

## Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

### The Current Issue

Many years ago, there was an IBM ad with the catch phrase "Not just data, reality". ADspeak is not science, so we should not take this phrase as describing the historical situation when it was published, nor should we look back at it with too critical an eye. (Though it is funny.) I think of it as aspirational, and in that context, it is really right-on!

It is one thing to have petabytes of data, it is another to be able to exploit it to some purpose. Gathering data is easy, though it can be expensive. Extracting utility from data requires more than expensive infrastructure. It requires insights to build technology to "mine" the data. The data engineering community has been working on this for many years for multiple and increasing purposes, from knowledge research to health care to business opportunity, and many places in-between.

The current issue surveys the efforts by our community to put data to good use. And, perhaps unique to the Bulletin, it spans historical to work in progress, from universities, research centers, and industry. Thus, the issue provides a broad perspective on the purposes to which data is being put and the technology to enable this. Haixun Wang, the issue editor, has succeeded in bringing this topic to Bulletin readers. The topic has, is, and will continue to be timely. I want to thank Haixun for his hard work in bringing this important issue to us.

### "No" on Proposed IEEE Constitutional Amendment

The Computer Society is part of the IEEE. As such it has a role to play in the governance of the IEEE, as do all societies within the IEEE. A proposed amendment to the IEEE constitution would change the way that the IEEE is governed. As of this moment, the Computer Society is joined with nine other societies who have had formal votes in opposition to the amendment. And no society has voted in favor of the amendment.

The thrust of the IEEE amendment is to move governance partially out of the constitution and make it subject to the more easily changed by-laws. Prior versions of the amendment have suggested that the purpose may be to reduce the role of societies in IEEE governance. It also removes IEEE members from some governance votes that are currently required. The proposal in detail can be seen at [https://www.ieee.org/documents/constitution\\_approved\\_amendment\\_changes\\_election.pdf](https://www.ieee.org/documents/constitution_approved_amendment_changes_election.pdf) (login is required using your IEEE account).

As a member of the Computer Society Board of Governors (BOG), I have participated in BOG discussions on the proposed IEEE amendment, and agree with the position taken by the Computer Society in opposition. I believe the amendment is misguided. Professional meetings can be contentious, as there are sometimes conflicting interests that need to be resolved. But the change proposed seems to me to not improve the way we deal with these conflicts but rather seeks to bury them. That is not the way democracy is supposed to work. So I urge you to vote "no" on this amendment.

### IEEE TCDE Award Winners

The Technical Committee on Data Engineering (TCDE) initiated awards for the data engineering community in 2014. This is the third year for the awards. The winners of the awards this year are listed on the TCDE web site <http://tab.computer.org/tcde/tcdeawardsrecipients.html>

This year, award winners have the opportunity to publish a short communication about their thoughts as a result of the award in the Bulletin. The current issue contains a short communication from Impact Award winner Michael Carey. Award winners have made truly distinguished contributions. I want to congratulate them on their awards, and I would encourage you to see what Mike has to say in the current issue.

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