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President's Message

A Look to Our Past with Our Future in Mind



In past issues of these last two years, I briefly reviewed the main activities that the Computational Intelligence Society performed and continue to pursue in order to serve your needs in computational intelligence technologies and related applications. The fundamental goal was to present to you what our society is doing for you and all communities that are, or may be, interested in our field worldwide.

Now that my term as President of our society is almost at the end, in this issue, I like to look back to what we did together, and be able to get some thoughts on how much more we can do and what brilliant achievements we can reach. It will not be impossible. A little effort from each and every one of us will return a huge amount of personal and professional satisfaction and pride, and many more friends around the world.

The organizational structure of the society underwent a major restructuring. The CIS office at the IEEE Headquarters was created to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in our actions, society memory, and ease in accessing IEEE. Guidelines for creating committees were developed to clearly guarantee transparency and fairness, scientific and organizational excellence, transnationality and geographical coverage, gender promotion and employment diversification. The ultimate goal was to be as comprehensive as possible to show that we really care for involving each of you, everywhere in the world. The new Constitution and Bylaws were carefully designed to provide appropriate governing documents, suited for the new status of our society and for the expanding needs of people interested in our field worldwide; a cooperative structure with appropriate oversight and leadership was designed to balance various views and goals for the overall good of the society. A new Educational Activities Committee and a Vice President for Educational Activities were adopted to coordinate and make more visible our efforts and care in education—we always invested in the young generations because they are our future.

The branding program was started to point out the CIS uniqueness and visibility in the worldwide scenario. The new logo began to be officially used in every aspect of the society life to mark our diversified, but comprehensive, identity so that each of us is able to feel at home in our society. Our common interest is to try to mimic nature for problem solving, by means of different approaches and technologies all inspired by nature. The CIS Web site has been updated to reflect the new common identity that we all share and love.

Technical activities were reorganized to increase effectiveness and coverage, to ensure transnational perspective and operation, to better nurture computational intelligence technologies and applications, to address emerging needs and ideas, to address the topics of interest of all scientific and professional communities in computational intelligence, and to exploit synergies and establish links with other IEEE societies and councils in application areas of common interest. This was achieved by selecting outstanding scientists and professional engineers for the technical

committees and the standards committee with particular attention to transnational coverage and diversification, by soliciting a proactive behavior of technical committees for new initiatives, and by creating task forces addressing specific topics within each of these committees. Two new technical committees were created in recognition of the outstanding results that they already obtained when they were operating as task forces: one on Granular Computing, the other on Games. The Technical Committee on Intelligent System Application was restructured to definitely point out the needs for an application-oriented focus and appropriate forums for our professional engineers, as well as for scientists interested in challenging their theoretical research with real-world applications and getting back new stimuli for research. This committee deepens the knowledge in the optimization and refinement of computational intelligence technologies in the various application fields and cooperates with other IEEE societies and councils that are specifically focusing on these application fields. Similarly, the Technical Committee on Emergent Technologies was reorganized to expand the new computational intelligence technologies that are important to nurture for ensuring our future leadership in this arena.

Many conferences and workshops were added to our portfolio around the world, with full sponsorship or technical co-sponsorship. This proves the interest that we have been able to solicit worldwide for our field and for the quality of our technical meetings. The number of attendees also increased, especially our major conferences: the International Joint Conference on Neural Networks (IJCNN), the International Conference on Fuzzy Systems (FUZZ-IEEE), and the International Congress on Evolutionary Computation (CEC). Our flagship conference, the World Congress on Computational Intelligence, grew at an incredible relevance and to an exceptional quality, becoming the reference point worldwide. For this reason, it became a biannual meeting gathering a diverse crowd from the academy, the industry, and the government from all over the world. We added also another important meeting: the International Symposium Series on Computational Intelligence (SSCI), which gathers specialized meetings under a common umbrella for promoting information interchange, cultural synergies, and interdisciplinary.

