



EDITORIAL

Teach Globally, Learn Locally: The 2003 IMIA Working Group on Education Meeting

The special issue of the *International Journal of Medical Informatics* is comprised of papers presented at the 2003 IMIA Working Group on Education Meeting. Eighty educators, from such countries as Germany, The Netherlands, Australia, Taiwan, United Kingdom, Brazil, Canada, and the United States, met in Portland, Oregon, USA from 23 to 25 April 2003. They presented ideas and educational programs on health and biomedical informatics.

The theme of the conference was “Teach Globally, Learn Locally: Innovations in Health and Biomedical Informatics.” While learning is a local and personal process, global changes in health care systems and technology are profoundly impacting education in informatics. The growth of the Internet and the increasing use of information technology in health care quality and safety have produced many changes.

A majority of the conference was devoted to the presentation of 64 papers and posters which were reviewed and selected by a 40-member program committee. Each paper and poster was assigned to one of four categories: curriculum, international issues, technology, or evaluation. The top six ranked papers, in each category (24 in total), were selected for a conference session presentation. The remaining submissions were presented as posters.

The keynote address was presented by Dr. Reinhold Haux, Vice-President of IMIA, Editor-in-Chief of *Methods of Information in Medicine*, as well as Editor of the *IMIA Yearbook of Medical Informatics*. His paper, *Biomedical and Health Informatics Education at UMIT*, is the first paper listed in this issue.

Several workshops were also held during the conference. One workshop was devoted to the global informatics textbook, covering global issues in health informatics education. Another workshop discussed various aspects of the virtual

university, a system modeled on the European Credit Transfer System. A third workshop was devoted to the ongoing efforts by the AMIA Education Committee to define core competencies in informatics.

In addition, there was plenty of time for social interaction; the main highlight was a riverboat cruise down Portland’s Willamette River. There was also a business meeting for the Working Group; the minutes of the meeting can be found on the IMIA Web site.

After the meeting, we began a process of selecting papers for invitation to appear in this special issue. Again, the four categories of curriculum, international issues, technology, and evaluation were used. Five to six papers were initially selected within each category for invitation to submit. But, ultimately, only three or four papers from each category were selected for publication in the special issue. The final sixteen papers, including the keynote address, comprise this issue. We hope the readers will find each paper in this issue interesting as well as enlightening.

We were grateful to the corporate and institutional sponsors of the 2003 IMIA Working Group on Education. The sponsors were the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the Curriculum Information System from the University of Calgary Faculty of Medicine, GE Medical Systems, Ovid Technologies, Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oregon, and the Department of Medical Informatics & Clinical Epidemiology of Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). As members of the latter, we were extremely proud to showcase our own program for our international colleagues.

The 2003 IMIA Working Group on Education Conference was coordinated by Lynetta Sacherek, MLS, MHA, Senior Research Associate, Department of Medical Informatics & Clinical Epidemiology, OHSU.

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