AAAI News

Minutes Executive Council Meeting

July 11, 1993 Washington, DC

Participants: Pat Hayes, Danny Bobrow, Randy Davis, Barbara Grosz, Norm Nielsen, Joe Bates, Paul Cohen, Tom Dean, Johan de Kleer, Bob Engelmore, Ed Feigenbaum, Richard Fikes, Ken Ford, Mark Fox, Peter Friedland, Barbara Hayes-Roth, Jim Hendler, Elaine Kant, Phil Klahr, Benjamin Kuipers, Ramesh Patil, Candy Sidner, Bill Swartout, Katia Sycara, Beverly Woolf, Carol Hamilton

Pat Hayes called the meeting to order with the introduction of the newly elected officer and councilors of AAAI. Randy Davis has been elected to a two-year term as President-Elect. Tom Dean, Bob Engelmore, Peter Friedland, and Ramesh Patil have all been elected to three-year terms as AAAI councilors. Hayes gave a special thanks to retiring councilors Tom Dietterich, Richard Fikes, Mark Fox, and Barbara Hayes-Roth for their generous donations of time and energy over the past three years. Hayes also presented Danny Bobrow with a special plaque, noting his many years of service to AAAI. Bobrow has served six consecutive years as an officer of AAAI, and had previously served an additional three years on the Executive Council.

Standing Committee Reports

Finance: Secretary-Treasurer Norm Nielsen presented the June 30 financial report to the Council, noting the continued decline of revenues in most areas. The association is expected to incur a $100,000 loss for 1993 due to the significant drop-off in vendor participation at the conference. However, AAAI's overall financial status remains healthy due to its stable operating reserve. A proposal to institute a subgroup membership fee of $10 per subgroup was approved by the Council, and will be effective as of August 1, 1993.

Publications: Mark Fox announced that he will be stepping down as Publications Chair, and will be replaced by Bob Engelmore. Engelmore was editor of *AI Magazine* for ten years, and now serves in an advisory capacity for the magazine as editor emeritus. With the resignation of Elaine Rich as coeditor of *AI Magazine,* Ramesh Patil will be the sole editor of the magazine, effective with the 1993 Fall issue. Patil is exploring the possibility of forming an editorial board for the magazine, which would provide a more extensive review of submitted articles and would assist the editor in soliciting high quality articles.

Ken Ford, editor-in-chief of the AAAI Press, reported that the Press has launched an experimental electronic publishing program with El-Tech in Palo Alto. Initial interest has been slow, but will hopefully improve as this service becomes more widely known. The Press books are selling well with the *Knowledge Discovery in Databases* book exceeding expectations and entering its third printing. The technical report series has been launched, and has received very positive response.

Jim Hendler proposed that the *AI Magazine* or AAAI Press consider publishing thesis reports. Although this did not seem feasible, Ramesh Patil suggested that *AI Magazine* might be able to publish annual lists of theses if the information were electronically submitted by department chairs.

Scholarships: Katia Sycara announced that $41,300 had been awarded in scholarships for the AAAI-93 student scholarship program. Although this was less than the budgeted amount, this was due to last-minute dropouts to the program. In addition, scholarships are now available through several other sources, including the robot scholarship program, which awarded over $20,000 in scholarships for 1993.

The symposium grant program has also awarded over $20,000 in student scholarships for the 1993 Spring and Fall Symposium Series.

It is expected that AAAI will renew its women and minority grants later this year to the American Indian Science & Engineering Society, Girls, Inc., the Math/Science Network, and Prime, Inc. at the $7,500 level.

Peter Friedland announced that NASA is exploring the possibility of forming a student scholarship contest, possibly in conjunction with the robot competition or another similar program, such as a science fair presentation at the 1994 AAAI conference. Barbara Grosz and Peter Friedland will discuss the possibility of AAAI administering this contest.

Workshop Grants: Candy Sidner announced that a total of $50,340 had been awarded in workshop grants since July 1992. In addition, AAAI awarded $8,000 to the 1993 Connectionist Models Summer School and $15,000 to the Linguistics Institute. A small grant of approximately $1,400 was given to the Computer Museum for their efforts in arranging for the current AI exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, entitled "Games Computers Play." Pat Hayes gratefully acknowledged Sidner's role as AAAI liaison for this project.

