Minutes of the July 31st, 2007 SGB Meeting

Participants:

Erik Altman, SIGMICRO Chair
Nancy Bauer, SIGUCCS Conference Liaison
Frank Bellosa, SIGOPS Vice-Chair
Gautam Biswas, SIGART Secretary/Treasurer
Barrett Bryant, SIGAPP Chair
Doug Burger, SIGARCH Chair
Donna Cappo, Director, SIG Services
Richard Cole, SIGACT Secretary/Treasurer
Ashley Cozzi, Admin. Assist. - SIG Services
Mark Crovella, SIGCOMM Chair
Jack Davidson, SGB EC
Matthew Dwyer, SIGSOFT Secretary/Treasurer
Stuart Feldman, ACM President
Mary Fernandez, SIGMOD Secretary/Treasurer
Kathleen Fisher, SIGPLAN Chair
Irene Frawley, SIG Program Coordinator
Jessica Fried, Manager, Conf. Ops, SIG Services
Maria Gini, SIGART Chair
Virgil Gligor, SIGSAC Chair
Erik Goodman, SIGEVO Past Chair
Adrienne Griscti, Prog. Coordinator, SIG Pubs
Elizabeth Grove, Prog. Coordinator, Site Selection
Mary Hall, History Committee Liaison
Vicki Hanson, SIGACCESS Chair / SGB EC
Brooke Hardy, Prog. Coordinator, Conf. Logistics
Simon Harper, SIGWEB Secretary/Treasurer
Bill Hefley, SIGCAS Vice Chair
Ginger Ignatoff, Program Director, SIG Services
Julie Jacko, SIGCHI President/SGB EC
Dave Johnson, SIGMOBILE Chair
Norman Jouppi, ACM Council Representative
Daniel Joyce, SIGCSE Secretary
Joseph Konstan, SGB Chair
James Korn, SIGAPL Member-at-Large

Ilias Kotsireas, SIGSAM CCA Editor
Lorie Liebrock, SIGAPP Treasurer
Diana Marculescu, SIGDA Chair/SGB EC
Renee McCauley, SIGCSE Treasurer
Brad Mehlenbacher, SIGDOC Chair
Arif Merchant, SIGMETRICS Secretary/Treasurer
Vishal Misra, SIGMETRICS Board of Directors
John 'Scooter' Morris, SIGCHI VP for Operations
Ethan Munson, SIGWEB Chair
Klara Nahrstedt, SIGMM Chair
Maritza Nichols, Prog Coordinator, Conf. Budgets
Scott Owen, SIGGRAPH President/SGB EC
Barbara Owens, SIGCSE Chair
George Pappas, SIGBED Secretary/Treasurer
David Pennock, SIGecom Chair
Gregory Piatetsky, SIGKDD Chair
Robert Pierce, SIGDOC Vice Chair
Maria Pimentel, SIGWEB Vice Chair
Darren Ramdin, Assoc. Director, Fin. Services
Ingrid Russell, SIGCSE Member-at-Large
Pat Ryan, ACM Chief Operating Officer
Andrew Sears, SIGACCESS Vice Chair
Lynne Shaw, SIGAPL Member-at-Large
Janice Sipior, SIGMIS Chair
Stephanie Smith, Prog. Coordinator, Conf. Logisitics
Fran Spinola, SIG Program Coordinator
Mark Stockman, SIGITE Vice Chair
Ricky Sward, SIGAda Vice Chair for Mtgs & Confs.
Doug Terry, SIGOPS Chair
Robert Walker, SGB Past Chair, ACM Council Rep
John White, ACM Executive Director
Darrell Whitley, SIGEVO Chair
Carey Williamson, SIGMETRICS Chair
Alexander Wolf, ACM Council Representative

Welcome

Welcome, Introductions and Voting Review (J. Konstan)

The meeting opened at 9:00 am with Konstan welcoming and introducing all participants and members of ACM HQ. Konstan reviewed the weighted voting practices with the leadership; each SIG is represented by one member with one vote plus an additional vote for each 1,000 members. Konstan and Hanson then reviewed the agenda.

ACM Welcome from the ACM President (Feldman)

Feldman congratulated and welcomed new SIG officers. As past chair of SIGPLAN and SIGecom, he discussed the important role that SIGs play in the success of ACM. Feldman believes that ACM's real role in the world is to be the cradle and collector of new information in the field of computing. SIGs are wrapped up in that goal.

