

# AAAI News

## Please Join Us for AAAI-97

The Fourteenth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-97) and the Ninth Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence (IAAI-97) will be held in Providence, Rhode Island, from July 27-31, 1997. The Third International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining (KDD-97) will be held in Newport Beach, California from August 14-17, 1997 immediately following the American Statistical Association annual meeting in Anaheim. Information about these conferences is available by writing to AAAI at [info@aaai.org](mailto:info@aaai.org) or by visiting the AAAI web site at [www.aaai.org/Conferences](http://www.aaai.org/Conferences).

Registration materials for AAAI-97, IAAI-97, and KDD-97 are now available from the AAAI office. Copies of the AAAI-97 and the KDD-97 registration brochures are being mailed to all AAAI members. For further information, please call AAAI at 415/328-3123. The early registration deadline for AAAI-97/IAAI-97 is May 28, 1997. The early registration deadline for KDD-97 is June 16, 1997.

## AAAI-97 Student Programs

AAAI is pleased to announce the continuation of its Scholarship and Volunteer Programs for students interested in attending the National Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Providence, Rhode Island, July 27-31, 1997. The Scholarship Program provides partial travel support and a complimentary technical program registration for students who: (a) are full time undergraduate or graduate students at colleges and universities; (b) are members of AAAI; (c) submit papers to the technical program or letters of recommendation from their faculty advisor; and (d) submit scholarship applications to AAAI by April 15, 1997. In addition, repeat scholarship applicants must have fulfilled

the volunteer and reporting requirements for previous awards.

In the event that scholarship applications exceed available funds, preference will be given to students who have an accepted technical paper, and then to students who are actively participating in the conference in some way. However, all eligible students are encouraged to apply.

After the conference, an expense report will be required to account for the funds awarded. For further information about the Scholarship Program, or to obtain an application, please contact AAAI at [scholarships@aaai.org](mailto:scholarships@aaai.org), or 445 Burgess Drive, Menlo Park, Ca, 94025. (415) 328-3123.

All student scholarship recipients will be required to participate in the Student Volunteer Program to support AAAI organizers in Providence. The Volunteer Program is an essential part of the conference and student participation is a valuable contribution.

Students not requiring travel assistance should only apply for the Volunteer Program, which provides complimentary registration to full time students, including conference proceedings, in exchange for assisting AAAI-97 organizers in Providence. This program does not provide any scholarship funds, and is designed for local students or students who have other sources for travel funds. For further information regarding the Student Volunteer Program, please contact AAAI at [volunteer@aaai.org](mailto:volunteer@aaai.org) or at the address above. The deadline for volunteer applications is May 31, 1997.

## AAAI Executive Council Elections

Please watch your mail for your AAAI Ballot, which will be mailed to all regular AAAI members in late April. This year the membership will vote for a new President-Elect, who will

serve three consecutive two-year terms as President-Elect, President, and Past President, as well as four new councilors, who will each serve three-year terms. Ballots will be due back at the AAAI office no later than June 13.

## 1997 Fall Symposium Series

The 1997 Fall Symposium Series will be held November 8-10 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The topics of seven symposia will be:

- Communicative Action in Humans and Machines David Traum ([traum@cs.umd.edu](mailto:traum@cs.umd.edu))
- Context in Knowledge Representation and Natural Language Sasa Buvac ([buvac@cs.stanford.edu](mailto:buvac@cs.stanford.edu)), Lucja Iwanska ([lucja@cs.wayne.edu](mailto:lucja@cs.wayne.edu))
- Frontiers in Soft Computing and Decision Systems Larry R. Medsker ([medsker@american.edu](mailto:medsker@american.edu))
- ITS Authoring Tools Carol Luckhardt Redfield ([carol@meitx.com](mailto:carol@meitx.com))
- Model-Directed Autonomous Systems Brian Williams ([williams@ptolemy.arc.nasa.gov](mailto:williams@ptolemy.arc.nasa.gov)), Pandurang Nayak ([nayak@ptolemy.arc.nasa.gov](mailto:nayak@ptolemy.arc.nasa.gov))
- Reasoning with Diagrammatic Representations II Michael Anderson ([anderson@morpheus.hartford.ed](mailto:anderson@morpheus.hartford.ed))
- Socially Intelligent Agents Kerstin Dautenhahn ([kerstin@cyber.reading.ac.uk](mailto:kerstin@cyber.reading.ac.uk)), Judith Masthoff

Symposia will be limited to between forty and sixty participants each. In addition to invited participants, a limited number of other interested parties will be able to register in each symposium on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration information will be available in early August.

