



## Contents

SIGCSE News in Brief.....	1
Presenting the New SIGCSE Board .....	2
Special Projects Grant Awarded ....	3
<b>MEMBER SPOTLIGHT</b> .....	4
SIGCSE Travel Grant Program .....	6
The European View: JENUI .....	6
ITiCSE 2013: Recap.....	7
ITiCSE 2013: Working Groups .....	8
ITiCSE 2013: Canterbury, UK .....	8
ICER 2013 Preview .....	9
Deadline SIGCSE.....	9

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## SIGCSE News in Brief

This summer issue of the Bulletin brings word of many new happenings in the SIGCSE community. Barbara Boucher Owens presents the new SIGCSE board on page 2. Doug Baldwin announces the latest Special Projects Grant to be awarded in his article on page 3, while on page 6 Susan Rodger and Amber Settle bring word of a brand new SIGCSE travel scholarship program.

This month's Member Spotlight column on page 4 features Renée McCauley, as she steps out of the role of SIGCSE Board Chair and into her new role as Immediate Past Chair.

We also bring you a series of articles with a European focus. José Juan Miró Julià puts Spain's national CS education on our collective international radar (see his article on page 6), while a series of articles on pages 7 and 8 highlight the recent international ITiCSE conference and its beautiful host city of Canterbury, UK.

Finally, speaking of beautiful cities...

Quintin Cutts tells you what you can look forward to on the other side of the Atlantic (and then across the United States) at the ICER conference, which is coming up in San Diego in just a couple of weeks. Look to his article on page 8 for an excuse to book your last-minute trip to Southern California.

### Newsletter Credits

- Editors: Christine Alvarado and Z Sweedyk
- Contributors: Christine Alvarado, Doug Baldwin, David J. Barnes, Janet Carter, Quintin Cutts, José Juan Miró Julià, Barbara Boucher Owens, Susan Rodger, Z Sweedyk
- Photo credits: Jesse Heines, Matthew Kirkland, Cary Laxer, Jon Sullivan

## Presenting the New SIGCSE Board

by Barbara Boucher Owens, Chair of the SIGCSE Board Nominating Committee

The election is over and the new officers are in place! I wish all the nominees could have won. It was a wonderful slate. As chair of the nominating committee I had hoped to secure leadership that was international and represented diverse institutions and constituencies. I think you will agree that that goal was met. SIGCSE is very fortunate to have such a strong volunteer base. Let me introduce you to your new leaders.



Susan Rodger, who served the 2010-2013 Board as secretary, will now be our Chair. Not only does the Chair oversee all Board meetings, approve

conference budgets, etc., but the Chair also serves on the Sig Governing Board of ACM. Susan has served SIGCSE in many roles—among the most important has been that of liaison with the vendors at the Symposium and at ITiCSE. With her gentle demeanor, she has secured strong support for SIGCSE to keep dues and conference registrations low compared to most SIGs. Let us welcome her as she leads us for the next three years. In her day job, Susan is Professor of the Practice in the Computer Science Department at Duke University, USA.



Paul Tymann assumes the role of Vice-Chair. Among the duties of Vice-Chair are the all-important role of heading the Awards Committee and the charge to step in when the Chair

needs it. Many of you will remember Paul as the 2006 Symposium Co-Chair in Houston and most recently as 2013

Symposium Co-Chair in Denver. Paul is a Professor and Chair of the Computer Science Department at the Rochester Institute of Technology, USA.



Judithe (Judy) Sheard will serve as SIGCSE Secretary. Don't be surprised to see minutes in British rather than US English as Judy hails from Australia! Judy has served

SIGCSE in such roles as the 2009-2010 chair of the Australasian SIGCSE Chapter and the co-chair of the SIGCSE Doctoral Consortium. Judy is Associate Professor, Faculty of Information Technology, Monash University, Australia.



Amber Settle will be the 2013-2016 SIGCSE Treasurer whose tasks include making sense of ACM accounting (no mean job) and explaining the

organization's finances to the membership. Amber moves into this position after serving as a member at large on the 2010-2013 Board. Amber is a frequent blogger on CS Education themes and has managed the ACM Inroads website. Amber is Associate Professor in the College of Computing and Digital Media at DePaul University, USA.