Publications were developed and expanded to better serve the needs of our various communities. Our flagship Transactions (Neural Networks, Fuzzy Systems, and Evolutionary Computation) reached an unparalleled visibility and international recognition and even enhanced their worldwide position as a primary place for publishing outstanding research. We transformed our newsletters in the Computational Intelligence Magazine, a unique publication that is directed to disseminate our knowledge with easy readability for non specialists. This publication was recognized as outstanding among a number of scientific magazines. New publications were also started in cooperation with other IEEE societies and scientific/professional associations: the IEEE/ACM Transactions on Computational Biology and Bioinformatics, the IEEE Transactions on Nanobioscience, and the IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security.

Member activities were widely expanded and still are growing in various directions. The ultimate goal is to promote the career development of people working in our field of interest and recognize their excellence. Chapters were promoted worldwide as fundamental venues for technical forum and for people networking in the local home environment. About 20 chapters were created in the last two years and still there is a lot of potential for their further growth. All of them are active, while many are exceptionally active and some are viewed as leading examples in IEEE. To ensure a better professional growth to all segments of our members and, in general, of people interested in our field, CIS expanded the activities of the Women in Computational Intelligence Committee to create a substantial support for networking women and guarantee equal opportunities. CIS also introduced a committee focusing on the needs of the recently graduated professionals and researchers (graduate of the last decade—GOLD), working in strict coordination

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with similar committees in IEEE. To maintain and expand the leadership of people interested in our field, especially for professionals, it is important to stay updated and be aware of the leading edge of technologies. CIS greatly supported and funded the development of tutorials on computational intelligence both in the IEEE Experts Now Program and the CIS Multimedia Tutorial Program, and the organization of summer schools on selected computational intelligence topics. To promote internationalization, people networking, and knowledge dissemination, CIS largely expanded the sponsorship to summer research grants, which support research periods of students abroad in research centers of excellence, and conference travel grants, which support the attendance of students at CIS conferences. CIS has also a great care for people who may be in need of special financial support to attend CIS conferences, even though they are already working in the academy or the profession. For these colleagues, a special program was started to provide conference travel grants so as to ensure the dissemination of their knowledge among the other attendees and better global networking. To manage efficiently all grants, a Web-based applica-

tion and review system was developed. Recognition of the achievements is an important aspect of carrier promotion. CIS developed various activities to address this issue. Awards to Outstanding PhD Dissertations started to be given. A program to identify and nominate prospective Senior Members in computational intelligence was devised. A Web-based nomination system is under development to simplify the award nominations.

Finances were carefully and professionally managed, with an expert and flexible touch, to ensure solid bases for all of our activities and a powerful stream of resources to fund many initiatives across the society and around the world. Large reserves were created in the past that now allow the society not to worry about the financial future, but to focus on the needs of all communities in computational intelligence and on funding their activities generously, with specific attention to people who are most in need of financial support.

From all that we were able to accomplish together in CIS, as summarized above, I get a lot of pleasure and professional satisfaction. I am also infinitely grateful to each of the CIS members, volunteers, CIS AdCom

Members, CIS Officers, and participants in CIS activities, for the unique opportunity that you gave me to see all of these achievements. Thank you! It was a great honor to serve you and see this legacy building up, day after day, with passion and care. These achievements have roots that deepen down into our history and the efforts of all volunteers who worked hard for our society in the previous years. These achievements will be solid foundations on which our society can continue to build for the benefit of the scientific and technological advancements, the scientific and professional communities, our members, and human kind, all together for a better future for everybody in the world.

If you have any comments, suggestions, or criticism, then please do not hesitate to contact me at piuri@dti.unimi.it. We will be very glad to hear from you and involve you in the Society's life! Please, do not be shy: think big! We can do incredible things together!!



The end of the year brings an end to many things, including this President's Message by Professor Vincenzo Piuri. "Vinnie the Pooh," as his friends call him, has been with this magazine since its debut. He stuck with us through the last two years, helping the magazine's developments in every aspect and every possible way. Without his strong support and unfailing dedication, we wouldn't be where we are today. Thanks, Vin.

Every ending creates an exciting beginning. Though we are going to miss Vin, 2008 brings a new president, Dr. David Fogel from Natural Selection, Inc., to *IEEE Computational Intelligence Magazine*. We would like to welcome him to the team and reassure to all our members that the magazine will continue to grow and strive to serve the needs of your professional life.

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