Forward

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This year marks the 20th anniversary of *Annals of Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence*. Through two decades, our journal has been the leading platform for the presentation of research in this multidisciplinary area. Together with our flagship conference, the biennial International Symposium on Artificial Intelligence and Mathematics, held since 1990 in Ft. Lauderdale and cosponsored by Florida Atlantic University, AMAI has influenced a generation of scientists and mathematicians.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of AMAI, a number of our editors have contributed to this special issue, “Essays on Mathematics and AI – Personal Perspectives: Past, Present and Future”. Together, they document some of the most significant recent developments in our field, and provide their views on—The Big Challenges—the most important directions for the coming years. I cannot thank them enough for responding to my invitation. I am sure you will enjoy reading these.

I would like to pay tribute to my late colleague, Peter L. Hammer, whose role in launching the Annals of Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence and the Florida Symposium was paramount. I thank him again posthumously for having recruited me to be the founding editor-in-chief. It was Peter’s vision that has lead to the comprehensive scope comprising the journal and the symposium. We hope to encourage periodic special issues and workshops devoted to Peter’s broad interests in AI, OR, and DM. Those of you who would wish to join and support this in the future, please contact me.

Finally, we are all greatly indebted to Fred Hoffman for his dedicated work on behalf of our research community in organizing the biennial AI and Math symposium. Throughout these years, several thousand researchers from across the globe have participated in this important series. The next symposium (the 12th) will be held in January 2012 in Ft. Lauderdale.

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For me, as Editor-in-Chief, it has been two decades of fun. I would like to give special thanks to our large pool of referees who have helped ensure high standards of our publications. Finally, I have enjoyed working with a truly distinguished group of past and current editors and guest editors, and look forward to a bright future with many young colleagues joining our ranks.

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