

IEEE Columbia Section Report

April 3, 2013

IEEE Southeastern Conference 2013 @ Jacksonville, Florida

Since the last SoutheastCon, IEEE Columbia Section celebrated its 40th anniversary and held successful technical sessions on nuclear engineering, arc-flash challenges, renewable energy initiatives, Boeing's solar project, electric power grids; and hosted financial planning (PACE), and a recent presentation by Lee Stogner, covering engineering developments in South Carolina. The Section is active but seeking growth, increased volunteerism and new benefits to members.

- Most fun activity/program your section has had recently?

The January social was this activity, which connected a cross-section of membership and their areas of interests, resulting in new opportunities, e.g. the February hosting of IEEE PES's student scholarship presentation and the March presentation on a current IEEE Spectrum topic by a doctoral student member.

- Most successful activity/program your section has had recently.

Technical meetings continue to be the strength and most attractive activities offered by the IEEE Columbia Section. To add even greater value to these meetings, the Section is

- enhancing its Web presence,
- focusing on a variety of STEM topics and membership levels,
- organizing members' interests using a schedule of activities,
- actively seeking member feedback and input, and
- designing visits to state-of-the-art STEM facilities.

- Member Engagement Activities: What did your Section do related to member engagement beyond meetings (projects, activities, etc.)?

In early February 2013, the Membership Development Chair launched a calling campaign to the 93 higher grade members in arrears. These members were identified and assigned to section volunteers to be contacted by telephone with a personal appeal for their renewal. Each member of the calling campaign was asked to devote 3 to 4 hours per week over two weeks to the campaign. Feedback from the team was that renewal was a difficult sell.

- Section activities focused outward: What activities did your Section do related to engaging members, industry, and the public in advancing, understanding, and properly using technologies of interest to IEEE.
- Barriers: What barriers does your section have in carrying out these activities?
Perhaps the greatest barrier is dependency upon volunteerism to sustain a visible, vibrant Section. Membership engagement is naturally cyclic and interests are expectedly diverse.
- Issues requiring action by the Region 3 ExCom or Committee
An onboarding process is needed for new members and leaders.