Employee Satisfaction Survey shows overall improvement

by Debra Schiff

It's often said, "In God we trust; all others bring data." And data, lots of it, is used to measure the IEEE's level of success. Five areas comprise the IEEE's Measures of Success: budget performance, and employee, member, volunteer and customer satisfaction. The results of these measurements determine at what level employees will benefit from each years' Success Sharing Program.

While all the Measures of Success are important, employee satisfaction has a special interest for us. Strategic Planning & Institutional Research analyzes employee satisfaction based on data collected in an annual survey. The survey, which is conducted by an outside vendor to guarantee employees' privacy and anonymity, provides a core group of questions that change very little from year to year.

"That's the only true way to be fair...comparing apples to apples and oranges to oranges. Of course, both needs and interests change over time," says Henry Shein, Strategic Planning & Institutional Research. "In order to maintain consistency, we utilize an established mechanism for eliminating questions that are no longer appropriate, and instituting questions that become more relevant over time."

There were many improvements in employee satisfaction comparing 1999 to the previous year. Participation increased by 31 employees in the 1999 Employee Satisfaction Survey — 449 staff members participated, up from 418 in 1998.

We've come a long way, baby! Operations Center turns 25

The Operations Center's humble beginnings: a 36,600 square-foot facility (now "Building One") constructed in a then-cornfield on Hoes Lane in Piscataway
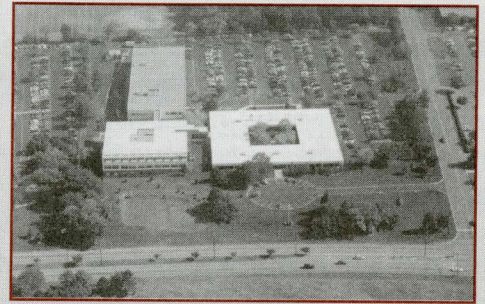
The Operations Center today

This year, the IEEE Operations Center celebrates its 25th anniversary. The building complex has tripled in size over the years, and the staff has increased by over 500 percent — with both increases aimed at providing more and better service to members and customers.

Here's a brief history of the evolution of the Operations Center:

◆ Early 1970s - The IEEE decides to switch its base of support operations from New York to a service center in New Jersey. With the expense of New York real estate, the cost of expanding the headquarters in New York is considered too great.

◆ Board Members agree that the proposed 36,600 square-foot building (now "Building One"), to be erected in a then-cornfield on Hoes Lane in Piscataway, will meet the IEEE's needs into the 1990s, if not to the end of the 20th century.

◆ December 1971 - The IEEE purchases over 14 acres from AT&T at a cost of $75,000 per acre.

◆ Early 1974 - Construction begins.

◆ Summer 1974 - A temporary IEEE Service Center is set up on Hadley Road in Piscataway. There are about 100 employees — some new, and others transferred from the New York Office. Accounting, Coding, Customer Service, Shipping,

Satisfaction survey

For all questions, the highest possible score was 100. The average rating for all the "core" questions — those asked annually to track changes in basic attitudes — increased to 67.1 from 66.4 in 1998. Among the most significant improvements in the core group was a 2.8 increase to 70.9 in employees feeling their supervisors treat their performance evaluation as important. When it came to determining if "the practice of the Enabling Staff Culture by my co-workers has a significant effect on the way they interact with me," employees registered a 3.4 increase to 56.4. The largest increase in the "core" group was in employees feeling that "directions received from supervisors and volunteers rarely conflict" — a 5.5 increase to 56.5.

Two core items decreased, however. Employees feeling that their work gives them a sense of accomplishment dropped 2.2 to 73.8. Also, a 2.7 decrease to 70.3 occurred with employees feeling positive job satisfaction. In both of these, however, the scores remain relatively high.

The survey also includes non-core questions relating to specific issues not asked every year. Human Resources' rating for "keeping personal or sensitive information confidential" went up 4.9 points to 60.9. The biggest increase in the non-core group was satisfaction with the new cafeteria service — a 13.1 increase to 66.1.