The Call for Participation is available by request from [fss@aaai.org](mailto:fss@aaai.org) or on the AAAI home page at

<http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/1997/>. The final deadline for submission of abstracts or papers is April 15, 1997.

## 1998 Spring Symposium Series

The 1998 Spring Symposium Series will be held March 23-25, 1998 at Stanford University. The Call for Proposals will be available this spring on the AAAI web site ([www.aaai.org/Symposia/](http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/)) and will be mailed to all AAAI members. Please note the deadline for proposal submissions will be approximately July 1, 1997.

## AAAI-98

AAAI is pleased to announce that the Fifteenth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-98) and the Tenth Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence Program (IAAI-98) will be held in Madison, Wisconsin from July 26-30, 1998. The Call for Participation will be published this summer and will be available on the AAAI web site at [www.aaai.org/Conferences/conferences.html](http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/conferences.html). Please note that the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society will be held directly after AAAI-98 in Madison. Please watch for future updates on other collated conferences in 1998.

## AAAI Member News

C. Lee Giles of NEC Research Institute in Princeton, New Jersey, was recently elected as a Fellow of The Computer Society of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) for "contributions to the theory and practice of neural networks." The grade of IEEE Computer Society Fellow recognizes unusual distinction in the profession and is conferred only by an invitation of the IEEE Board of Directors upon a person of outstanding and extraordinary qualifications and experience.

Aravind K. Joshi, Henry Salvatori Professor of Computer and Cognitive Science, Professor of Linguistics, and Co-director of the Institute for Research in Cognitive Science at the

University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the winner of the 1997 IJCAI Research Excellence Award. This award is given to "a scientist who has carried out a program of research of consistently high quality, yielding several substantial results." Professor Joshi has made fundamental contributions to computational linguistics and natural language processing. As the inventor of tree-adjoining grammars (TAG), he has been at the forefront of the investigation of computationally tractable syntactic formalisms with greater power than context-free grammars. He contributed significantly to computational research on discourse and has been a leader in the establishment of research and educational establishments in support of interdisciplinary research in AI and cognitive science in the US and India.

Leslie P. Kaelbling, Associate Professor of Computer Science at Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island, USA, is the winner of the 1997 Computers and Thought Award. This award is given to an outstanding young scientist in the field of Artificial Intelligence. Dr. Kaelbling is being recognized for her contributions to the semantic theory of information in embedded systems, to the development of programming tools for mobile robots, for algorithmic advances in the solution of partially observable Markov decision processes, and for her application of reinforcement learning methods to intelligent embedded control. She is also a past recipient of the National Science Foundation National Young Investigator Award and of the National Science Foundation Presidential Faculty Fellowship.

Raj Reddy, Dean of the School of Computer Science and Professor of Computer Science and Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University and a past president of AAAI, and Edward H. Shortliffe, Associate Dean for Information Resources and Technology, Professor of Medicine, and Professor of Computer Science at Stanford University School of Medicine have been appointed by President Clinton to serve on the White House Advisory Committee on High-Performance

Computing and Communications, Information Technology, and the Next Generation Internet. The Advisory Committee will provide guidance and advice on all areas of high performance computing, communications and information technologies. The Commission members bring a broad range of expertise and interests from business and universities. They will provide valuable guidance to the administration's efforts to accelerate development and adoption of information technologies that will be vital for American prosperity in the 21st century.

## Minutes AAAI Executive Council Meeting

November 8, 1997 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Participants:* Randall Davis, Bruce Buchanan, Jon Doyle, Tim Finin, Barbara Grosz, Ken Ford, Pat Hayes, Richard Korf, Benjamin Kuipers, Steven Minton, Edwina Rissland, Jude Shavlik, Lynn Andrea Stein, David Waltz, and Carol Hamilton

The AAAI Executive Council held a special meeting in November to discuss the future direction of the National Conference on Artificial Intelligence. Because this was a short meeting and the focus was intentionally narrow, standing committee reports were not presented.

