Jacob Z. Schanker, P.E., Newsletter Chair

Rochester Section Meeting – Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at Noon

The next Rochester Section business meeting is on Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 12:00pm, at the **Hibachi Sushi Buffet Restaurant** in South Town Plaza on Jefferson Road (Route 252) just west of West Henrietta Rd. (Route 15). Any IEEE member is invited to attend. Lunch is only $3 for IEEE members. No reservation or RSVP is needed, just show up.

Section Officers for 2014

The results of our November election vote are in, and here they are:

Chair
- **Greg T. Gdowski**   **71.2%**   **Winner**
- John Kerkeras   28.7%

Vice Chair
- **Matthew Sidley**   **66.1%**   **Winner**
- Jim Ziobro   33.8%

Treasurer
- William Fowlkes   45.4%
- **Dennis Thompson**   **54.5%**   **Winner**

Secretary
- **Raymond Ptucha**   **100%**   **Winner**

IEEE MTT and Antennas & Propagation Joint Chapter Meeting

Join us for an end of the year meeting for IEEE MTT/AP Society.

What: MTT/AP IEEE Meeting
When: December 3rd, 2013 at 6-7pm
Where: RIT Kate Gleason Hall - EE Conference Room (09-3319)
Pizza and Refreshments will be provided.

Congratulations to Carol Richardson

ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) named Carol A. Richardson as a 2013 Fellow of ABET at the 2013 ABET Annual Awards Banquet in Baltimore on October 25.

The Fellow of ABET Award is presented annually to recognize individuals who have provided sustained quality service to the ABET-related professions, in general, and to education within the ABET disciplines, in particular, through the activities of ABET.

Carol, a former chair of the IEEE Rochester section and current chair of the Rochester Life Member group, was recognized "for chairing ETAC and for leadership in accreditation activities that have created additional career opportunities for graduates of engineering technology programs and have improved accreditation processes for institutions."

She served as the interim Dean of the College of Applied Science and Technology at the Rochester Institute of Technology for two years and a department chair for ten years before she retired in 2010. Her involvement in ABET dates back to 1994 when she was selected to be an IEEE program evaluator. In 2008 Richardson began serving the executive committee of the Technology Accreditation Commission and went on to hold the positions of Vice-Chair for Operations, Chair-Elect, and then Chair for the 2011-12 accreditation cycle, when the commission was renamed to the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission ETAC.

Richardson played a key role in the commission's name and scope changes. She communicated important information regarding the name change to the ABET community at large and the engineering technology community with the help of her fellow ETAC commissioners.

Carol Richardson

IEEE Rochester Section Scholarship announcement

The Rochester Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) awards two $1500 college scholarships annually to student members of the IEEE who meet the following qualifications:

1. Is an undergraduate student in good standing in an engineering, engineering technology, science or technology curriculum in an ABET accredited program.
2. Has completed two years and/or achieved Junior standing (or equivalent) in the program defined in number 1 above.
3. Has an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 out of 4.0 (or equivalent).
4. Plans to continue engineering, engineering technology, science or technology studies in an undergraduate ABET accredited program in September following presentation of the award.
5. Is a resident of Allegany, Monroe, Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Steuben, Wayne, or Wyoming Counties of New York or is enrolled in a college in one those counties.

Please contact the chair of the IEEE Scholarship committee, Jeanne Christman at jxciee@rit.edu with questions. The scholarship application can be found at www.roceng.org.

Congratulations to our latest Senior members

Elevated to Senior Members at the recent Admission & Advancement meeting held with the cooperation of the Benelux Section on September 14, were two members of the Rochester Section:

Minwoo Park, who is a member of the Signal Processing Society, and
Anthony Vodacek, a member of the Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society.

H-1B Increase on Congress' Agenda

Legislation has passed the U.S. Senate and is pending in the U.S. House of Representatives that would roughly double the size of the H-1B temporary visa program. If an immigration reform bill passes this year, the H-1B increase will almost certainly be part of the bill unless legislators hear from their voters soon.

The bills are part of Congress' on-going efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform. While most media attention has focused on issues like amnesty and boarder security, the legislation would also profoundly change high-skill immigration into the United States.

At the moment, both the House and Senate are supporting legislation that will increase the H-1B visa cap from its current 65,000 visas to around 180,000 visas annually. Along with new and existing exemptions from this cap, the total number of H-1B visas available each year would likely be around 250,000, up from 130,000 now.

The Senate bill (S. 744, which is the big comprehensive immigration bill) also includes a number of useful reforms to the H-1b program. While these don't undo the damage done by a cap increase, they will help. The reforms include:

- Improving the formula for calculating the prevailing wage, so that H-1B wages will be closer, although still less than, American wages
- Requiring most companies to hire American workers before turning to the H-1B
- A ban on most companies using the H-1b to outsource jobs
- Limiting companies to having only 50% of their total U.S. workforce on an H-1B

The House bill (H.R. 2131) includes none of these protections.

Between 2001 and 2012, the United States created, on average, 58,000 new STEM jobs each year. A recent analysis by IEEE Spectrum estimated that there are a total of 277,000 new STEM job vacancies each year, which includes retirees and individuals leaving the STEM workforce.

IEEE-USA opposes any attempt to raise the H-1B visa cap, and supports efforts to protect American and foreign workers from the unintended consequences of this visa program. At the same time, IEEE-USA recognizes that there are many highly skilled and innovative people around the world who were not born in the United States. It is in our country's interest to let some of these people live and work here – but they must be allowed to live and work here as American citizens, not merely temporary workers.

The Senate bill includes a large expansion of the EB green card program, which IEEE-USA supports. The bill would create a new green card for every international student who earns a Masters or PhD in a STEM field in the United States. The House bill includes a more limited, but still very useful, version of this provision.

Problems with the H-1B program have been well documented. The most damming problem with the program is that more than half of the visas last year were used to replace American workers with lower-cost foreign workers. Outsourcing companies received around 55% of the visas. These companies employ tens of thousands of workers in the United States, almost none of whom are Americans.

IEEE-USA encourages everyone who is concerned about expanding the H-1B visa program to send an e-mail to their legislators as soon as possible. This can be done at IEEE-USA's Legislative Action Center (www.ieeeusa.org/policy, look in the upper right.) or at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.