Making Our Society Even Better

Deborah M. Cooper
IEEE Computer Society 2006 President

In 2006, while improving the Computer Society’s financial future, we will also focus on outreach to underserved and underrepresented IT communities worldwide.

In my first message as 2006 Computer Society president, I extend a warm welcome and thanks to our members, volunteers, and staff worldwide, without whose contributions the Society cannot succeed. I look forward to working together in 2006 to make our Society even better.

This year, the Computer Society celebrates its 60th anniversary, and we have much to celebrate. Our progress to date is in no small measure due to our exceptionally talented and dedicated past presidents, most recently the six-year succession of Guylaine Pollock, Ben Wah, Willis King, Steve Diamond, Carl Chang, and my immediate predecessor, Gerald L. Engel.

Last year, then-President Jerry Engel vowed to build on the excellent work of the previous five years to help implement the vision articulated in our strategic plan, “SP5.” As a result of Jerry’s leadership, courage, and support, the Computer Society is closer to achieving its strategic goals and establishing our appropriate place within the IEEE. On behalf of the Society, I extend our heartfelt thanks to Past President Engel for his outstanding contributions throughout a most challenging year. Fortunately, we will have the benefit of Jerry’s experience as immediate past president in 2006.

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

I also extend my thanks and best wishes to a number of individuals who are completing their terms of service to our Society.

The following Society leaders completed terms on the Executive Committee in 2005: Carl K. Chang, 2004 president; James W. Moore, vice president for electronic products and services; Yervant Zorian, vice president for conferences and tutorials; and Gene F. Hoffnagle, 2004-2005 IEEE Division V director. We will miss their contributions as members of the Executive Committee this year, and we look forward to their continuing involvement with Society activities.

Departing from the Board of Governors at the end of 2005 were Oscar N. Garcia, Mark A. Grant, Michel Israel, Stephen B. Seidman, and Kathleen M. Swigger. We thank them for their service and their valuable contributions to the Society.

I would be remiss in failing to acknowledge the contributions of members of the Computer Society staff, including Anne Marie Kelly, associate executive director; Angela Burgess, publisher; Violet S. Doan, director of administration; Robert G. Care, director of information technology; Richard J. Price, associate publisher; and Desmona D. Harris, manager of finance and accounting. One of the greatest strengths of the Society is our effective volunteer-staff partnership, and these individuals make it happen.

Finally, I regret that space limitations prevent me from adding thanks to all the others who make the Society what we are. Whether your involvement is with one of the standing committees, chapters, conferences, educational activities, electronic products and services, publications, or standards or as a staff member, your contributions are invaluable. Thank you for your efforts to further the mission of the Computer Society.

2006 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It is my pleasure to introduce my 2006 team. The 2006 Executive Committee includes Past President Jerry Engel (2005 president), professor of computer science at the University of Connecticut, and President-Elect (2007 president) Michael R. Williams, professor emeritus at the University of Calgary.

First Vice President for conferences and tutorials is Rangachar Kasturi, the Hood Professor and chair of computer science and engineering at the University of South Florida. Second Vice President is Susan K. (Kathy)
Land, program manager and technical director for Huntsville Operations Northrop Grumman Information Technology/TASC.

Stephanie M. White, professor of computer science and management engineering in the College of Information and Computer Science, Long Island University, is the vice president for technical activities. Christina M. Schober, a product team leader/staff engineer at Honeywell Sensor Guidance Products Division, is vice president for chapters activities. Murali R. Varanasi, a professor of computer science and engineering at the University of North Texas College of Engineering, is the vice president for educational activities. Sorel Reisman, managing director, MERLOT, in the office of the chancellor, and professor of information sciences, California State University, Fullerton, is vice president for electronic products and services. Jon Rokne, professor of computer science at the University of Calgary, is vice president for publications.

The Board secretary is Ann Gates, associate professor of computer science at the University of Texas at El Paso; the treasurer is Stephen B. Seidman, professor of information systems and a professor of computer science at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. As prescribed by Society bylaws, Computer’s editor in chief, Doris L. Carver, an associate vice chancellor of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at Louisiana State University, is also a member of the Executive Committee.

In addition to David W. Hennage, executive director of the Computer Society, the three members of the IEEE Board of Directors elected by Society members serve as nonvoting members of the Executive Committee: 2005-2006 IEEE Division VIII Director Steve Diamond, managing director at Picosoft; 2006-2007 IEEE Division V Director Oscar N. Garcia, professor and founding dean of the college of engineering at the University of North Texas; and 2006 IEEE Division VII director-elect Thomas W. Williams, chief scientist at Synopsys.