Feldman touched briefly on upcoming activities at ACM such as the "new" CACM with the goal of making it a must read magazine each month; a first class flagship publication. It will include first class technical articles with an explanation of why the article is important. Editorial boards will be reaching out to SIGs.

The DL continues to be strong with rising subscribers and large contributions from the SIGs. ACM is taking an active role in other countries with progress being made with the China Task Force and the development of an India Task force.

This year's Turing Award will be co-sponsored by Intel and Google with the winner receiving $250,000. Feldman discussed the growing number of SIG awards and stressed that ACM can never have enough awards.

1.0   Report from the CEO (J. White)

1.1   ACM Update

ACM is the largest computing society in the world and membership has been growing for the last five years. There are currently 62,360 professional/non student members and 20,000 student members. SIG membership is currently over 44,000..

This was a good financial year for ACM in terms of membership, publications and operations. Overall conference surplus is much higher than budgeted. All conferences are contributing to that, not only the top five conferences.

White reviewed the Member Satisfaction Survey conducted in June. It was completed by 2,000 members and can be reviewed in the slides linked above. The survey found that in comparison to student members, higher rates of professionals are very satisfied with their memberships. Satisfaction with the DL continues to be high and 86% of the research community found the DL to be very useful and relevant to their job.

31% of ACM professional members were also members of SIGs; 66% of those members are very satisfied with 14% attending at least one SIG sponsored conference. 78% of those conference attendees said that they were very satisfied with their SIGs primary conference.

The Education Board and Education Council continue to discuss education issues and activities with the help of CSTA. The Council is looking to become involved in the development of new curriculum standards in the field of computer science.

The Publications Board is launching new publications as well as looking at ways to improve current ones. The Board is also discussing the direction of the DL and what ACM can do in the citation area. Can we become the definitive spot for citations?

The Professions Board is working on benefits for practitioners. There is an effort to look into ACM resurrecting case studies. The goal is to bring quality information to practitioners.

The Membership Services Board is currently focusing on member satisfaction in particular how to increase the student retention rate which is now at 50%. The Board is also looking at revitalizing Chapters and the Distinguished Speakers Program.

White reported on initiatives including ACM's presence in India and China and the progress of each country's respective task force. The China task force met in October where they discussed co-publishing a Chinese software/systems journal and considered the translation of popular ACM content (CACM, Queue) to Chinese. The India Task force is just coming together and has plans to meet this fall.

White discussed the long standing concern and focus on the image and health of the computing field. CSTA and the Image Task Force are working with the Education Policy Committee to shift the image of computing in high schools.

There is an effort to increase gender equality and ethnic diversity in the computing field by revitalizing ACMW and working with the Coalition to Diversify Computing. ACMW is looking at their role with the Grace Hopper conference and the Anita Borg Institute.

1.2   CACM Update

White gave a brief history of CACM including the first re-design in the 80's where CACM was changed from a journal to a magazine. He discussed the reasons CACM is undergoing a redesign. With the current design dating back 20 years, it is time for CACM to catch up to the evolving membership and advances in technology such as the WWW, Internet and DL that have taken place in that time.

Moshe Vardi was invited to take the lead in the shaping of the new CACM model developed by the Task Force established in 2005. In the last two years, Vardi has held discussions with the SGB, ACM members, Publications Board, and ACM EC. There has been a general consensus that ACM needs a flagship publication. White discussed the feedback Vardi received as well as the new content model for CACM including the decision to combine Queue with the model.

The new CACM is a large investment at ~$4 million dollars and will require a staff of approximately 14.

Council Retreat

White reported on the topics discussed at the Council Retreat including ACM's international model and ACM's financial strategy. Are we international or not? Where are we, are we happy, and what else should we do? ACM's level of activity outside the US has increased, yet we are still viewed as a U.S. centric organization.

The ACM financial strategy is to focus on increasing the gap between revenue and expenses by looking at spending and investing in new publications and the DL. ACM is financially sound but it is time to consider things such as the price of membership, the long-term financial implications of an expanding publications program, and potential cuts in ACM spending.

White will provide updates on these topics during future SGB meetings.