Symposium Committee: Jim Hendler announced that the response to the 1994 Spring Symposium Call for Proposals was so good that it will not be necessary to send a call for the 1994 Fall Symposium. The symposium program is full with ten planned for spring and five for fall. The spring program will include a special symposium on AI in the Arts, chaired by Joseph Bates. This particular symposium will be scheduled for the weekend just prior to the regular schedule to avoid any overlap in subject area with other symposia. In addition, the fall series will feature a special symposium on "Improving Instruction of Introductory AI," which will be videotaped. A site for the fall has not been chosen yet, but the meeting will continue to be held on the east coast.

Hendler reminded the Council that Lynn Stein will be taking over as

symposium chair as of spring 1994. Bonnie Dorr has volunteered to serve as symposium cochair. Hendler also asked for a volunteer to serve as the council representative on this committee. It was decided that the $2,000 discretionary fund for each symposium chair would remain constant. However, it was agreed that this fund need not be used exclusively for student support, although this should be a high priority.

Fellows Committee: Danny Bobrow reported that there are 24 new Fellows for 1993. This year the new Fellows were listed in *AI Magazine* with a picture and citation. It is hoped that *CACM* and *IEEE Expert* will carry these announcements in the future. Press releases are sent out each year to these as well as many other publications. In addition, special local papers are notified for individual fellows.

Nominating Committee: Danny Bobrow announced that the 1993 Council elections went relatively smoothly. However, despite the fact that nomination forms were mailed to the members and included in the magazine—both for the first time—nominations did not constitute a representative sample of the AI community. Therefore, the nominating committee will become more proactive in the future to ensure that the slate of candidates does reflect the various groups and areas of study in the community.

Conference Committee: Bill Swartout reported that the attendance at the technical conference had dropped slightly from 1992, but less than would be expected during an IJCAI year. Tutorial attendance also declined in 1993. It was agreed that the emphasis should be on quality, not quantity, when putting together the 1994 tutorial program. In addition, it may not be necessary always to have a team of presenters since attendance has significantly dropped from what it was several years ago.

Barbara Hayes-Roth and Richard Korf, cochairs for AAAI-94, plan to make several changes to the submission and review process. First, they hope to encourage more student participation by instituting a student abstract and poster program. They also hope to increase the submissions and acceptances by encouraging controversial papers. In addition, there will be a blind review process to avoid any bias by reviewers. The program committee will also be revamped for 1994. The size will be increased, but only the area chairs will come together in the spring to make the final decisions regarding the program. Area chairs will be asked to be familiar with all the papers in their area, in the event that they will need to make a tie-breaking decision. The general program committee will be honored at a banquet at the national conference.

Phil Klahr reported that the IAAI Conference attracted a very healthy number of attendees, particularly those individuals registered for both conferences. The quality of the program was also very high, despite the fact that paper submissions had been very low. After some discussion, it was decided that the AAAI will continue to sponsor the IAAI Conference, and will attempt to expand the program to encourage participation by the business community. The 1994 Chair, Liz Byrnes, will explore the possibility of including more work in progress as well as tailoring the submission requirements to the commercial environment. IAAI will continue to have its own program committee, which will select award winning applications, and highlight these winners in the program and news releases. Phil Klahr will also investigate the possibility of promoting IAAI at the next World Congress on Expert Systems. The *Communications of the ACM* plans to feature a few of the 1993 papers in a future special issue.

Old Business

AAAI Forum: Peter Friedland reported that the members of the Forum Committee would meet with AI members of government agencies and committees during AAAI-93. The purpose of this forum lunch was to solicit ideas from individuals in Washington about the best way to get the needs of the AI community met. He emphasized that his early discussions with government contacts indicated the importance of forming a mission statement for AAAI and the field of AI.

Public Relations: It was agreed that the AAAI needs to change the focus of its public relations. Barbara Grosz agreed to study this problem, and prepare a proposal during the next six months. In the meantime, the AAAI office will begin collecting information for an "AI database," which will detail AI success stories. Beginning with the IAAI Conference award winners, this database will include examples of AI making a difference in the commercial world. Not only will this be a valuable tool for members of the press and business community, it will also assist researchers with funding efforts.

New Business

AI in the Arts: Joe Bates, who organized the AAAI-92 Art Show, made a special plea to the members of the Executive Council—in particular, the 1994 Program Chairs—to keep the arts in mind when forming programs for AAAI. He emphasized the importance of keeping a balanced representation of engineering, scientific, and artistic research efforts in AAAI programs. He also announced preliminary plans for an arts electronica contest, featuring interactive arts, and perhaps sponsored by AAAI and IJCAI in 1995.

