

This editorial gives me an opportunity to introduce myself as the new editor of the *Journal of Applied Mechanics*. I succeed Lewis Wheeler who served almost ten years at the head of the Journal. On its behalf, I wish to extend thanks to him for his long service during which the *Journal of Applied Mechanics* has stayed at the forefront of its area and maintained its position as one of the leading periodicals in the fields of engineering.

During Professor Wheeler's term of service, important innovations were introduced. These changes will make it even more attractive for the applied mechanics community to publish its best work in the Journal. The length limit for papers has been increased to 9 journal pages, approximately 9,000 words. This increase from the previous level of 6 pages became effective some time ago and is applicable to any paper now submitted to the Journal. The board of Associate Editors and the Division of Applied Mechanics is convinced that this increase in the length limit will enable the journal to publish papers in a more effective format and to allow it to attract a greater diversity of excellent papers in areas where it was previously difficult to fit within the Journal's length constraints. Not least, the new length limit will enhance the Journal's ability to attract the best papers in the fields of applied mechanics and therefore will help maintain its leading position.

The Journal now publishes bimonthly and the time between the submission of a paper and its publication has improved dramatically. The Journal can now achieve publication of a paper in as little as 10 months after it has been first received at the editorial office, as can be confirmed by the submission dates in the May, 2002 issue. The bimonthly format also results in the Journal appearing on library shelves and on desks more frequently, commanding the attention of those working in the fields of applied mechanics more often each year. This publishing schedule makes the *Journal of Applied Mechanics* a more compelling habit on the part of its readers and a better vehicle for the publication of the best work in our field.

Another innovation that has been introduced is that special collections of papers will be assembled by editorial teams composed of Associate and Guest editors. The first of these on the nanomechanics of surfaces and interfaces, edited by Demetris Kouris and Huajian Gao, has already appeared in the July 2002 issue. These special collections will focus the attention of Journal readers on topical issues in applied mechanics and will be used to highlight important trends and developments in the fields relevant to the *Journal of Applied Mechanics*.

The typesetting, graphics and printing of the Journal have been improved. This has given the papers in the Journal a more professional appearance, so that authors can be better satisfied about how their work is being presented to the world. These benefits are not simply cosmetic; as a consequence of the changes, authors are now able to present information and data more clearly and with greater effectiveness in experimental papers and in the form of computer-generated graphics.

These improvements will encourage authors to continue to send their best work to the *Journal of Applied Mechanics*. In my period of being editor, I will endeavor to ensure that the Journal capitalizes on these changes and maintains its position as one of the leading periodicals in the field of applied mechanics. With advice from authors, the board of Associate Editors and the leadership and membership of the ASME Division of Applied Mechanics, I will seek further innovations in the Journal to improve its overall effectiveness, its attractiveness to potential authors and its significance and importance among its readership. This, I hope, will include a growth within the Journal of emerging areas of importance in applied mechanics and a broadening of the coverage of cross-disciplinary fields connected to them. We will also be considering improvements to the handling of manuscripts and reviews by electronic means to improve the efficiency of the process and to ease the work of authors, reviewers and Associate Editors while ensuring that the Journal remains the vehicle of choice for the best work in applied mechanics.

For me, it is a great honor to be appointed Editor of the *Journal of Applied Mechanics*. I follow in the footsteps of many distinguished individuals who have served before me in this position, such as the first Technical Editor, John Lessells, and his joint successors, Dan Drucker and Joe Kestin. It is my hope that I will succeed as well as my predecessors in my stewardship of the Journal and carry out my responsibilities as Editor in a way that makes the Journal stronger and more effective. In all this, though, the *Journal of Applied Mechanics*, the board of Associate Editors and I need the support of the community of applied mechanics in the form of the submission of its best papers and its willingness to carry out reviews of papers under consideration for publication. We hope that our efforts in the coming years will merit that support and together we can assure that the *Journal of Applied Mechanics* continues to be the leading publication for the field of applied mechanics.

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