2.0   Athena Project (Landau)

Susan Landau called in to discuss the Athena Project which was started two years ago by ACMW. The purpose of the Athena Project is to increase the visibility of women in the computing field. There have been two Athena lectures so far. Landau encouraged SIGs to nominate outstanding women to be keynote speakers in which ACMW covers the cost. Nominee numbers are slightly down this year; what can ACMW do to encourage SIGs to nominate more women from their field?

Konstan gave a background on the Athena Project including ACMW's role in developing this process and how selective they are in choosing speakers. He questioned if the SIGs see value in participating and what they find the obstacles to be.

Julie Jacko proposed the idea that there should be more winners. With a high number of nominees and only one winner, potential nominees may feel discouraged from being nominated.

Susan discussed the reasons for only one winner and asked if SIGs would be willing to share the costs should the committee come to a decision to select more than one winner. Landau will discuss options with the committee and encouraged SIG leaders to email her (susan.landau@sun.com) with any thoughts or to visit the Athena Project webpage.

3.0   ACM History Committee (Hall) Slides

Hall discussed the history of the committee and reviewed the current members. Why is ACM's history important? We should not only contribute to the future, we should document the past. What do the last 60 years tell us about the next 10 years or about ACM and computing in general?

The History Committee is currently spending time gathering oral histories from past ACM representatives and Turing Award winners. Each oral history costs ~$5,000 for the interview, transcript

and editing. The committee would be interested in sharing the costs for any SIGs interested in pursuing oral histories for their specialty. SIG leaders should contact Mary Hall if interested.

The May 2007 issue of CACM included many history articles about SIGs and conferences such as HOPL.

Hall discussed the efforts of some SIGs to document the history of the SIG and the impact of their field. Some SIGs currently have their own history committees. The History Committee is looking to work with a SIG with a history to develop an institutional history. SIGs are encouraged to keep consistent record-keeping of conferences and archive important information that may not usually be preserved.

The Committee is looking for their next SGB liaison. Please contact Mary Hall [mhall@ISI.EDU] with questions or suggestions.

4.0   SIG Program Reviews

4.1   SIGEVO (Goodman) : Slides Viability

Erik Goodman presented the SIGEVO program review. SIGEVO is the newest SIG. Their fund balance has increased from $23,000 to $82,000 which is over the required amount. Their membership is on the rise and 7 of their 18 EC members are from outside the U.S. SIGEVO sponsors an annual GECCO conference; 80% of the attendees to this year's conference were from outside the U.S.

SIGEVO has appointed future conference chairs and is working on developing a conference in China. SIGEvolution is their current newsletter and they are redeveloping their awards to fit into the ACM framework.

Motion: The SGB congratulates SIGEVO on its program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

[Unanimous]

4.2   SIGMOBILE (Johnson):   Slides Viability

SIGMOBILE currently has two local Chapters; one in Singapore and the other in Australia. SIGMOBILE is the sponsor of 4 healthy annual conferences, 12 co-located workshops and was held in cooperation with 13 conferences in 2007. They are a major contributor to the DL and release a quarterly newsletter and journal to their members.

SIGMOBILE membership is steady with a retention rate of close to 70%. They are looking for ways to increase membership and find that many of their conference attendees are not members. Their fund balance is $72,000 over the required amount and they continue to be careful and conservative with their budgeting.

Motion: The SGB congratulates SIGMOBILE on its program performance and finds it viable to continue its status for the next 4 years.

[Unanimous]

5.0   ACM Board Reports Continued (Konstan)

Konstan spoke about SIG finances and noted that they are fine. Collectively, they hold twice the required fund balances. However, some SIGs are still struggling.

Konstan discussed the Gender Diversity Task Force. How many SIGs knew something that ACMW did before the Athena Lecture discussed in today's meeting? We need to raise visibility and stress the importance of ACMW and the Athena Project. Konstan sat on the task force to figure out how we can help with things that ACMW can not handle on its own. The issue of child care at conferences has come up recently. We need SIG volunteers to sit on committees and brainstorm ideas.

Konstan went on to discuss CACM. This is a huge opportunity for SIGs to get involved, not only to include conference content but to be part of the editorial boards and possibly contribute to potential columns in the new CACM. Konstan encouraged SIG leaders to think of members of their community that could play a role and contribute to the future of CACM.

