Statement from the Treasurer

It's my pleasure to announce that SIGMOD is financially strong. Our conference is the best in the field technically. This research excellence has contributed to financial health, enabling the conference to continue to generate more than enough revenue to cover its expenses. SIGMOD '98 took in approximately $25K more than it cost to produce.

The SIGMOD fiscal year (FY) 2000 runs from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000. The SIGMOD FY 2000 budget has been prepared, and includes the following highlights. The fund balance estimated for the beginning of the year is $454K. The minimum fund balance required by ACM for SIGMOD is $112K. Since our fund balance is higher then necessary, we are budgeting in a lower safety factor for the SIGMOD '99 conference, reducing the registration fee by approximately $50. We plan to continue this for future conferences. In addition, we are spending $40K on the SIGMOD Anthology, a compendium of all prior proceedings of SIGMOD and many other valuable publications on CD (and now DVD!). We'll spend $13K on the SIGMOD '99 DiSC compilation CD. These are approximately the same amounts spent in FY 1999. Another $5K will be spent on 10 $500 student scholarships to SIGMOD '99. The expected fund balance at the end of FY 2000 is $400K. Our FY 2000 revenue is estimated to be $298K, and estimated expenses are $352K. Other than special projects, SIGMOD is essentially breaking even.

We believe that the SIGMOD anthology and DiSC will be a great benefit to members of SIGMOD and to the database research community as a whole. Spending part of our fund balance to create them is well worth it. SIGMOD members have asked for a lower conference registration fee, and we responded.

As with the other SIGs and with ACM in general, SIGMOD has been slowly losing members (though at a smaller rate than almost all the other SIGs). This might raise a concern with respect to our financial health in the long term. Over the short term, declining membership is not a serious financial problem, because membership dues are a small part of our revenue, and don't fully cover the cost of services provided to members. The conference is quite healthy, and it is our major source of income. Fortunately, we recently added over 200 new members through a promotion at SIGMOD '98, where registrants who were not members could join SIGMOD at no charge. This has kept our total membership numbers level this year. We are initiating a student membership drive this spring to try to bring in new members, and will continue the membership promotion associated with the conference. This should stabilize our membership numbers and hopefully make them grow. Our hope is that a healthy membership will mean a robust conference and a strong database research community for the future.

Eric N. Hanson
Treasurer, ACM SIGMOD