In 2006, James D. Isaak and Makoto Takizawa will return for their second terms as members of the Board of Governors. Newly elected to the Board are the following individuals: Richard H. Eckhouse, Gary McGraw, James W. Moore, Robert H. Sloan, and Stephanie M. White. In a special election conducted during the Board of Governors meeting in November, Antonio Doria and Bob Colwell were selected to fill vacancies on the Board.

Susan A. Mengel resigned from the Board due to family emergencies, and we wish her well and thank her for her many contributions.

With nearly 100,000 members worldwide, the IEEE Computer Society is truly the world’s largest computer society.

IEEE UPDATE

The cost and complexity of IEEE operations continue to be a critical challenge to our Society and to other IEEE organizations. With nearly 100,000 members worldwide, the IEEE Computer Society is truly the world’s largest computer society, and it is by far the largest of the IEEE societies and councils. However, as a result of IEEE distributions, the Society is facing a significant deficit budget for 2006, 2007, and beyond.

In his December Computer article, “The End of a Very Interesting Year,” 2005 president Jerry Engel described several proposals by volunteers and staff for repositioning the Society within the IEEE. Jerry presented our findings to the IEEE Board of Directors in November 2005, with a recommendation that a task force be formed at the IEEE Board of Directors level to further investigate these areas and recommend specific improvements.

Staff continues to lead an internal review, and our executive director, David Hennage, presented his findings to the 2006 Executive Committee in January of this year. Further updates will be forthcoming as we continue to make progress in these areas.

2006 PLAN

The IEEE Computer Society vision, as articulated in SP5, is to be the leading provider of technical information, community services, and personalized services to the world’s computing professionals. To achieve this vision, the Society must be proactive in adapting to the evolving needs and interests of our diverse membership worldwide.

Members are increasingly faced with the challenges of maintaining technical currency, keeping pace with new technologies, and obtaining access to state-of-the-art technical information. We must adapt our existing programs of publications, conferences, services, and technical activities to meet these challenges. This includes tailoring existing programs to improve the value of membership, enhancing our electronic and educational offerings, providing additional opportunities to our membership for skills enhancement, and expanding our outreach programs for students, academics, and practitioners.

At the same time, the Society faces a future of uncertain financial resources. It is critical to our success that we strengthen our relationships with other organizations within and outside the IEEE. We must also continue to identify new partners who will join us in better serving our communities throughout the world.

In response to these challenges, I have made outreach a primary initiative for 2006. We will focus on outreach to underserved and underrepresented IT communities worldwide, including women, minorities, and IT practitioners, while also improving the Computer Society’s financial future. Thus far, I have received tremendous support for this initiative from the 2006 ExCom and several sister organizations.

Several activities are already under way in support of our outreach initiative; however, space limitations permit me to cite only a few:
Yervant Zorian, vice president and chief scientist of Virage Logic and chief technology advisor of Logic-Vision, is chairing a new ad hoc committee, the Strategic Development Committee, reporting directly to me. SDC will focus on strategic planning, business development, improved products and services to members, and expansion into underserved markets.

Throughout the year, Computer will publish articles that relate to outreach. Juan Gilbert, associate professor of computer science and engineering at Auburn University, will help lead Computer’s initiative in this area.

Each of the 2006 Board vice presidents will be implementing specific projects in their respective areas to better serve our diverse membership and reach out to underrepresented sectors worldwide.

The Computer Society will host a summit of organizations with similar interests and activities this summer to explore areas for greater collaboration. Jerry Engel will lead the summit with my full support.

In response to your requests, we will develop a CSDP entry-level certification as part of our career development and education products and services.

Leaders serve for the good of those they represent. I am honored to lead our Society and am pleased to serve. But I need your ideas and your support. I look forward to hearing from you and working successfully together in 2006.

Deborah M. Cooper is president and founder of an independent consulting firm that specializes in computer security and information assurance. Contact her at president@computer.org.

How to Reach Computer

Writers
We welcome submissions. For detailed information, visit www.computer.org/computer/author.htm.

News Ideas
Contact Lee Garber at lgarber@computer.org with ideas for news features or news briefs.

Products and Books
Send product announcements to developertools@computer.org. Contact computer-ma@computer.org with book announcements.

Letters to the Editor
Please provide an e-mail address with your letter. Send letters to computer@computer.org.

On the Web
Explore www.computer.org/computer/ for free articles and general information about Computer.

Magazine Change of Address
Send change-of-address requests for magazine subscriptions to address.change@ieee.org. Make sure to specify Computer.

Missing or Damaged Copies
If you are missing an issue or received a damaged copy, contact membership@computer.org.

Reprint Permission
To obtain permission to reprint an article, contact William Hagen, IEEE Copyrights and Trademarks Manager, at whagen@ieee.org. To buy a reprint, send a query to computer@computer.org.