Konstan questioned how we can become a more international society. 65% of ACM members are based in the U.S. and 39% of our conferences are held outside of the U.S. How can we increase our presence internationally and encourage international membership? One possibility is to nominate people outside of the U.S. for ACM awards. Many highly qualified candidates are not members of ACM/SIGs. Reach out and encourage them to join and show that they would be recognized in the field.

At the last SGB meeting, the SGB received and deferred a motion to dissolve SIGAPL. Since then, members have rallied with a set of petitions not to dissolve. They are co-locating their conference this year with OOPSLA and discussed their plans for awards and future activities. A new motion will come to the floor after a detailed report to be given at the Spring SGB meeting.

Two new SIGs have submitted preliminary inquiries; a SIG on DL and a Services Computing SIG. Both are in the early stages of inquiry and information will be presented to the SGB as it develops.

Keith Marzullo has agreed to stay on as Publications Advisor until he is replaced.

The new simple TMRF was announced. SIGs are encouraged to get this out to conference leaders that it may apply to.

Annual reports are due July 31st and Membership benefits are due November 15th.

Konstan opened the floor to the discussion of onsite childcare at conferences. 5 SIGs noted that they have received requests for childcare services. Currently, ACM does not have a policy on this but is able to provide contracts with childcare vendors. What should conference do? Conferences can set up

services and risk the possibility of not meeting minimum requirements. There is also the option of subsidizing companion travel. Some conferences defer to the hotel concierge.

SIGDA: Some Universities have programs or will subsidize companion travel.

SIGCHI: Is it ACM/SIGs responsibility to subsidize the costs of bringing children?

SIGMM: Yes it is. Many mothers/fathers lose out on the experience of attending a conference because they can not leave children at home.

SIGMOD: Are there professional services available to members to help provide childcare?

SIGARCH provides funding for nursing mothers or disabled attendees. The program started 6 years ago.

SIGPLAN: SIGPLAN EC- PAC program is being extended. It usually funds students but will now also provide funding for parents or disabled attendees to bring companions.

Konstan suggested that ACMW get involved and recommend what steps need to be taken next. Vendors for this are expensive. Konstan invited SIG volunteers with experience in regards to childcare at their conferences to step up and offer other ideas. What works for them and might work for other SIGs who have not yet approached this issue? Diana Marculescu, Julie Jacko, Norman Jouppi and Darrell Whitley volunteered.

6.1   MSB Project (Morris)

Morris reported that some SIGs are working toward capturing their conferences and placing in the ACM DL but there is a significant amount of ACM content that is not being archived. The Digital Media Capture Committee is recommending experimenting with the capture of conferences. There are several ways this can be done. We can have volunteers tape events with ACM owned equipment and software or we could have an a/v company videotape and then ACM will send tapes out for processing or we could have an a/v company videotape per our specifications and then ACM will send tapes out for processing or we could hire a company to produce per our specifications and processing requirements. It's unlikely we will find a standard that will be acceptable to all conference and SIG leaders but we should experiment and share experiences. Morris will work with Konstan to come up with a list of conferences willing to try the various options available.

7.3.1   Distinguished Speakers Program (Bryant) Slides

The Distinguished Speakers Program is ACM's outreach effort serving both student and professional chapters, SIG chapters, as well as ACM members, by providing quality speakers on a variety of important and "hot" topics. There are a number of speakers committed but certain fields are currently lacking speakers. SIGs are encouraged to have potential speakers fill out the form provided. The long term goal of the program is to be international and international speakers are strongly encouraged to

apply. The commitment is to speak once a year. Conferences can request speakers through the web. Potential speakers will be notified and asked if they want to give the talk.

7.3.2 Mentornet (Fernandez): [Slides](#)

Mentornet is an online e-mentoring program that is launching in September. It pairs protégés with mentors for email based relationships allowing them to share real-world information. Mentornet serves as a resource for all ACM student members. Professional members are encouraged to sign up as a mentor and volunteers are encouraged to discuss the program at their meetings.

7.2 Question and Answer

A question about student travel funding policies was raised and various SIG leaders responded with details about criteria used to award funds, and whether SIG funds were used or corporate donations were solicited.

7.1 Best Practices

The CHI madness program was mentioned and the issue of childcare was raised again with some SIGs contributing their experiences at various conferences.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.