From the Presidents of the IEEE Computer Society and ACM

Alain Chesnais, President, ACM
Sorel Reisman, President, IEEE Computer Society

The overlapping interests of the IEEE CS and the ACM include their support of lifelong computing education programs.

A s most members of our organizations probably know, there is a great deal of overlap between the products and services offered by the IEEE CS and ACM. In fact, about 24 percent of IEEE CS members belong to ACM, and 27 percent of ACM members belong to IEEE CS.

This became very clear to us when we first met at the SC2010 Conference in New Orleans, and had a brief conversation before stepping onstage to present the conference awards. Clearly, this wasn’t a serendipitous meeting, as the SC Conference is sponsored annually by both organizations. What did surprise us was to learn that one of us (Alain), while born in Paris resides in Toronto, and the other (Sorel), resides in California but was born in Toronto. Moreover, we both have French names!

Two months later, over lunch in Toronto, we began to explore ways we might capitalize on the healthy competition our organizations have shared that has served the profession well over the decades. In a subsequent breakfast meeting three months later, we came up with the idea to craft a joint message to our members to appear concurrently in the August issue of Communications and Computer. Our goal is twofold: to describe areas in which we have cooperative and synergistic activities, and to explore new areas of mutual interest—all for the betterment of our profession.

One of the interesting challenges in writing this letter together has been how to present it without one or the other appearing to be “in control.” Rather than flipping a coin to determine whose name should come first, we decided we would alternate leads—with Sorel as the lead author in the Communications-based version and Alain taking the lead here in Computer.

As mentioned earlier, there are many areas in which the two organizations have overlapping interests, but the one for which both associations are internationally recognized is computing education. While our strategic strengths in this area may appear to have different foci—with ACM’s being academic education geared toward schools and universities and the IEEE CS’s efforts centered on professional education—in fact both organizations support lifelong computing education programs. For example, both ACM and IEEE CS

- have representatives in the Computing Research Association (CRA), a premier resource for information about computer science education and technology-related public policy in the US;
- have representatives on the International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP);
- share metadata in respective digital libraries;
- promote Computer Science Education Week (Dec. 5-11, 2011);
- developed and maintain the widely adopted curricula for computing, computer engineering, computer science, software engineering, and information science;
- sponsor the graduate software engineering curriculum;
- are working together to develop the Partnership for Advancing Computing Education (PACE), to be recognized as a cross-organization unified voice in support of computing education; and
- sponsor the aforementioned annual SC Conference (Nov. 12-18, 2011, Seattle, WA), the International Conference on Software Engineering (June 2-9, 2012, Zurich, Switzerland), along with many other conferences.

This letter to our joint membership is the first of what we hope
REPORT TO MEMBERS

will be many more cooperative activities aimed at capitalizing on the strengths of our organizations. We intend to continue to discuss new ideas about other joint efforts. More importantly, we would really like to hear from you, our members, with ideas and suggestions you might have that will help us along this path. To facilitate exchanges of ideas regarding this message, we set up electronic forums at http://cooperation.acm.org and http://cooperation.computer.org. Please visit those sites and participate in the discussions there.

In today’s environment, we recognize that resources are constrained, and are likely to be so for a very long time. We also recognize the technologies we have invented and continue to invent are changing the world at a pace unlike any point in history. If ever there was a time for us to cooperate, it is now. Alain Chesnais is president of ACM and founder of Visual Transitions, Toronto, Canada. Contact him at chesnais@acm.org. Sorel Reisman is president of IEEE CS and a professor at California State University, Fullerton. Contact him at sreisman@computer.org.

I

WITH 30,000 OPPORTUNITIES, IT’S ALSO CALLED JOB SECURITY.

From the White House to Wall Street, the demand for cybersecurity experts has never been greater. According to CNN, an estimated 30,000 jobs are being created to meet the demand. You can be a part of this booming industry. And a bachelor’s or master’s degree in cybersecurity from University of Maryland University College (UMUC) can help you make it possible.

- Designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education by the NSA and DHS
- BS and MS in cybersecurity and MS in cybersecurity policy available
- Programs offered entirely online
- Interest-free monthly payment plan available, plus financial aid for those who qualify

Visit us at booth #4 at the 2011 Cyber Security Training Conference

Selected CS articles and columns are available for free at http://ComputingNow.computer.org.

Enroll now.

800-888-UMUC • umuc.edu/cyberwarrior