Employees also were asked to rate the importance of various job factors. Here are the responses:

JOB FACTOR	CHANGE	1998/1999
Compensation	+ 3.0	75 / 78.0
Job Satisfaction	+ 1.3	76 / 77.3
Nature of My Work	+ 0.8	74 / 74.8
Benefits	− 0.5	73 / 72.5
Open Communication	+ 1.6	69 / 70.6
Job Security	− 1.7	72 / 70.3
Flexible Work Schedule	+ 0.2	65 / 65.2
Career Opportunities	+ 1.3	63 / 64.3
My Performance Evaluation	− 0.3	64 / 63.7
Coworkers	+ 0.1	61 / 61.2
Physical Working Conditions	− 1.1	61 / 59.9
Building Location	—	55 / 55.0

Job factor ratings also were reported in terms of each department's collective response. While Regional Activities chose benefits as most important, Technical Activities chose job security (up 10.7 points from 1998). Most other departments chose compensation or job satisfaction. ◆

Operation Center turns 25

Printing and Mailroom are among the departments moved from New York.

◆ January 1975 - The IEEE Service Center at 445 Hoes Lane opens for business.

◆ October 1979 - The Warehouse, Shipping and Printing Departments are moved from the area now occupied by Sales & Marketing to a one-floor 20,000 square-foot addition.

◆ 1988 - A 62,000 square-foot, three-story "Building Two" is added. Technical Activities and Standards are moved from New York to the Service Center.

◆ 1993 - Two major events continue to transform the Service Center. First, a third expansion extends the "footprint" of the Warehouse by 10,000 square feet and adds a 34,000 square foot second story office complex. More than 100 employees are moved from New York to the Service Center, including Corporate Activities, Corporate Communications and most of Publications.

Second, a Conference Center is created to encourage more volunteer meetings and develop closer staff/volunteer working relationships. The Center, on the lower level of Building Two, has seven meeting rooms that can be partitioned into 12. A warming kitchen and registration area also are created. The registration area is given up later for more meeting space.

◆ 1994 - The name of the Service Center is changed to the Operations Center to better reflect the many and varied services that take place at the facility.

◆ 2000 - Over 600 IEEE staffers work at the Operations Center, and its newest revamping is taking place. Now that many operations are outsourced, a large portion of the Warehouse is being converted to space for the new Data Center.

Data provided by retiree Charlie Stewart and Mary Ann Hoffman, IEEE History Center. ◆

ROVING REPORTER
New Column

by Christy Bouziotis

In honor of the Operations Center's 25th anniversary, *Network News* asked four long-time employees what, in their opinion, have been the most significant changes at the Operations Center in the past 25 years. Here are some of their responses.

Mario Ripatranzone, Member Services (joined the IEEE in January 1966 at the New York Office):

◆ "The move to New Jersey. It was the same year my wife and I bought our first house and gave birth to our first child, who grew up to be an IEEE member.

◆ "The expansion of the New Jersey facility from the once-lonely square building to the three-building complex.

◆ "The non-smoking policy. Now there's no smoking anywhere in the building, but it used to be allowed everywhere. Next, it was only permitted in private offices. I was a smoker, and my office became the morning coffee hang-out for staffers on that floor. I miss those smoke-ins.

◆ "The Success Sharing Policy started in 1999 because it recognizes everyone's work efforts."

Verna Miller, IT (joined the IEEE in May 1974 at the temporary service center on Hadley Road in Piscataway):

◆ "Electronic business applications. You have no idea how exciting this has all been for me, and I am humbled to have played a small part in all of this progress. We've gone from very manual processes, such as keypunching and coding, to having a "Web to Primary" system. We have a very impressive Web presence, and members and customers can purchase IEEE products through the Online Catalog.

◆ "The telephone system with voice mail. There used to be a special ring after regular hours, and anyone in the building could be the operator and pick up the call.

◆ "Secured building access. I remember when the last person out would have to lock the door. Better yet, I remember it being like home — the front doorbell would ring, and someone would have to go answer it.

◆ "The cafeteria. We've gone from Marie's Italian Hot Dog Special to gourmet meals!

◆ "The Holiday Party. Our first one was held across the street at the VFW; now it's held in a swank hotel!"

Ed Donahue, Warehouse (joined the IEEE in August 1975 at the Operations Center):

◆ "The switch to personal computers and the end of typewriters and paper copy.

◆ "Cubicle panels. In the early days, desks were set up one after another in rows, so you always knew who was goofing off.

◆ "Email. A big-time communication hurdle. I'm glad it comes with spell check.

◆ "The 401(k) plan."

Peg Pascale, Controller's Office (joined the IEEE in August 1974 at the temporary service center):

◆ "The online accounting system. I used to joke that it wouldn't happen until I finally retired.

◆ "The Staff Learning Center.

◆ "Community outreach. Year after year, we have shown a dedication to helping others by giving our time and material items through charity donations, shadowing and mentoring programs for local schools, scholarship offerings, blood donations, and more.