AI in Medicine Student Paper Competition: A proposal from the *AI in Medicine Journal* for AAAI to cosponsor with Elsevier a student paper competition was discussed. The Council decided not to participate in this particular program since it was rather narrowly focused and did not fall within AAAI's usual parameters for cooperation or sponsorship.

International Journal of Intelligent Systems in Accounting, Finance, and Management: The Executive Council also denied a request by the above journal to place the phrase "Published in cooperation with the American Association for Artificial Intelligence" on its cover. The editor of the journal will be notified of our current journal sponsorship program, and the Publications Committee will

consider extending journal sponsorship to more specialized publications at a future meeting. SIGMAN will continue to notify its members of the availability of this journal through their quarterly newsletter.

Showcasing Young Researchers: Barbara Grosz encouraged the conference program chairs to consider ways to showcase young researchers in the AI field. Possibilities include invited talks by young researchers, or a special award presented at the conference. A volunteer was solicited to chair a committee to propose an award.

SIGMAN Election Results

The Special Interest Group on Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing held its annual elections in June, 1993. Winners from that election include Christopher Tong, the new Academic Cochair; Anil Rewari, the new Area Chair, Production and Field Service; and David Goldstein, the Area Chair, Organization and Management.

AAAI-94 Student Programs

AAAI announces the continuation of its scholarship and volunteer programs for students interested in attending the National Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Seattle, Washington, July 31-August 4, 1994.

Student Scholarship Program

The scholarship program provides partial travel support and a complimentary technical program registration for students who qualify by meeting all the following criteria. Students must be full time undergraduate or graduate students at US colleges and universities; members of AAAI; submit papers to the technical program or letters of recommendation from their faculty advisor; and submit scholarship applications to AAAI by April 15, 1994. In addition, repeat scholarship applicants must have fulfilled the volunteer and reporting requirements for previous awards. Limited funds are also available to students at accredited foreign universities who meet the criteria

outlined for US students.

All scholarship recipients will be required to participate in the student volunteer program to support AAAI staff in Seattle. The volunteer program is an essential part of the conference and student participation is a valuable contribution. 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, or 445 Burgess Drive, Menlo Park, Ca, 94025. (415) 328-3123.

AAAI Volunteer Program

The Volunteer Program provides complimentary registration to full time students, including conference proceedings and a special AAAI-94 t-shirt, in exchange for assisting AAAI support staff in Seattle. This program does not provide any scholarship funds, and is designed for local students or students who have other sources for travel funds. Student volunteers are a valuable contribution to the success of the national conference. The 1994 Volunteer Coordinator is Professor Alistair D.C. Holden, CSE Department, FR-35, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. He can be reached by telephone at (206) 543-2054 or by email at holden@cs.washington.edu. Please contact Professor Holden directly with your questions regarding the Volunteer Program. Volunteers will be accepted until May 27, 1994.

Peter Friedland Second Recipient of Feigenbaum Medal

AAAI extends its congratulations to member and AAAI Fellow Peter E. Friedland, chief, AI Research Branch, NASA Ames Research Center; the second recipient of the World Congress on Expert System's Feigenbaum Medal. Friedland was honored in recognition of his scholarly activities, namely for translating his research achievements into improving expert systems technology and subsequent applications.

Zadeh Receives ASME Award

AAAI member and 1991 Fellow Lotfi A. Zadeh received the Rufus Oldenburger Medal of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers during its winter annual meeting earlier this month in New Orleans. Zadeh was so honored for his seminal contributions in system theory, decision analysis, and theory of fuzzy sets and its applications to artificial intelligence, linguistics, logic, expert systems, and neural networks. AAAI extends its congratulations to Dr. Zadeh on receipt of this honor.

AAAI Fellows Nominations

We are now accepting nominations for candidates to become 1994 AAAI Fellows. AAAI's Fellows program is designed to recognize people who have made significant, sustained contributions to the field of artificial intelligence. Candidates should, in general, have made significant contributions to the AI field for more than ten years.

We encourage you to give careful consideration to persons whom you think deserve recognition. If you would like to nominate a candidate, please contact AAAI at fellows@aaai.org.

Nominations Due for Councilor

AAAI is currently soliciting nominations for councilors, to begin their term of office in July, 1994. Please consider nominating persons to fill these important volunteer positions. A nomination form can be found elsewhere in this issue of *AI Magazine*.

Email Addresses Needed

In preparation for its expanded electronic publication project, AAAI is currently collecting and updating internet email addresses from its members. If you have not already done so, please send your email address to membership@aaai.org. Please include your name, surface mailing address, and membership number.