30 Years of Applications of Computer Algebra (ACA), A Personal Perspective

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Abstract

This is now the 30th meeting of the Applications of Computer Algebra (ACA) conference series. The first took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, May 16–19, 1995. The chairs were Stanly L. Steinberg and Michael J. Wester. At the time, computer algebra was still fairly young, and the main established CA conference series was ISSAC, which was fairly theoretical. Stan thought it would be good to have an "applications" conference in which developers and users were encouraged to co-mingle, and enlisted me at co-chair. We started out with a few thousand dollar loan from IMACS (International Association for Mathematics and Computers in Simulation), and a couple of US$10K grant proposals. Both proposals were funded, and we had a very succesful conference at the University of New Mexico with 93 people in attendance.

Here, we provide a short history of the ACA conference series, with a collection of lessons learned, sprinkled with anecdotes that prompted them.