Onward! 2013 Chairs' Welcome

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 12th edition of Onward!, the ACM Symposium on New Ideas in Programming and Reflections on Software.

Onward! focuses on everything to do with programming and software: including processes, methods, languages, communities, and applications. Onward! is more radical, more visionary, and more open than other conferences to not yet well-proven but well-argued ideas. Onward! welcomes different ways of thinking about, approaching, and reporting on programming language and software engineering research.

Onward! is looking for grand visions and new paradigms that could make a big difference in how we will build software in the future. But Onward! is not looking for research-as-usual papers—conferences like OOPSLA are the place for that. Those conferences require rigorous validation such as theorems or empirical experiments, which are necessary for scientific progress, but which typically preclude discussion of early-stage ideas. Onward! papers must also supply some degree of validation because mere speculation is not a good basis for progress. For this Onward! accepts compelling arguments, exploratory implementations, and substantial examples. The use of worked-out examples to support new ideas is strongly encouraged.

Onward! is reaching out not only to experienced academics but also to graduate students for constructive criticism of current software development technology and practices, and to present ideas that could change the realm of software development. Practitioners who are dissatisfied with the state of our art are also encouraged to share insights about how to reform software development, perhaps by presenting detailed examples of as new approach, and demonstrating concrete benefits and potential risks.

This year we accepted 11 out of 27 research papers and two out of four essays by following a two-phase process. This process was different from the one of previous years in that it made explicit the opportunity for shepherding of submissions. Shepherding allows the program committee to offer help to the authors of papers deemed potentially acceptable by requesting them to improve specific aspects of the papers in keeping with the assessment criteria and the nature of Onward!. For example, the following represent some core improvement suggestions: Clarity of presentation and overall writing improvements to make the work more accessible, making the presentation of the technical ideas crisper or more concrete, making the argument sharper and more compelling, or expanding or refining the ideas based on new input from the reviewers. Authors were given about two months to perform revisions, after which a second submission occurred. Three of the research papers and two of the essays were subjected to shepherding. All of them reflected the revision requests of the program committee and so were accepted.

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Our keynote speaker Gilad Bracha is known for his work on Newspeak, a highly dynamic and reflective object-oriented programming language designed to support explicitly modularity and security. His talk examines the past, present and future of radical innovation in programming languages.

We wish to thank our program and essays committees and our supporting reviewers.

We are looking forward to an interesting and inspiring symposium.

Onward!

Robert Hirschfeld	**Bernd Bruegge**
Onward! 2013 Program Chair	*Onward! 2013 Essays Chair*
Hasso-Plattner-Institut Potsdam	*Technische Universität München*