News from the SIGs

by Ellen Walker
Hiram College

In this issue, Amber Settle, our SIGCSE reporter, writes her final column as SIGCSE Chair. Thanks so much, Amber, for your leadership!

*From our SIGCSE reporter and
SIGCSE chair, Amber Settle.*

A new SIGCSE Board was elected in June 2019, although at the time I'm writing this the election has yet to conclude. I'll serve on the new Board as past chair, and I look forward to working with everyone for the next three years. But I'd like to use my last column as SIGCSE chair to reflect on some of the accomplishments of the 2016-2019 SIGCSE Board.

One of the first changes the 2016-2019 SIGCSE Board made was to the organization of the International Computing Education Research Conference (ICER). It used to be the case that conference co-chairs served for three years and during their terms were assigned to tasks involving both conference logistics and program creation, something the ICER organizers suggested was overwhelming for volunteers. In collaboration with the ICER leadership the SIGCSE Board created separate program co-chair and site co-chair roles, with the former doing work only for the program and the latter only for logistical matters. Continuity is maintained with two-year terms for each role. This change was implemented for ICER 2017, and organizers

have indicated to the Board that they feel it better manages workload and allows for more targeted recruiting of conference leadership.

Inspired by the ICER results and working to address a similar problem, the SIGCSE Board and Technical Symposium organizers also separated the roles for the conference organization team. It used to be the case that Symposium organizers first served as program co-chair and then in the following year as conference co-chair. Recognizing that each role requires a different skill set, the positions were separated so that someone is appointed only as a conference co-chair or only as a program co-chair, with a two-year commitment for continuity. The change to the conference organization will first be implemented for the 2020 Symposium. Another change for the Technical Symposium was a re-organization of the site selection team, with the creation of junior and senior site selection chair roles. Documentation of existing site-selection procedures was also crucial and was accomplished by the first pair to serve in the newly-created roles. Finally, a member of the SIGCSE Board and several former Symposium co-chairs served on a committee to celebrate the 50th Technical Symposium in 2019, with special activities and 50 Travel Grants for new attendees to the conference. Their efforts were appreciated by all who attended the conference in Minneapolis.

The biggest changes in conference leadership were made to the Conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE). In 2018 the SIGCSE Board voted to work with Informatics Europe and ACM Europe in overseeing the conference, and a steering committee was created for ITiCSE with membership from all three organizations.

First approved in February 2018, the inaugural ACM Global Computing Education Conference took place May 17–19, 2019 in Chengdu, China.

The biggest changes in conference leadership were made to the Conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE). In 2018 the SIGCSE Board voted to work with Informatics Europe and ACM Europe in overseeing the conference, and a steering committee was created for ITiCSE with membership from all three organizations. The newly formed steering committee began by formalizing and documenting the work that the previous conference site selection committee had devotedly done for many years. Moving forward, the steering committee will work to find ways to improve the profile of the conference, with the goal of ensuring it is the premiere European computing education conference. We are all excited to see what this means for the future of ITiCSE.

Finally, the SIGCSE Board completed work begun by the 2013–2016 Board and voted to create a fourth SIGCSE conference, the ACM Global Computing Education Conference (CompEd). The goal of the conference is to reach the parts of the world not already served by a SIGCSE conference. First approved in February 2018, the inaugural conference took place May 17–19, 2019 in Chengdu, China thanks to a great deal of hard work on the part of the CompEd steering and conference committees. Initially the conference will take place every two years, with the next conference scheduled for 2021. The next SIGCSE Board will evaluate the first two offerings of the conference during their term and decide on directions for the future of CompEd.

The 2016–2019 SIGCSE Board didn't focus on conferences alone. The Board made it a priority for all Board-approved positions to have a public call for volunteers, both to

allow for more transparency in volunteer approval and to help reach new candidates for SIG leadership. Term limits were a focus for all positions so that new people and ideas could regularly cycle into the organization, and when new people were appointed to positions the Board worked hard to ensure that institutional knowledge from our long-time volunteers was passed along. One particularly dedicated member of the SIGCSE Board worked hard during 2018 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the SIG, with fifty posts detailing activities for each year of the SIG. The SIGCSE Board also began supporting several other organizations, exhibiting at two CSTA conferences, supporting two CRA-W Grad Cohort events, and making a CSForAll commitment to create discount registrations for all elementary and secondary educators at SIGCSE conferences. Finally, the Board worked to document many of its procedures and policies and update the sigcse.org web site, with the goal of ensuring that future Boards have the information they need as they begin their terms.

Nearly all of the work that the 2016–2019 Board did was a team effort, and I thank Judy Sheard, Adrienne Decker, Sue Fitzgerald,

Michelle Craig, Briana Morrison, Mark Weiss, and Susan Rodger for your hard work, passion, and dedication. Thank you too to the SIGCSE Bulletin editors Maureen Doyle, Leo Porter, and Karen Davis who shared valuable input and communicated so much of what the SIGCSE Board did to the membership. Much of the work done during our term was a collaborative effort with conference organizers, and I appreciate and commend the many people on the front lines of the Technical Symposium, ITiCSE, ICER, and CompEd conferences.

Finally, my thanks to all the SIGCSE members who voted in the elections, attended the conferences, participated in online discussions on our listservs, and shared their concerns, comments, and praise with me over the past three years. SIGCSE depends on its volunteers for the vast majority of its work, and the caring and dedication that each member has inspires SIGCSE Board members in all that they do. ♦

For more information on these SIGs, see the following websites

SIGCSE: www.sigcse.org

SIGITE: www.sigite.org

SIGMIS: www.sigmis.org

Ellen L. Walker
Professor of Computer Science
Hiram College
11715 Garfield Road
Hiram, OH 44234 USA
walkerel@hiram.edu

Amber Settle
Vincent de Paul Professor
School of Computing
College of Computing and Digital Media
DePaul University
Chicago, IL 60604 USA
asettle@cdm.depaul.edu

DOI: 10.1145/3350622 Copyright held by author/owner