◆ "Communication. There is a definite effort to keep people informed of what's going on. Meetings have become much more efficient too. It seems we used to have meetings to determine when to meet again. But we eventually got the hang of having an agenda and following it.

◆ "The electronic expense report form.

◆ "Flextime and telecommuting. I can remember trying to juggle career and family life within set IEEE hours, and it wasn't easy. IEEE has taken a giant step forward in allowing more convenience in work hours. I could have used this flexibility 18 years ago." ◆

Nurturing an e-business mindset: a profile of Matt Loeb

by Christy Bouziotis

" When I tell my friends I'm relocating to New Jersey from southern California, they have only one question: Why?," says Matt Loeb, new staff director, Institute Projects and Research. But for Matt, who considered the snowy view from his temporary office at the Operations Center "an absolute pleasure," it's the challenges of his new position that compel him to move his wife and three children back east. "This job is a great opportunity for me." he says. "It represents all my professional interests."

Born and raised in Nyack, a suburb of New York City, Matt was publisher for the IEEE Computer Society for six years before accepting his new position. He managed the Society's Publications Office in Los Alamitos where he supervised over 70 people and was responsible for 19 periodicals, 155 conference proceedings, and about 20 books each year.

Matt Loeb

Matt's new responsibilities include widespread implementation of e-business across the Institute. To date, e-business efforts are centered on two teams formed in late 1999.

The Data Access Team is organized to advance the IEEE's ability to acquire and maintain information about members and customers. An early goal of the committee is to improve the timeliness and integrity of membership data distributed to volunteers, particularly those involved in regional activities. The second group is the E-Business Team, whose focus is implementing and overseeing e-business practices throughout the Institute.

Matt is also involved with the 2000 staff goals, the 2001 strategic initiative development process and an initiative to identify future business opportunities for the Institute. In addition, Matt directs the staff of Strategic Planning & Institutional Research and sits on the IEEE Management Council.

Think "e-business," retain members

Matt hopes to immediately influence a change of mindset that will encourage IEEE staff to "think e-business." This will encourage the discovery of new opportunities for IEEE to leverage the use of technology in what has become a highly competitive marketplace.

"The IEEE now competes head-to-head with commercial, for-profit corporations, and especially 'dot-coms,'" Matt says. "What the IEEE has traditionally called 'member benefits' are becoming available to engineers for free through Web-based entities like VerticalNet and Ei Engineering Village. There's a siege on the value of IEEE

Matt Loeb

membership. If we are to continue recruiting and further improving our ability to retain members, we need to convince them of the enhanced value in being a member of the Institute."

According to Matt, one way the IEEE can begin to "think e-business" is to alter the traditional thinking of "print first."

"When we acquire a valuable piece of engineering information, we should consider what the best methods are to maximize dissemination of the information," he says. "For example, take the reader who wants to know more about a new technology mentioned in a brief article in *The Institute*. To obtain more information, the reader could be directed to *IEEE Spectrum* Online. Perusing the online content might cause the reader to link to a ten-minute Video-on-Demand briefing from a prominent researcher. Impressed with the briefing, the reader would then click to the Online Catalog where a white paper, purchased using a credit card, could be downloaded for immediate use."

Matt notes this type of thinking is non-traditional — out-of-the-box. "This is the mindset I'd like to nurture here," he says. ◆

To the rescue! First Response Team handles medical crises

by Maureen Curran

A call comes in that an individual at the Operations Center needs medical assistance — and the First Response Team flies into action!

Whether the staff member reports heart attack symptoms, a stapled finger that won't stop bleeding, or the first pangs of labor, the well-trained First Response Team can help. The team will respond for anyone in the Operations Center who needs immediate assistance. Once, they helped a delivery person with a diabetic emergency.

First Response Team members participating in a monthly emergency drill.

Ed Donahue, Warehouse, was putting a cart beneath a shelf when his right pinky was pinched between two pieces of metal. "There was a lot of blood, so first I went to the men's room to wash it off," he says. "When I realized that my finger was cut to the bone, I knew I needed help." Team members Melinda Stortz, John Hunt, Joe Blair and John Gulics responded to Ed's emergency. "They calmed me down and gave me a ride to Medemerge where my finger was stitched," he says.

Heading back from lunch one day, Olyne O'Reggio, Regional Activities, tripped and fell. "My left shoulder hit the ground and I was in such pain that the First Response Team decided not to move me," he explains. "They were very helpful, very efficient and caring. In less than five minutes the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) arrived and took me to St. Peter's Hospital in New Brunswick to treat my fractured shoulder."

