active in professional practice for at least 10 years, with significant performance over a period of at least five of these years. (Senior member applications are available from the Computer Society by using number 204 on the Reader Service Card.)

**Best papers.** Best papers in society publications are identified by editors and editorial board members and are nominated for IEEE awards, such as the Baker for original work, the Thompson for a writer under 30 years of age, and the Fink awards for the outstanding survey, review, or tutorial paper.

Several Computer Society conferences grant awards for the best paper and the best presentation. The judging is performed either by a volunteer committee of experts in the field or by the audience. Among these are the ACM/IEEE Design Automation Conference and the International Test Conference best paper awards, Medcomp's selection of the Martin M. Epstein Memorial Best Paper, the Software Engineering Best Papers, and the K.S. Fu Memorial Best Paper in Pattern Recognition.

The Lance Stafford Larson Memorial Award is presented annually to the best paper on a computer subject submitted to the annual IEEE Student Paper Competition. The $500 award is administered by a subcommittee of the Area Activities Board.

**Student awards.** The society selects several students annually to receive $3000 each from the Richard E. Merwin scholarship fund at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Computer Society Design Automation Technical Committee awards fellowships to graduate students studying in the design automation field. They are announced at the annual ACM/IEEE Design Automation Conference, which also funds them up to $4000. The Test Technology Committee awards fellowships to students in the area of test technology from funds supplied by the annual International Test Conference.

The Computer Society, under its Area Activities Board, participates in the judging of high school science fairs. It also awards prizes in the area of computer science and engineering in the annual final judging at the International Science and Engineering Fair. The first prize is $250, the second $100, and the third is $75.

We invite all members to participate in the Computer Society's awards program. Opportunities for participating — and thereby serving your society and profession — range from judging a high school science fair to nominating and writing support letters for technical and service awards.

Ralph Preiss
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**LETTERS**

The IEEE Trial-Use Standard: a specific case

To the editor:

In reference to the discussions of IEEE Trial-Use Standards in the September 1987 issue of *Computer*, it may help to provide some applicable data from the specific case of IEEE Standard 730, IEEE Standard for Software Quality Assurance Plans.

During the initial formulation of 730, many steps were taken to publicize this effort, including presentations at the ACM Software Quality Assurance Conference, Fall Joint Computer Conference, etc.; briefings of various industry and professional groups including ANS Z1; and the publication of a draft of the standard in *Computer*. Although technical comments were solicited, none were received as a result of any of the above procedures.

When the standard was initially presented to the 104 members of the balloting group for sponsor approval, the results were as follows—returns: 82 (78.8 percent); approvals: 64 (88.9 percent); disapprovals: 8 (11.1 percent); and abstentions: 10. Based on these statistics, the standard was approved as a trial-use standard in 1979.

After it was published as a trial-use standard, significant comments were received from, among others, the Nuclear Power Engineering Committee of the Power Engineering Society. Resolutions of these comments were implemented in the full-use standard (approved in 1981 with 100 percent approval). Further resolutions resulted in the approval of another revision in 1984.

This experience is instructive since publication of the draft did not result in any significant comments, perhaps due to the prior exposure of readers to the work at that time. However, approval and publication of the trial-use standard brought the effort to the attention of affected interests outside of the information technology group. In this instance, the trial-use mechanism fulfilled its intended purpose.

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*Computer* welcomes your letters. Send technical correspondence to Bruce D. Shriver, Editor-in-Chief, IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, PO Box 704, H0-B04A, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598. Send other comments to Letters Editor, *Computer*, 10662 Los Vaqueros Circle, Los Alamitos, CA 90720. All submissions are subject to editing for style, length, and clarity.

November 1987