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The House Elves of ACM

THIS IS MY last column as President of ACM. It has been an honor to serve and I look forward to a continuing role as Past President until June 2016. It has been a privilege to take up a page of each edition of *Communications* for the past 24 months and I have enjoyed the discipline that such a commitment inspires. It has also been enormously helpful to have Diane Crawford on my case when the column is late—she is one of the many staff who serve not only the professional and student members of ACM but all the many others who benefit from attendance at our conferences and workshops and who have access to our published literature.

Those of you familiar with the *Harry Potter* series will recognize the reference to house elves. I do *not* mean to imply that any of our hard-working staff are mistreated (à la Dobby). The house elves keep the great houses running behind the scenes. I use the term in appreciation of the often invisible but absolutely vital role every employee of ACM plays in making our institution productive and smooth operation. As President, I have been deeply impressed by the leadership skills shown by all the ACM management, particularly the dynamic duo: John White (CEO) and Pat Ryan (COO). If you have served in some capacity on the executive committee, the council, as a SIG chair, or on one of the many ACM boards or committees, you will be similarly conscious of the amazing amount of work they manage.

We have a truly dedicated staff that can be found at <http://www.acm.org/key-people/staff>. While ACM is deeply dependent on the extraordinary contributions of our volunteers, the organizational framework and underlying

support for this work is key to ACM's successful operation. So I want to make a point of thanking the ACM staff for all they have done and continue to do for all of us.

This issue of *Communications* is also our awards issue and on the cover you see the incomparable Leslie Lamport, the recipient of the **2013 ACM A.M. Turing Award** for his almost uncanny work on distributed systems and protocols. I have known Leslie and his work for a long time and it will be a great pleasure to present him with our highest honor at the ACM Awards Ceremonies in San Francisco on June 21.

Other honorees to be feted at the event include: David Blei, recipient of the **ACM-Infosys Foundation Award** for his strikingly scalable, statistical topic modeling work. And the team responsible for the development of Coq will receive the **Software System Award**: Thierry Coquand, Gérard Huet, Christine Paulin-Mohring, Bruno Barras, Jean-Christophe Filliâtre, Hugo Herbelin, Chet Murthy, Yves Bertot, and Pierre Castéran.

Pedro Felipe Felzenszwalb will receive the **2013 Grace Murray Hopper Award** for contributions to object recognition in pictures and video. Robert D. Blumofe and Charles E. Leiserson are recognized for their contributions to efficient and robust parallel computation with the **Paris Kanellakis Theory and Practice Award**. And Susan H. Rodger will receive the **Karl V. Karlstrom Outstanding Educator Award** for her work in developing CS education in grade schools.

ACM-W named Susan T. Dumais the **2014–2015 Athena Lecturer**. Dumais introduced novel algorithms and interfaces for interactive retrieval. For their long-standing work as series editors of the *Springer Lecture Notes in*

Computer Science, Gerhard Goos, Juris Hartmanis, and Jan van Leeuwen will receive the **Distinguished Service Award**. And Sanjam Garg will receive the **2013 Doctoral Dissertation Award**.

The **2014 Presidential Award** goes to Mehran Sahami for his exhaustive efforts to produce CS2013. And the **Outstanding Contribution of ACM Award** goes to two exceptional staffers from ACM HQ: Russell Harris and Donna Cappo.

I should also note that ACM awards were also presented last November at the SC13. The **ACM Gordon Bell Prize** was awarded to the researchers responsible for the 11-petaflop simulations: Diego Rossinelli, Babak Hejazialhosseini, Panagiotis Hadji-doukas, and Petros Koumoutsakos from ETH Zurich; Costas Bekas and Alessandro Curioni from IBM Zurich Research Laboratory; Adam Bertsch and Scott Futral from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; and Steffen Schmidt and Nikolaus Adams from Technical University Munich.

Jack Dongarra received the **ACM-IEEE CS Ken Kennedy Award** for his leadership in designing and promoting standards for mathematical software used to solve numerical problems common to high-performance computing (HPC). And Jonathan Lifflander and Edgar Solomonik received the **ACM-IEEE George Michael Memorial HPC Fellowships** for 2013 for their projects on algorithms for large-scale system and parallel physical equation solutions, respectively.

At the awards banquet in June we will also recognize the 2013 ACM Fellows. I hope to see many of you there.

Live long and prosper.

Vinton G. Cerf, ACM PRESIDENT

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