

## Adapting to COVID-19 Challenges and Moving Forward With GRSS Diversity and Inclusion at IGARSS 2020

**T**he year 2020 has brought a different kind of diversity to us all: a diversity of challenges as we shift our work and lifestyles to cope with the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. More than ever, this global pandemic has brought issues of equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion to the forefront of public view. Large-scale social demonstrations and protests have unfolded across the

United States and other countries in support of policy changes to ensure law enforcement's equitable treatment of all individuals. As learning has moved to a virtual online setting, working families have taken on new roles as educators, all while trying to balance this with their day jobs. Millions of people who work in essential jobs have braved the

risk of infection to continue to earn a paycheck and to provide necessary services.

The IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) has also adapted to overcome the challenges of 2020 while ensuring that our mission and the community we provide for our members remain strong. For the first time, the IEEE International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS) will be fully virtual, a shift made possible by many dedicated GRSS

members. The Inspire, Develop, Empower, Advance (IDEA) Committee has also made the shift. Our conference events, part of the Technology, Industry, and Education track at IGARSS, will also be in a virtual format this year.

We are excited to share that our Women in GRSS forum this year, the "IDEA and WISE-E Inspire and Empower" panel, will be held Friday, 25 September, at 12–1:30 p.m. Eastern time. This event will be co-organized with the Women in Science, Engineering, and the Environment (WISE-E) group, and we will take you on a tour of women scientists and engineers working in the geosciences and remote sensing. We will also be holding a photo contest to encourage members to share their stories and experiences as a diverse group of technical researchers in our discipline, with the winner announced during the event. In lieu of our Women in GRSS luncheon, we will hold a GRSS Diversity and Inclusion Fireside Chat (Wednesday, 21 October, at 12–1:30 p.m. Eastern time). This event will include our annual IDEA Committee activities update and will subsequently kick off a moderated discussion around how our committee can 1) better assess diversity and inclusion within the GRSS and 2) design and launch initiatives that have a high impact on the Society. The panelists will focus on different types of diversity and inclusion initiatives, how to measure their success, and what barriers they address. We hope you are well, and we look forward to engaging with you during our 2020 IGARSS events!

**THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC HAS BROUGHT ISSUES OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION TO THE FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC VIEW.**

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