

# IEEE R3 Richmond Section Report

August 16, 2020

## Issues requiring action by the Region 3 Committee or ExCom

None at this time.

## Successes/Opportunities for Engaging the member, volunteer, non-member, public

- We hosted a very successful Pandemic Challenge Symposium on August 14<sup>th</sup> at Virginia Commonwealth University. This was the culmination of our Pandemic Project and was funded by grants from Region 3, the Richmond Section, and the local Magnetics Society Chapter. Teams of Problem Solvers (high school and university students along with recent graduates) worked on solving a variety of pandemic-related problems that were identified by Problem Owners in the community. They were aided by Mentors (more experienced professionals). Five of the six teams showcased the solutions that they have been working on. We had a total attendance at the event of 45 people. The breakdown of the 45 attendees was as follows:
  - 40 adults, 5 minors
  - 11 IEEE members, 34 non-members
  - 39 attended live, 6 attended via Zoom
  - 34 volunteered to sign a release form allowing us to use their image to promote future events that would interest students in STEM fields.

We hope to use pictures and video from the event to promote similar (hopefully non-pandemic related) community problem solving challenges in the future.

We are waiting to receive the Zoom recording from VCU so that we can post it for those who were not able to attend in person.

## Notable section activities (positive and negative)

- We are working with the Student Branch Counselors for Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia State University to determine how best to restart those two student branches. Both were severely impacted by the shutdowns due to the pandemic.
- We are still working with the producer of the film on Frank Sprague and his invention of the world's first successful streetcar system in Richmond in the late 1800's. We had planned to have an in-person showing of the film at a local brewery, but we may have to do a virtual-only event due to the rising pandemic numbers.
- The exact plans for both of these events are very tentative at the moment. The projected number of COVID-19 cases in the Richmond metro area is expected to peak in mid-to-late September at about 120% of last year's peak, although the estimates still have a large degree of uncertainty. The 95% confidence intervals range from about half of the projection to about two times the projection.

**Allen Jones**

**Chair, IEEE Richmond Section**