Randall Davis, President of AAAI, brought the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. At the summer Executive Council meeting, Davis had requested an update on AAAI financial policy, which was distributed to council members. In addition, Bruce Buchanan, a member of the Finance Committee, reported on the current and projected financial position of the association. Based on current trends and assets, Buchanan presented several future financial scenarios. Buchanan reported that there was a decision made many years ago to invest AAAI's excess revenue in a manner that will sustain the association even with significantly reduced membership or conference attendance. This policy has been successful and has produced an operating reserve that should allow the association to

continue to operate at its current level of programs into the foreseeable future. The Council agreed that AAAI is in a strong position and should continue to sponsor worthwhile programs whenever possible, despite the fact that they may not be self-supporting. In addition, they decided to continue to run the national conference with the same or comparable programs in 1998, 1999, and 2000.

As a follow-up to a discussion at the summer meeting, both Ken Ford and Jon Doyle presented proposals for strengthening the programs and attendance at the national conference. Ford's proposal, which was drafted in cooperation with Mel Montemerlo and Pat Hayes, concentrated on several methods of increasing attendance at the conference. His proposal was heartily endorsed by the Council, and included the following provisions: 1) an increase in the number of workshops; 2) workshop attendees must register for the technical conference; 3) the establishment of specialized tracks with their own small program committees; 4) a freeze on registration fees; 5) the integration of application papers in the main conference; 6) the inclusion of a panel or half-day session featuring representatives of government agencies that support AI research, who would discuss current problems and opportunities as well as future directions; 7) the expansion of the conference site search beyond the current bi-coastal restrictions, and 8) the continued expansion of student programs. As a follow-up to point 1, a list of current workshops was circulated to the Executive Council, who agreed to solicit additional proposals for 1997.

Jon Doyle's proposal concentrated on ways to minimize the impact of area and other smaller conferences on the national conference. He proposed a federated model, similar to that currently employed by the Computing Research Association for the FCRC, or the collocation of established smaller conferences with our national conference. The Council decided to pursue the collocation model in the short-term, and perhaps evolve into the federated model over

time. A list of sub-conferences was made and council members agreed to pursue the organizers to see if any are interested for 1998.

At the request of Randy Davis, Carol Hamilton circulated three possible scenarios for the 1998 conference, including a large hotel, a convention center, and a campus setting. Based on the current collocation plans, the decision to maintain the current number of programs, and the cost of each facility, the Council chose Madison, Wisconsin for 1998. The conference will be held in the new convention center, the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center. Rich Korf proposed that all future sites be reviewed by the Executive Council, if time allows. This proposal was approved by the Council.

On a separate issue, Steve Minton submitted a proposal for online distribution of the *AI Magazine* for consideration by the Council. The proposal called for access to full-text of articles by members and nonmembers; the discontinuation of the hard copy of the magazine; email notification to members of the publication of each issue; availability of back issues of the magazine on the AAAI web site; and the inclusion of web-based advertising on the web. The Council voted to allow access to articles by both members and nonmembers on a trial basis, the length of which will be determined by the Publications Committee in cooperation with AAAI staff. The Council voted against the discontinuation of the hard copy. A project is currently underway by the AAAI staff that will allow for the email notification of members when each issue is published, and the back issues of the magazine are already available in PDF format on the web site. The prospect for web-based advertising is questionable, but will be investigated by staff. Carol Hamilton urged the Council to review the financial impact of these decisions in the near future.

A mission statement for the association, drafted by Martha Pollack, Tim Finin, and Dave Waltz, was approved and will be posted on the AAAI web.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.



## AAAI Members Receive a 20% Discount on *all* AAAI Technical Reports!

For a complete listing of AAAI Technical Reports available for purchase, including tables of contents, consult the AAAI Web Pages at:

[www.aaai.org/  
TechReports/](http://www.aaai.org/TechReports/)