"The Team's purpose is to provide immediate care, which is especially important in the event of uncontrolled bleeding or cardiac arrest," says team leader John Gulics, Facilities. "The safety of IEEE employees is our number-one priority."

Background

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) does not require the IEEE to have a trained first-aid team. But with over 600 people working at the Operations Center, the team serves an important function.

Once a month, the team runs drills, practices emergency techniques, and learns about building and fire safety. All First Responders are certified by the National Safety Council in CPR, first aid and oxygen administration. The entire team recently completed an OSHA-required course on communicable bloodborne pathogens such as Hepatitis B.

Well-equipped

Having the right equipment can be vital in treating some medical emergencies. The IEEE has a collapsible wheelchair, a backboard and neck collar for spinal injuries, and plenty of oxygen tanks. The team has all the necessary first-aid equipment, such as bandages, first-aid cream, a CPR face mask, blankets and burn spray.

"With the necessary equipment, we can have the injured person 'packaged' and ready to go when the ambulance arrives," says team member Melinda Stortz, Information Technology. Melinda is a trained EMT who serves on the volunteer rescue squad in Clinton, N.J.

If you need assistance from the First Response Team, just dial extension 5555.

For more information, contact John Gulics at j.gulics@ieee.org. ◆

Members of the Operations Center First Response Team:

Joe Blair, Shipping
Nancy Blair, Publications
Steve Cherry, Publications
John Gulics, Facilities
Joe Hale, Information Technology (IT)
Rob Jobmann, IT
Gigi Kenna, Technical Activities
Kristen Merrick, Financial Services
Terri Simonetti, Controller's Office
Jo-Ellen Snyder, Signal Processing Society
Rich Schwartz, Jr., IT
Melinda Stortz, IT

Reserve members:

Athelda Harden, Corporate Activities
Janice Porter, Human Resources

Getting the most from external training seminars

by Greg Garcia

Almost any career is an ongoing learning experience. At the IEEE, a great deal of that learning takes place in courses offered by the IEEE Staff Learning Center. However, the learning also can be done outside the IEEE.

Debbie Custer

"The Learning Center courses are great," says Debbie Custer, Sales & Marketing. "But I chose an external seminar because I needed a course that was very specific to my job responsibilities."

Debbie took the Basic Institute marketing course given by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) in September 1999. The course, held at the DMA center in New York, focused on the basics of direct marketing, including new insights, research and techniques. Although Debbie majored in marketing in college, she believes it's important to take ongoing courses to stay current.

"It's imperative that I learn new marketing techniques and stay abreast of new customer and market trends," she says.

For her, one of the best aspects of the experience was receiving contact information for all 40 students in the class. "Now I can network and keep in touch with other professionals in my field," she says.

Jo Ellen Snyder

Staffers like Jo Ellen Snyder, IEEE Signal Processing Society, are especially pleased when they are able to use their real work situations for class discussions and projects as well as receive feedback from other professionals. In September and October 1999, Jo Ellen attended MBA PowerPak™, an eight-day mini-MBA course presented by Global Resources. The course covers traditional MBA topics such as business planning, marketing principles, financial analysis and managerial effectiveness.

In many cases, the challenge of external training is to balance work and class schedules. Jo Ellen used vacation time so she could devote her full attention to the 18-month course that was squeezed into two four-day segments.

For some people, scheduling conflicts have become less of a problem thanks to the Internet and training courses offered online. Sonny Barber, Corporate Communications, recently completed an online course through the New Jersey Institute of Technology to become certified in Web-page authoring and site development and management. All the work for this three-part, 15-week course was done over the Internet, giving Sonny a flexible schedule to complete the work.

Sonny Barber

"I was able to take the course without stepping into a classroom," he says. "I learned the material on my own schedule, whether it was at night or on the weekend." ◆

In an IEEE minute

by Christy Bouziotis

Every IEEE employee performs a variety of tasks each day — from interacting with members and planning projects, to filing and going through email.

Network News recently caught 35 employees at a given moment in time to provide a snapshot of **just one minute** at the IEEE. **At 9:31 a.m. Eastern on Thursday, 27 January 2000 . . .**

◆ Timothy Sotomayor, Human Resources, was updating the HR Website, modifying information on the Staff Learning Center schedule and other pages.

◆ Peter Curtis, Technical Activities, had just returned from getting coffee and was reconciling financials for the IEEE 1999 Industrial Electronics Society Conference (IECON).

◆ Mary-Louise Piner, IEEE Computer Society, was getting ready for work. It was 6:31 a.m. in California.

