THE MIF UPDATE

Spring 2021 Newsletter

During the MIF business meeting at the 2021 INFORMS annual conference, we presented our new board. In this issue of The MIF Update, we outline the activities of the MIF board, print inspiring messages from our past and new presidents, and detail an initiative introduced in 2021.

Welcome to our new board members!

President: Eduardo Perez  
Vice President: Shannon Harris  
Secretary: Michelle Alvarado  
Treasurer: Karen Hicklin  
Programs Co-chairs: Clara Novoa, Diana Ramirez-Rios  
Junior Vice Chair of Programs: Sofia Perez-Guzman  
Communication Co-chairs: Wesley Marrero, Alexandra Newman  
Industry & External Outreach Liaison: Alicia Bridges  
Past president: Ruben Proaño

The 2022-2023 board was elected online through electronic votes, and was presented during the 2021 INFORMS annual meeting. MIF board members are elected for two-year terms.

Want to learn more about MIF?

Email us: mif.informs@gmail.com
Visit our website: connect.informs.org/minorityissuesforum/home
Follow us on Twitter: @MInforms
Join our LinkedIn group: linkedin.com/groups/12093829

A message from our president

I am honored to be your incoming president and I want to acknowledge the leadership provided by Dr. Ruben Proaño and last years’ executive board. I am excited to welcome the new board. Even though we all faced many challenges with the pandemic, last year was a very successful year for MIF. The forum remained very active, which helped to increase the participation in our sponsored student competitions, sessions, and events. We appreciate the efforts of volunteers, our previous executive board members, and the generous financial support of our sponsors.

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Awards

Paper Competition
The 2021 MIF paper competition considered papers that have been accepted or published after January 1, 2019, with a lead author who is a MIF member. Papers were judged based on the significance of their contribution, the novelty of the methodology, the clarity of the results, the conclusions, and the overall exposition.

The 2021 first-place winner was Dr. Michele Samorani, who is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Information Systems & Analytics at Santa Clara University. His paper is titled “Overbooked and overlooked: Machine learning and racial bias in medical appointment scheduling,” and was published in Manufacturing & Service Operations Management. The finalists of the 2021 paper competition were Chamsi Hssaine, a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University, and Tanzid Hasnain, a Ph.D. candidate at NC State University. Details of the paper competition finalists can be found on the last page of the newsletter.

Poster Competition
The 2021 MIF poster competition was open to students who were MIF members. Students’ research was judged in terms of their motivation, methodology, results, and conclusions. Posters were judged online based on their visual appeal, organization, and presentation.

The 2021 first place winner was Sayed Rezwanul Islam, who was a master’s student at Texas State University. His poster was titled “Aggregate production Planning with Renewable Energy.” Our poster competition honorable mention was awarded to Coralys Colón Morales, a doctoral student at the University of Florida, for her poster titled “Using Stochastic Programming on Skin Cancer Appointment Scheduling.”

Continuation of the message from our president.

Dr. Eduardo Perez
MIF President 2021-2023
Associate Professor,
Ingram School of Engineering
Texas State University

Dr. Michele Samorani

Sayed Rezwanul Islam
Membership

Over the past year, our membership has grown by 38% (from 95 to 131 members). The distribution of our members is as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Regular members</th>
<th>Student members</th>
<th>Retired members</th>
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<tr>
<td>98 (75%)</td>
<td>32 (24%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
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2022 MIF Sessions

We encourage our members to organize a session sponsored by MIF in our next INFORMS annual meeting. If you are interested in organizing an invited session, please use the following link to submit the information about your session before March 13, 2022: [https://forms.office.com/r/grBzq3GsmR](https://forms.office.com/r/grBzq3GsmR).

MIF Undergraduate Students Workshop

The first MIF Undergraduate Students Workshop was hosted in 2021, supported by a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) Ambassadors project. The event took place virtually the week before the 2021 Annual Meeting. Targeting underrepresented minority students that had not been exposed to OR/MS, 10 students currently pursuing degrees in mathematics, computer science, and engineering were selected to participate, with 90% of the participants having no previous OR background. Workshop participants had the opportunity to attend sessions showcasing 11 speakers among faculty and industry professionals, including representatives from Google and Netflix. Additionally, participants got a glimpse at graduate studies life by engaging with URM doctoral students in an interactive session.

The program content provided students a holistic picture of the opportunities available in OR/MS careers. To make sure students could navigate the annual meeting successfully, seven faculty volunteers met individually with students to help them plan their conference schedule. Furthermore, MIF helped secure funding to cover the traveling expenses of three students who attended the Annual Meeting in person. Preliminary results from the survey conducted at the end of the Annual Meeting showed that 100% of students were satisfied or highly satisfied with our workshop, and 60% are considering graduate studies in OR/MS. This event will be hosted again in 2022 with support from the DEI Ambassadors initiative.

Workshop participants

Lora Mayats Alpay
Comp Sci Junior
Chapman University

James Andradas
Business Analytics Junior
Bucknell University

Ana R. Jimenez Rivera
Industrial Eng Senior
Texas State University

Christian Martinez
Engineering Sophomore
Binghamton University

Isabella Qian
Comp Sci Freshman
UCLA

Luis Rodriguez
Math/Econ Junior
University of Nebraska - Omaha

Jacqueline Yu
Data Analytics Junior
Chapman University

Timothy Wise
Industrial Eng Senior
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Yu Xia
Mathematics Senior
New York University

Jocelyn Zhu
Industrial Eng Senior
Northeastern University
Our support to MIF members

With the help of our sponsors, we can continue to support the research of minority scholars in OR/MS. MIF has committed to cover one WORMS Family Care Award. In addition, we have provided the following support:

**Doctoral Colloquium sponsorship**
- 3 students

**CMMI traveling grant nominations (PI: Dr. Hicks)**
- 5 students

**Registration for virtual participation**
- 24 students
- 10 Ambassador project participants

**Junior faculty support**
- 2 members

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Special thank you to our sponsors!

Gold Sponsors

- Texas A&M University
- University of Maryland
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Georgia Tech
- H. Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering
- Gurobi Optimization

Silver Sponsors

- Manning School of Business
- Industrial Engineering & Operations Research Columbia Engineering
- Northwestern University Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences

Bronze Sponsors

- RIT
- Kate Gleason College of Engineering
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Ingram School of Engineering Texas State

For more information on supporting MIF, contact our treasurer, Karen Hicklin, at khicklin@ufl.edu.

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Paper competition finalists

**Winner**

**Finalists**