Message from the 2020 Program Chair

Dear DSI members,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 51st Annual Conference of the Decision Sciences Institute!

The conference theme for the 2020 DSI conference is “Decision Sciences in the Age of Connectivity”. This theme was chosen as a platform to discuss the challenges that accompany the connected world, requiring us to rethink structures and processes within organizations and networks and the ways we make decisions.

When the conference theme was selected, little did we know that our world was on the verge of a dramatic change, and that the theme of connectivity would herald the first virtual conference in the history of DSI. Last April, with the support of the DSI community and DSI leadership, the conference program team decided to take the challenge and move on to organize a large scale online event. While being acutely aware that no virtual conference can replicate the opportunities to meet new and old colleagues offered by a face-to-face event, we believe that we can exploit the current realities to innovate and use technology in creative ways to benefit our members and create more inclusive conference events. We are deeply grateful to DSI members who supported this decision and provided inspiration.

In keeping with DSI conference tradition, the conference schedule includes keynote speakers, workshops, panels, and paper sessions. In spite of the virtual format, we received 900+ submissions.

Keynote events include presentations on how new technologies are shaping business: “Reimagining Business with AI” by Sudhi Ranjan Sinha, author and former executive with Johnson Controls, and “Training with Virtual Reality Technology (VR): Improving and Predicting Workplace Behaviors” by Michael Casale, chief scientist with Strivr.

More than before, we think that this year it is also important for the DSI community to reflect together on the future of academia. For this reason, we have organized two other keynote events: “Business Schools in Transition: Perspectives from AACSB” by Caryn Beck-Dudley, Int. President & CEO, AACSB, and “State of Academia in business schools”, a panel featuring the deans of five key business schools in the US.

We hope students and faculty will enjoy the selection of educational and research workshops we have organized. New this year, the Doctoral Symposium takes place as a separate full-day event the day before the conference (Nov 20). This exciting event is offered free to all DSI members. We have also introduced a new type of session during the conference, called “showcases”, where presenters are matched to expert discussants who will provide feedback on their submissions. The showcases are especially targeted towards strengthening our connections with doctoral student and emerging market communities.

I hope you will find the conference sessions thought-provoking and that they will offer opportunities to advance scientific inquiry, share new research methods with students, and improve our teaching via new pedagogical approaches.

We wanted to provide you not only an educational and enlightening conference, but a fun and unique event as well. As networking has always been an important component, we offer our “DSI Conversation Café”, where you can meet up with friends and colleagues to ‘have coffee’ or catch up. Simply message them within the platform and set the time. Also new this year, we offer a
“Break Arcade” featuring exercise, music, videos and other fun options to give you a respite from the thought-provoking sessions.

My sincere thanks go to the associate conference chairs, Rebecca Duray, Sriram Narayanan, Wendy Tate, CMS manager Stephen Ostrom and Executive Director Vivian Landrum for their tireless work and commitment to this event. I also thank the keynote speakers, track chairs, session chairs, panel and workshop organizers, panelists, and the presenters for their contributions that are invaluable to the creation of a high quality and successful program. I would also like to recognize the painstaking and dedicated work of the administrative staff and all the volunteers who are supporting the conference.

Enjoy!

Carmela Di Mauro2020 DSI Conference Chair