

Candidate for Vice President
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John West

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BIOGRAPHY

John West is Director of Leadership Computing at the Texas Advanced Computing Center, one of the largest supercomputing centers in the world. In this role, his responsibility is to ensure that TACC provides the right mix of technology and expertise to enable its tens of thousands of users to make new scientific discoveries.

Before joining TACC, he was Director of the Department of Defense High Performance Computing Modernization Program, a multi-hundred million-dollar DOD-wide program that provides high performance computers and computational expertise to the DOD research community. Prior to that he held positions in private industry and the federal government, with responsibilities in computational modeling and high-performance infrastructure. He also founded the technical news site insideHPC.com, which he sold three years after launch; the company remains successful.

John currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer of ACM, a role which participates in oversight of ACM's investments and the association's annual budget. He is a founding officer of the ACM Special Interest Group on High Performance Computing (SIGHPC) and responsible for communications and member recruitment, setting records for financial viability and member growth. He also served as SIGHPC's Chair and Vice Chair. His efforts to foster a more inclusive computing community include creation of programs that have awarded more than \$2.5M in fellowships and awards internationally to women and members of other groups underrepresented in computing. John also served as founding co-Chair of ACM's Diversity and Inclusion Council and was a member of ACM Council from 2019 to 2021. Between 1996 and 2020, he held leadership roles in one of ACM's largest conferences and has served in multiple capacities on editorial boards, including most recently as Associate Editor in Chief.

STATEMENT

ACM serves as a cornerstone for our community, providing essential resources and fostering a sense of community. Moreover, ACM extends its influence beyond academia, offering valuable resources to inform and shape technology-related policies in society.

During the last election, I noted that the pandemic and social challenges had created dramatic opportunities for computing to reshape the ways in which we work and relate to one another. Many of these forces will continue to influence our community over the next two years. I also want to highlight ACM Open, facing a key decision point in 2025. If implemented as envisioned, ACM Open will make content in the Digital Library available for free worldwide. This move will put ACM in a strong leadership position, leveling the playing field for researchers by eliminating barriers to access faced by institutions with fewer resources. However, like many paradigm shifts, the path to universal accessibility poses risks: in this case, potential revenue reduction and the related need to balance ACM's priorities and commitments against available resources. I believe my experience as ACM's Secretary/Treasurer and my experience leading large research and operational organizations has prepared me to lead conversations with ACM's members and stakeholders as we move approach an implementation decision.

I have previously emphasized the dramatic pace of change in our profession, mirroring societal shifts. We continue to face intense technical challenges in creating the tools of a new generation. As ethical professionals we also have the obligation to address important questions about who benefits from these tools, and who may be left behind. My long-term commitment to ACM stems from ACM's unique ability to bring together the many groups needed to hold meaningful conversations about how to address these issues. We are also uniquely positioned to respond to the changes in our profession as a growing number of people join computing from other fields, communicating the best of our established practices.

As ACM tackles these challenges, I believe my experiences leading organizations to address the needs of many different groups – and to balance today's urgencies against future growth – will serve ACM and its members effectively.