Tiffany Barnes returns to the Board as an at-large member. Tiffany brings her energy and enthusiasm for serious games for education and her work in broadening participation in computing

as co-founder of the STARS Alliance. Tiffany is Associate Professor of Computer Science at NC State University, USA.



At-large member Alison Clear had served on the SIGCSE Board from 2004-2010 (when she was Alison Young) and returns as an at-large member for 2013-2016. Alison has served in

many capacities in ITiCSE conferences including being Program Chair; she will be the co-chair of our first South American conference in 2016. Alison has also been chair of the ICER conference. Alison is Head of Department at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, New Zealand.



Sue Fitzgerald comes to the 2013-2016 Board as an at-large member. Sue has had a long history of dedicated service to the SIGCSE membership including serving as 2008

Symposium co-chair, twice as the Doctoral Consortium co-chair. Sue is Professor of Information/Computer Sciences at Metropolitan State University Saint Paul – Minneapolis, USA.



Finally, Renée McCauley will continue her Board service as 2013-2016 Immediate Past Chair. She is Professor of Computer Science at the College of Charleston, USA.

We thank the new board for their commitment to the SIGCSE community. ☺

### Special Projects Grant Awarded by Doug Baldwin, outgoing SIGCSE Treasurer

SIGCSE is pleased to announce a Special Projects Grant award from the May 2013 funding cycle: David Pritchard (Princeton University) and Sandy Graham and Troy Vasiga (University of Waterloo) have received a grant for a project entitled "Opening CS Circles: A Platform for Interactive Lessons and Exercises." The proposers are authors of the successful "Computer Science Circles" web site (<http://cscircles.cemc.uwaterloo.ca/>) for teaching introductory Python programming. In this project, they will open the site's content and technology to the computing education community at large, by adding features for easily exporting exercises and by refactoring the entire system for release as an open-source WordPress (<http://wordpress.org/>) plug-in under a Creative Commons license.

On a personal note, this is my last reviewing cycle for Special Projects grants, as I am stepping down from the SIGCSE Board. This has been a tremendously rewarding program to work with, both because of the wealth of creative projects and educators I've been able to meet, and because of the thoughtful and hard-working review committee—Tiffany Barnes, Mark Guzdial, and Amber Settle. Thank you all for your commitment to the Special Projects Grant program. I know it is in good hands with the incoming SIGCSE board, and I look forward to seeing the projects that it funds in the future.

Speaking of future projects, the Committee looks forward to the next group of proposals (deadline Nov 15). See <http://www.sigcse.org/programs/special/apply/> or contact "[apply@sigcse.org](mailto:apply@sigcse.org)" with questions. The Committee is always happy to discuss project ideas with authors or answer questions, and welcomes contact from you at any time.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*In this feature of the Bulletin, we highlight recent accomplishments of our members. For this issue, Bulletin co-editor Christine Alvarado interviewed Renée McCauley, College of Charleston, who just completed a three-year term as SIGCSE Board chair. Renée was recently elected to the ACM SIG Governing Board Executive Committee, where she will serve as at-large board member. She will also continue on the SIGCSE Board for three years as Immediate Past Chair. Her scholarly activities revolve around computer science education, and include teaching, curriculum development and computer science education-based research. Her research is focused on the cognitive development of novice programmers.*



**CA:** How did you first become interested in computer science education research?

**RM:** I have been interested in computer science education since I starting teaching high-school computer

programming in the early 1980's. I wanted to teach at the university level, so I went back to graduate school. When I graduated with my Ph.D. in computer science, I looked for and found a job in a computer science department that valued undergraduate education. I shifted my research focus from disciplinary to education-based research, which seemed so much more interesting to me.

