

Inside ASIS&T



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JASIS&T Gets New Editor

Blaise Cronin, Rudy Professor of Information Science and dean of the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University, is the new editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (JASIST)*, effective January 1, 2009. Cronin succeeds Donald Kraft, retired from Louisiana State University, who served as editor since 1985.

Describing his vision of *JASIST*, Cronin said, “*JASIST* is the preeminent journal of its kind in the world and the enduring record of our field’s intellectual focus and evolution. Under Don Kraft’s editorship *JASIST* has flourished, growing in terms of size, number of annual issues and breadth of subject coverage. The institutional, geographic and disciplinary affiliations of contributing authors are more varied than ever, reflecting the internationalizing of interest in information science and also the perceived attractiveness of *JASIST* as a publication outlet of first, not last, resort.”



“In short,” he continued, “the maturation of our field, both scholastically and professionally, is mirrored in the pages of the journal. The challenge is to maintain a balance between the known and the novel, the canonical and the emergent; the goal is to enlarge the journal’s footprint, prudently and selectively, by connecting more tightly with cognate academic communities where the study of information is also a central intellectual concern.”

In announcing the selection, ASIS&T President Nancy Roderer said, “It is a

wonderful indication of the depth and vitality of ASIS&T that we have one Award of Merit Winner as editor followed by another winner of our highest honor. ASIS&T is fortunate indeed to have two such outstanding individuals leading the profession and ASIS&T as information science becomes more and more important.”

Cronin has been editor of the *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology* since 2002, a role he will continue until a new editor is selected for that important ASIS&T publication. ■

ASIS&T Reports on Graduate Information Programs and Accreditation

The Information Professionals Task Force of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) has issued a report reviewing the current status of information professional programs and related accreditation activities. The report, *Graduate Information Programs and Accreditation: Landscape Analysis and Survey*, is available at <http://www.asis.org/news.html>.

As stated in the report, “There is a concern that the proliferation of information programs poses a problem of legitimacy, accountability, consistency and quality assurance within the information field.” This situation led task force chair and ASIS&T President Nancy Roderer to commission Samantha Becker and Bo Kinney, graduate students at the University of Washington’s I-School, to conduct the study with support from the Council on

Library and Information Resources (CLIR).

The report includes the following key findings:

- About 900 distinct information-related master’s programs exist across 468 institutions. Some are designated as majors and others as concentrations in a major. A total of 220 distinct majors or concentration areas were found in 500 academic units.
- Slightly more than one third of the programs are located in four core disciplinary domains: engineering, computer science, information science and applied information science/informatics.
- Of the remaining programs, fully half were found within the business domain. Most of the remaining programs are distributed among biological and health sciences, library science, public administration, communications and education.

The International Calendar of Information Science Conferences (<http://icisc.neasist.org/>) is a nonprofit collaboration between the Special Interest Group/International Information Issues (SIG/III) and the European (ASIST/EC) and New England (NEASIST) chapters of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, with the additional support of Haworth Press.

- Sixty percent of the programs have majors or concentrations in at least one of the following categories: information systems, informatics, information technology and information science.

The study's appendixes provide a directory of master's information programs and profiles of 19 information school programs, including how each is accredited.

In September, ASIS&T and CLIR will sponsor an invitational meeting of information organizations to discuss the establishment of a new accreditation process for the range of master's degree programs that educate information professionals.

For more on the goals of the Information Professionals Task Force and its efforts, see the ASIS&T Presidential White Paper at www.asist.org/news.html.

News from ASIS&T Chapters

The **New England ASIS&T Chapter (NEASIS&T)** held its annual awards dinner in mid-June, with an after-dinner speech from Robert Wolfe of MIT. Wolfe is a professional librarian and information architect who has worked in the field of educational technology since 1999. He spoke about the future of semantic web technologies for libraries and demonstrated some of his favorite semantic web applications.

The **Los Angeles Chapter of ASIS&T (LACASIS)** held its annual business meeting and dinner program in early June. Robert McDonald of the San Diego Super Computing Center spoke about *At-risk Digital Info: Preservation for Tomorrow via a Datagrid Approach*.

News from ASIS&T SIGs

Special Interest Group/Social Informatics (SIG/SI) will accept submissions until August 29 for presentations at the 4th annual SIG/SI Research Symposium at the ASIS&T Annual Meeting in Columbus. The symposium will focus on *People, Information and Technology: The Social Analysis of Computing*. Submissions may include empirical, critical and theoretical work, as well as richly described practice cases and demonstrations. In keeping with the theme of the Annual Meeting, the symposium will feature work that focuses on the relationships of mutual shaping between people and information as mediated by technology.

SIG/USE will accept proposals until August 15 for papers to be presented at the 8th Annual SIG/USE Research Symposium, also to be held at the ASIS&T Annual Meeting. The SIG/USE session will focus on *Future Directions: Information Behavior in Design and the Making of Relevant Research*. Symposium organizers are interested in short position papers that reflect upon critical questions for information behavior research. Presentations will be in a seminar format emphasizing participant discussion.

SIG/III Announces Contest Winners

Special Interest Group/International Information Issues (SIG/III) has announced the six winners of the 2008 SIG/III International Paper Contest, the ninth annual competition for information scientists and practitioners in developing countries. Authors of five of this year's

winners are from India; the sixth represents Pakistan. The winning titles and their authors follow:

1st Place: *Use of Social Networks and Information Seeking Behavior of Students during Political Crises in Pakistan*, by **Maqsood Ahmad Shaheen**, Pakistan

2nd Place: *Use of Electronic Journals in Astronomy and Astrophysics Libraries and Information Centers in India: A Users' Perspective*, by **Neela J. Deshpande** and **S.K. Pathak**, India

3rd Place: *Technology and Customer Expectation in Academic Libraries: A Special Reference to Technical/Management Libraries in Karnataka*, by **Manjunatha K.**, India

4th Place: *Identifying and Exploiting Human Needs for People Centric Evolving Knowledge Society: A Case Study of Indian ICT Emergence*, by **S.M. Pujar**, **R.K. Kamat**, **S.Y. Bansode**, **R.R. Kamat** and **S.H. Katigennavar**, India

5th Place: *Empowering People through Information: A Case Study of India's Right to Information Act*, by **Tariq Ashraf**, India

6th Place: *Information: By the People, For the People, For Development*, by **Pramila Dangwal**, India

Jurors for the 2008 competition were **Judy Jeng**, chair; **Jonathan Levitt**, co-chair; **Aaron Bowen**, **Yunfei Du**, **Julian Warner** and **Yin Zhang**.

Principal authors of the each of the six winning papers receive two-year individual memberships to ASIS&T. In addition, the first place winner receives travel assistance to attend the 2008 ASIS&T Annual Meeting in Columbus. ■