is appointed by the President of

ACM and has been led by Eugene Spaford ("Spaf") for many years. I think Spaf would say this volunteer effort has been remarkably rewarding. USACM has given ACM a platform for expressing its views on U.S. technology policy issues vital to our discipline. It has provided opportunities for ACM staff and volunteers to contribute broadly.

I also want to emphasize how valuable it has been to have staff support at ACM to reinforce the leadership of the volunteer members. For virtually all of the ACM volunteer leaders there is a corresponding person or group within ACM HQ to support the volunteers. For example, ACM has a policy office in Washington, D.C., led by Cameron Wilson and includes David Bruggeman and Renee Dopplick. They faithfully track legislation, research activities and policy issues, and many of their notices are triggers for USACM reaction.

There are many opportunities for ACM members to join volunteer posts. Some of these posts are elective, others are appointed, and many just take personal initiative. Starting a student or local chapter or a local SIG is one example where initiative counts. I had the pleasure of serving as the chair of the Los Angeles SIGART chapter for a couple of years in the mid-1960s. There are some ACM members with lists of volunteer leadership efforts as long as my arm. Others have served in particular capacities for long periods of time. I think of Kelly Gotlieb, who has served as chair or co-chair of the ACM Awards Committee for two decades, and the late Jim Horning who served as co-chair with Gotlieb for a decade, as well as the new co-chair, Cherri Pancake.

Volunteering takes time and not everyone has a lot of it available for

such work. Still, a remarkable number of our 100,000-plus members have found the time to take on additional responsibility on behalf of the organization. I think of people like Moshe Vardi and his collection of volunteer editors and the complementary staff at ACM, like Diane Crawford, executive editor of *Communications*, who corresponds regularly and particularly vigorously, especially when I am late with my monthly contribution to our flagship publication. This points out another key factor in the volunteer/staff relationship. ACM is deeply dependent on the synergy between the full-time staff and the volunteer leaders. Anyone who has ever had experience working as a volunteer can appreciate that the sinews of an organization are a critical part of binding the volunteer muscle of the organization into a functioning whole. I can't think of better examples of that than John White, the CEO of ACM, and Pat Ryan, the COO. They and the staff of ACM keep the trains running on time and help the volunteer talent to perform their responsibilities.

If you are interested in exploring some volunteer options, please visit ACM's website (<http://www.acm.org>) where you will find information about the Key People of the organization (<http://www.acm.org/key-people>) who can connect you with volunteers or staff who will help you discover such opportunities. See <http://www.acm.org/publications> for a list of volunteer opportunities for publications. In fact, I encourage everyone reading this column to explore the ACM website—it is a gold mine of information about your organization and opportunities for volunteer work.

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