**CA:** Of all of the studies you have done, which has been your favorite, and why?

**RM:** I have especially enjoyed the studies that have involved one-on-one interviews with undergraduate students. Among my favorites is the study of how students debug programs, in which I collaborated with Sue Fitzgerald, Gary Lewandowski,

Laurie Murphy, Beth Simon, Lynda Thomas and Carol Zander. It is a favorite because of the great collaborative experience. Which is also the reason I love being in SIGCSE. Today, I still collaborate with Sue and Laurie—our research group also includes Raymond Lister and Brian Hanks.

**CA:** From your perspective, how does CS education research fit into both the SIGCSE landscape as well as the broader field of CS research?

**RM:** The mission of SIGCSE is to "provide a forum for educators to discuss issues related to the development, implementation, and/or evaluation of computing programs, curricula, and courses, as well as syllabi, laboratories, and other elements of teaching and pedagogy." Education research is clearly one way to do evaluation, but beyond that, CS education research informs all aspects of CS programs, curricula and courses.

Like CS research, CS education research is essential to the advancement of the field of computing. In a way, CS education research subsumes CS research, as CS researchers do not come out of a vacuum – they come from well-designed undergraduate and graduate pedagogic experiences.

**CA:** What got you interested in taking a leadership position within SIGCSE? How did you first get started?

**RM:** When I attended my first SIGCSE symposium (in 1986), I learned how nurturing the SIGCSE community was and how much I could learn in just a few days of face-to-face interactions. I knew immediately that I wanted to be more involved in the SIGCSE organization. I contacted a few people that I had met and

they suggested ways that I could contribute. Boots Cassell asked me to build a website of computer science education resources. I maintained the "Computer Science Education Links" website for several years. As a result, John Impagliazzo invited me to contribute a column for inroads: The *SIGCSE Bulletin*, which was the SIGCSE publication that eventually split into the *ACM Inroads* and this *SIGCSE Bulletin*. Harriet Taylor suggested that I contact Bruce Klein about working on a symposium committee; Bruce recommended me to Curt White, who was chairing the San Jose conference (1997) and I became the Birds-of-a-Feather coordinator. Later, I was ITiCSE 1999 program chair (with Mats Daniel) and the SIGCSE 2002 symposium chair (with Judith Gersting).

I ran for SIGCSE office 4 times: in 1998 I lost my bid for an at-large position. My next three runs were successful: 2004 at-large position, 2007 treasurer, 2010 chair. It has been a great experience. I look forward to the next three years as immediate past-chair.

**CA:** What do you feel were the Board's most significant activities during your time as chair?

**RM:** A major issue, throughout the 9 years I've been on the board, has been how to provide great benefits to members, without increasing membership fees and keeping conference registration rates low. Other issues have been to increase participation of computer science educators from outside the U.S., involve more members in volunteer activities, and to fund new programs (such as the young faculty workshop).



**CA:** What do you see as the most important issues facing SIGCSE and the Board in the years to come?

**RM:** Expanding our services, outreach activities, and membership to meet global computing education needs, in a financially conservative way, is one of the important issues.

**CA:** What advice do you have for those who are relatively new to the SIGCSE community?

**RM:** The SIGCSE community is a very welcoming community. Reach out to others and you will find friends and collaborators.

**CA:** What do you like to do in your free time?

**RM:** Free time – what a concept! I like to watch my children's activities; among other things, my son is an athlete and a musician, and my daughter is an actress and vocalist. I also like to escape with my husband, to dinner, or lunch or beyond. When time is mine alone, I read fiction, work out at the gym, or meet a friend for lunch or tennis.

## SIGCSE Travel Grant Program

By Susan Rodger, SIGCSE Chair and Amber Settle, SIGCSE Treasurer

In March 2013 the SIGCSE Board established a travel grant program inspired by a generous donation from former



*Henry Walker, Grinnell College provided the gift that initiated the SIGCSE Travel Grant Program*

SIGCSE Board chair Henry Walker. The program supports up to five travel grants a year, and each grant defrays up to \$500 in travel expenses for attendance at the SIGCSE

Symposium. While the formal application process remains to be determined, the intention is to support Symposium attendance by young faculty or by faculty

who have never been able to be a part of the conference.

