Peter Magyar

Transitions

Blake Lloyd, Guest Author

I am excited to take on a new role for the IEEE Industry Applications Society (IAS) supporting the Chapters and Membership Department (CMD). With the astounding growth in Chapters, the volume of work needed to support and nurture our IAS community and manage CMD activities has increased well beyond the workload for a single volunteer. By breaking CMD into the three teams (i.e., standing committees) of Chapter Development, Chapter Promotion Programs, and Travel Awards and Events, we can share the load and deliver a better product to our membership.

For those who don't know me, I am a past president of the Society (2013–2014); during that time, I was very active in Chapter development and support. The role of Society president was very challenging, but rewarding, and I very much enjoyed my interactions with the Society members and visiting Chapters around the world. After my time as Nominations chair, our bylaws required a one-year break from Board activities, which has sidelined me until now. In the interim, I quasi-retired from my day job, which should give me the time and band-

width for more intensive volunteer activities going forward.

The CMD standing committee on Travel Awards and Events is an administrative group that manages the many programs established to support Young Professionals, Women in Engineering, and Chapter activities at IAS conferences. It will require a team of members to make the standing committee work, and, I am looking for more volunteers.

The CMD budget is one of the larger expenses for the Society, and as Chapters have grown, so has that expense. One of my goals is to establish metrics to assess the effectiveness of these programs in terms of member satisfaction, retention, and benefit to the Society. The Executive Board, which establishes and monitors the Society's budget, needs these metrics to make spending decisions and wrestle with financial priorities.

Many of today's existing support programs were the brainchild of

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CMD Chair Peter Magyar. In addition to reviewing the effectiveness of our current portfolio of Chapter programs, I would like your input on other ways the CMD can be more effective and provide value to members. The nature of conferences is changing, and it will be a challenge to ensure that ours will continue to be well attended and successful. Soft benefits, like networking opportunities, are often not enough to convince the boss to sign the travel requisition. Support from CMD can often be the difference between attending and not attending an event.

As I worked to transition into my new role and reinsert myself back into the IEEE world, I was struck by how fluid the IEEE is as an organization. It is mostly operated by volunteers, who change out every few years, and opinions and emphasis are constantly shifting. Some of the issues that haunted my presidency remain; however, some have just gone away, as the volunteers

who were promoting them have transitioned out. The life lesson for me is that sometimes the things we wrestle with perhaps do not need to get solved immediately; rather, they may naturally hit their expiration date and go away of their own accord!

In terms of Chapters, particularly Student Branch Chapters, there is a constant churn in membership, and activity levels and effectiveness ebb and flow with the volunteer contingent. CMD needs to provide continuity and always be reinforcing and sharing the lessons learned from successful Chapter programs.

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In addition to my role on the IAS Board and CMD, I have taken on the job of IAS manuscript administrator.

Louie Powell, who has been doing this work since IAS adopted Scholar-One Manuscripts, has given me some excellent training, and I hope, with practice, I can provide the type of support to authors, reviewers, program chairs, and associate editors that he has provided for so many years. Several thousand papers flow through this system each year, feeding our outstanding publications and IEEE *Xplore*.

As I get absorbed in these tasks, future articles will provide more specifics and details on CMD activities.