

COMPUTING IN THE USSR

PANEL ABSTRACT

Moderator: *Ronald L. Baker*
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In May of 1989, an international delegation of computer specialists spent two weeks examining the state of computer education in the Soviet Union. The panelists were members of that delegation. Delegates observed the instructional use of computers at all levels of the Soviet education system and benefitted from conversations with students, teachers, educational researchers, and administrators (both local and national). National policy regarding current and future directions for computer education in the Soviet Union were outlined by high-ranking officials of the central government. Regional officials emphasized localized ventures. As a result of this visit, delegates were afforded an opportunity to experience a theoretical and practical overview of the philosophy, policy, and implementation of Soviet computer education initiatives on a personal basis.

Many innovative approaches for computer education, some of which are contrary to views held in the United States, are being actively pursued by Soviet academicians. Nonetheless, the Soviets are confident in their implementation of instructional uses of computers. Members of this panel will share their observations and impressions. In particular, panelists will address issues of the type and availability of computing resources used in the classroom, the use of computers in kindergarten, and the pedagogy applied to the teaching of programming concepts and languages. Presentations will be augmented by photographic slides of classrooms and institutes taken during the trip. Each panelist will speak for 15-20 minutes, leaving time for questions and comments from the audience.