SIGCSE members who wish to support the travel grant program can send donations to the ACM with details posted to <http://sigcse.org/travelGrant>.

One of the first orders of business for the new SIGCSE Board, who started on July 1, 2013, will be to formalize the application process and explore alternate donation options. As more information becomes available it will be posted to the SIGCSE web site at the URL above. In addition, a note mentioning the award will be posted on the SIGCSE Symposium 2014 web site.

We hope this new travel grant will be a chance to bring the pedagogical excitement of the SIGCSE Symposium to those who have not had a chance to experience it. If you have suggestions for the future of the travel grant program, please contact Amber Settle ([asettle@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:asettle@cdm.depaul.edu)) or Susan Rodger ([rodger@cs.duke.edu](mailto:rodger@cs.duke.edu)).

## The European View: JENUI

By José Juan Miró Julià, Universitat de les Illes Balears

Europe is a continent full of countries, each with its own language (or languages) and its own university system. So it is only natural that, together with a powerful common conference such as ITiCSE, there also are local national CSE conferences in which to discuss how best to teach CS within the quirks of one's own system and environment. This also has the large added benefit of using one's own language and not having to labor for days over every single sentence.

One of the oldest, if not the oldest, of these national conferences is the Spanish CSE conference, called JENUI (Jornadas sobre la Enseñanza Universitaria de la Informática). It is organized by AENUI, the Spanish CSE association. JENUI started in 1994 and held its 19th edition on July 10-12 2013 at Castellón de la Plana. Each year approximately 100 professors attend the conference and deliver 60 to 70 papers and posters. Being held in Spain, the discussions are loud and lively and keep on going after the sessions in restaurants and bars late in the night.

JENUI papers after 2001 are available at <http://bioinfo.uib.es/~joemiro/aenui/actas.html> and from 2009 it is being stored at the UPC COMMONS digital library. JENUI has its own character, but to my mind, its strong suit is its classroom experience and pedagogical innovation papers. So if you can read Spanish, or are willing to have the roller-coasting experience of reading through an automatic translator, check out JENUI. You might want to begin by the special issue in the journal ReVisión ([www.aenui.net/ReVision](http://www.aenui.net/ReVision)) in which the four most influential papers of its history are re-issued and reviewed.

## ITiCSE 2013: Recap

By Janet Carter, University of Kent and ITiCSE Conference Chair



The 18th annual Conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE) was held July 1-3, 2013 at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

It was truly an international event with 185 delegates from 24 countries in attendance. About one-third of the delegates were attending ITiCSE for the first time including five school-teacher delegates.

The conference opened Monday morning with a welcome by Prof. Keith Mander, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent. There were three keynote speakers who spoke on the theme of inspiration and education at all levels.



ITiCSE Keynote Speakers: (left to right) Wg. Cmdr. Andy Green, Chris Wildsmith, and Prof. Simon Peyton Jones.

Professor Simon Peyton Jones, Microsoft Research and Chair of the Computing at School Working Group, spoke about the new computer science curriculum in UK schools. Wing Commander Andy Green of the Royal Air Force discussed the inspirational education program associated with his upcoming 1000 mph land speed record attempt in the Bloodhound supersonic car.

And Chris Wildsmith, Managing Director of Kinetic Solutions Ltd., discussed how education can continue in the workplace after graduation.

There were many great presentations throughout the conference. We accepted 51 papers out of 161 submissions (32% acceptance rate). There were also 4 working groups, 3 panels, 9 tips, techniques and courseware presentations, and 39 posters.

We took off Tuesday afternoon to explore the local environs. There were four excursions to choose from including a trip to Leeds Castle, a tour and tasting at the Shepherd Neame Brewery in Faversham, a cycle ride through the Blean woods to the seashore at Whitsable, and a walking tour of Canterbury.



Tuesday afternoon excursions included a trip to Leeds Castle, photo by Matthew Kirkland

The conference concluded with a Wednesday evening banquet at the lovely Dover Town Hall.

I'd like to thank the committee, presenters, and delegates for making ITiCSE 2013 a thoroughly memorable event.

