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Editorial

Pan American Congress of Applied Mechanics (PACAM VI)

The sixth Pan American Congress of Applied Mechanics (PACAM VI) was held together with the eighth International Conference on Dynamic Problems in Mechanics (DINAME 99) in the campus of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, PUC-Rio, in Brazil in January 1999. Three hundred and thirty participants from five continents, including 25 countries, attended the congress. The organizing and editorial committees accepted over 400 four-page abstracts, which were published in the three volume proceedings entitled "Applied Mechanics in the Americas."

Following the congress, some 80 papers were selected by session chairs and the scientific committee of the congress, based on the short-paper versions and the oral presentations. The authors of these papers were invited to submit full-length papers to be published in either the *International Journal of Solids and Structures* or the *Brazilian Journal of Mechanical Sciences*. This special issue contains 39 papers, all of which were peer reviewed. These papers are arranged in eight areas, which include biomechanics, fluid mechanics, numerical methods, stability, bifurcations and chaos, mechanics of new materials, structural mechanics, solid mechanics and dynamics.

Pan American Congresses are sponsored by the American Academy of Mechanics and the congresses are always held in Latin America. Previous congresses took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1989), Valparaiso, Chile (1991), San Paulo, Brazil (1993), Buenos Aires, Argentina (1995), San Juan, Puerto Rico (1997). The next Pan American Congress (PACAM VII) will take place at the Universidad de La Frontera in Temuco, Chile in January 2001. The aims of these congresses are (1) to expose mature engineers and scientists as well as advanced graduate students to new research findings, techniques and problems, and (2) to provide opportunities for interactions through formal lectures and informal conversations. All PACAMs served these goals. Originally, the congresses were intended to bring together researchers, practicing engineers, and graduate students from South, Central and North America. However, the participants from all over the world are welcome to attend these meetings.

The editorial committee would like to thank all the authors for their contributions, all the reviewers who assisted us in the review process to assure the high scientific level of published papers, and finally Professor Charles Steele, the Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Solids and Structures* who was the driving force behind this congress and who agreed to dedicate this special issue to PACAM VI.

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