Margaret Hamilton
Royal Melbourne Institute
of Technology

James Harland
Royal Melbourne Institute
of Technology

EDITORS' MESSAGE

Welcome to the December edition of *Inroads*.

As we signalled in our previous issue, we are encouraging paper submissions around specific themes. For this edition, our theme is the classroom of the future, and we are pleased to announce that we have three papers which made it through our rigorous reviewing process in time for this edition. Thank you to Richard Blumenthal, Mikey Goldweber and Lisa Kaczmarczyk for their excellent and thought-provoking contribution around computing for the social good that is becoming increasingly important for future class projects and discussions. Also, thanks to Joseph Maguire and Quintin Cutts who prepared their paper in quick time around the future of software engineering education including the lessons learned from the past, industry relevance and experience from software engineering programs running in Canada, Germany, and Ireland. The third is an interesting expose of the teaching of Artificial Intelligence and the consideration of teaching this as part of school education. Thank you very much to Gary Wong, Xiaojuan Ma, and John Huen for their discussion of the stages when AI can be introduced based on their Hong Kong model. Thus, our classroom of the future is a truly international theme.

We are always happy to accept articles on other themes any time and will publish if there is sufficient space and time for review, so if you have a paper for this theme which missed this edition, please still send it, as there are currently two further papers for this theme under review.

We are also of course very pleased with the other contributions to this issue. These include news about the Upsilon Pi Epsilon society from Jeff Popyack, two columns from Henry Walker, one on syllabus considerations (including tailoring to particular students'

needs) and another on issues of code clarity and efficiency in early computing courses, and another column from Mikey Goldweber on the curriculum decision-making process.

In line with our discussion last issue, of having timely data on which to base important decisions such as staff recruitment and program or course changes, we have two further papers full of relevant data and information. Stuart Zweben has provided data from enrollment and retention of students in computer science bachelor programs. Jeremy Straub discusses statistics and correlations between the type of College and the performance of Computer Science Department. Both these papers provide interesting insights into student choice of programs.

We also include a reprint of the best paper from the recent conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITICSE) held in Aberdeen, entitled *Experience Report: Thinkathon - Countering an 'I Got It Working' Mentality with Pencil-and-Paper Exercises* by Quintin Cutts, Matthew Barr, Mireilla Bikanga Ada, Peter Donaldson, Steve Draper, Jack Parkinson, Jeremy Singer, and Lovisa Sundin. We hope you find all of these stimulating and enjoyable.

Eagle-eyed readers will notice the lack of a column about News from the SIGs from Ellen Walker. After nearly four years of tireless contributions, Ellen has understandably decided it is time for someone else to take over this role. So, a big thank you Ellen for your service, and if you are interested in this role, please email us at eic@inroads.acm.org.

Thank you to our Associate Editors and Reviewers who have worked tirelessly especially these past few months in the lead-up to this issue. We appreciate your efforts. We would also like to encourage any readers who enjoy *Inroads* to please nominate for the role of Reviewer.

Our theme for the March issue will be the following.

The Role of Industry in Computing Degrees

Computing degrees often include a capstone project, i.e., one that is done in the final semester which serves as an introduction to the workaday life in the computing industry. This usually involves a client from a relevant company, with the students working as end-to-end developers, eliciting the requirements and designing, implementing, testing and deploying the relevant software. Industry representatives may also be present on advisory or accreditation boards, or have other involvement in curriculum design or delivery of content. They may also provide advice on current practice, assessment, review, project supervision while delivering desired interaction with students explaining why particular skills would be relevant for jobs and discussing what the role of industry could be in computing degrees.

Articles on this theme include both current practice (e.g., advice, accreditation, review, assessment, project supervision) and desired interaction (i.e., what *should* be the role of industry in computing degrees), and/or may also include the role of technology providers in education, who often have training programs or other technical content which is allied with their technologies. We also consider Industry to include the providers of technologies and resources such as textbooks, e-books in education, training programs or other technical content provide a role in computing degrees.

We look forward to receiving many thought-provoking articles. We are very happy to see more diversity happening in the case studies and content of *Inroads* and would like to encourage more.

As the end of the year draws near, we wish you all a Happy Christmas (or whatever you celebrate!) and look forward to hearing from you in the New Year. ❖

**Margaret Hamilton and
James Harland**
Editors-in-Chief