## ITiCSE 2013: Working Groups

By David J. Barnes, University of Kent and ITiCSE  
Chair of Working Groups

Working Groups are a distinctive and popular feature of the annual ITiCSE conference. In a working group, participants get to meet and work with like-minded international colleagues with the aim of creating a substantial paper that is published later in the year as a supplement to the conference proceedings. At the ITiCSE 2013 conference in Canterbury, UK, around 40 of the delegates took part in four Working Groups:

- User Requirements and Design Strategies for Open Source Interactive Computer Science eBooks
- The McCracken study – 12 years on
- Cybersecurity, Women and Minorities: How to Succeed in the Career
- One Thousand and Twenty Four Questions for CS1/CS2

Groups are formed in advance and undertake some preliminary work before the conference, sharing ideas or gathering data, for instance. They then meet over the weekend preceding the conference to start on the bulk of their task. Although the groups continue working throughout the conference, there is still ample opportunity to dip into sessions of interest and meet with the other delegates at the break times. They also have the chance to present their fledgling results in a conference session and receive feedback. After the conference, there is time to put the finishing touches to the final paper before it goes out for review. Working groups are an excellent way to meet new colleagues and many friendships; collaborations started in this way have continued productively over many years. Why not consider participating in a WG at next year's conference?

## ITiCSE 2013: Canterbury, UK

By Z Sweedyk, Co-editor SIGCSE Bulletin

One of the great things about attending the ITiCSE conference is the travel! This year, ITiCSE was held at the University of Kent, which is just outside the beautiful, historic city of Canterbury.

Canterbury has been populated since prehistoric times. The Canterbury Cathedral, which was built around 600 AD, was the site of Thomas Becket's murder in 1170 AD and subsequently became a pilgrimage destination, as chronicled in the Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Today, the Canterbury



Cathedral remains the home church of the Anglican Communion and the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Canterbury Castle, photo by Cary Laxer, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

If you missed ITiCSE this year and want a tour of Canterbury, check out Jesse Heines' photo tour at the following link: <http://youtu.be/TofBKq7pteE>.



Canterbury shots by Jesse Heines, UMass Lowell



## ICER 2013 Preview

by Quintin Cutts, University of Glasgow and ICER co-Chair, photos by Jon Sullivan

The 9th Annual International Computing Education Research Conference (ICER'13) will be held August 12-14, 2013, in San Diego, California.



Sure, it's short notice, but what's stopping you booking a quick trip to beautiful San Diego just before term resumes (in much of the US at least)? Fabulous beaches, famous zoo, amazing aquarium, great food, and more...!



Seriously, ICER is open to all who are interested in CS education. ICER both disseminates and fosters empirical research into computing education, and is recognized as the premier conference in the field.

In a single-track format, you hear about and discuss the results of completed research, researchers' preliminary ideas (in the Lightning Talk slots), and summaries of the research projects of PhD students in the field. With only around 40-80 attendees, ICER always has a very convivial atmosphere, and you can talk to everyone present.

If you find new ideas on computing education to be provocative and stimulating, you're likely to enjoy every contribution, picking up great ideas for your own research and teaching. Furthermore, if you're usually in an environment where discussion of this kind isn't commonplace or encouraged, then ICER'13 is your dream holiday and might even provoke a whole new research career. Book now.

<http://wp.acm.org/icer-conference/>

## Deadline SIGCSE

Here are some upcoming deadlines and dates you won't want to miss!

Sept 6	SIGCSE Paper, Panel, Special Session, and Workshop submission ( <a href="http://sigcse2014.sigcse.org/authors/">http://sigcse2014.sigcse.org/authors/</a> )
Oct 28	SIGCSE Birds of a Feather and Poster submissions ( <a href="http://sigcse2014.sigcse.org/authors/">http://sigcse2014.sigcse.org/authors/</a> )
Nov 15	SIGCSE Special Projects Grants submissions <a href="http://www.sigcse.org/programs/special/apply/">http://www.sigcse.org/programs/special/apply/</a>