◆ April Tesoriero, Payroll, was writing an employee's vacation and sick-day carry-overs and accruals in the 2000 vacation books.

◆ Anthony Edwards, IEEE Communications Society, was putting the final touches on the EuroComm 2000 Advance Program to be held this May in Munich, Germany.

◆ Kevin Mackemull, IT, was looking into a configuration problem with an email alias.

◆ Sharon Richardson, IEEE-USA, was getting water to take her medicine and a cup of herbal tea to warm her frozen toes.

◆ Mike Capaccio, Sales & Marketing, was organizing a meeting to review the copy for the next *IEEE Publications Bulletin*.
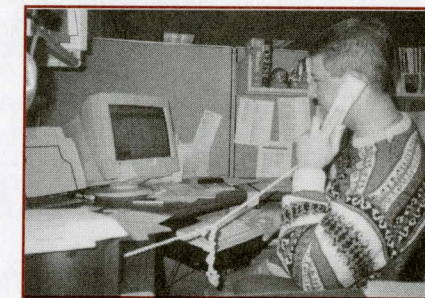
Mike Cappacio

◆ Cindy Poko, Corporate Activities, was drafting a report for the Constitutional Amendment Ad Hoc Committee.

◆ Jacques Kevers, Regional Activities - European Operations Center, was in a meeting with the organizers of the international conference, "Electralis 2001 - Electrical Year," to be sponsored by Region 8 in March 2001. It was 3:31 p.m. in Brussels.

◆ Matthew Plotner, Member Services, was rebooting his computer.

◆ Mirelle White, Financial Services, was discussing with her coworkers how to respond to a member inquiry.

◆ Debbie Tomaro, *IEEE Spectrum*, was generating the advertising sales report for the March 2000 issue of *IEEE Spectrum*.

◆ Tony VenGraitis, IEEE Press, was opening a Federal Express package containing the artwork for an upcoming book on microprocessor circuits.
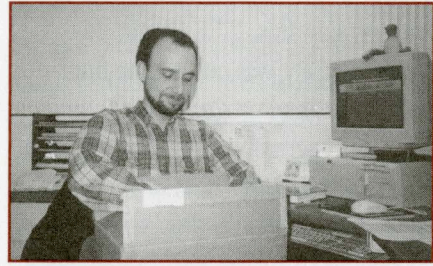
Tony VenGraitis

- Magdalene Johnson, IEEE Computer Society, was finishing journal entries and eating a banana.
- Bryan King, Financial Services, was preparing the daily cashflow statement.
- Elaine Webb, Member Services, was speaking with a member who was checking the status of his membership.
- Jitendra Patel, IT, was helping a coworker schedule a meeting in Lotus Notes.
- Joe Kelly, List Management, was on the phone, listening to his wife tell him she quit her job. After he recovered, she told him she was kidding.
- Lauren Lawson, Educational Activities, was preparing the EAB agenda books for the Board series.
- Shanon Nason, IEEE Power Engineering Society, was sorting through email that had accumulated while she was home with the flu.
- Ronni Rubenstein, Standards, was heading back from the cafeteria with a cup of hot chocolate.

Ronni Rubenstein

- Diana Pladdys, Regional Activities, was getting limo service request forms from Travel Services.
- Sara Naimpally, IT, was calling her daughter's nursery after realizing she forgot to fill out her daughter's lunch card.
- Blanche McGurr, Sales & Marketing, was attending the weekly Creative Services production meeting.
- John Pape, IEEE Communications Society, was on the phone with a vendor confirm-

ing the specifications for the annual Communications Society Volunteer Directory.
- Elaine Pitcher, Human Resources, was processing benefit paperwork for new employees.
- Sally Cahur, *IEEE Spectrum*, was editing the "Newslog" items for *IEEE Spectrum's* Web page.
- Patty Columbus, IT, was getting a co-worker set up to access the Helpdesk Call Management database.
- Mary Ann Erazo, Member Services, was having a visitor sign the guest register.
- Luz Molina, Shipping, was putting labels on envelopes for a special project.

Luz Molina

- TerryAnne Gagliano, Customer Service, was enjoying a breath of fresh air and sunshine on her morning break.
- Tara O'Brien, Publications, was reviewing the site prototype for the newly-redesigned *IEEE Spectrum* Online.
- Debbie Mai, Purchasing, was converting requisitions to purchase orders.
- Laura Riello, IEEE Electron Devices Society, was updating the EDS Membership Directory.

So, there you have it! **Just one minute** at the IEEE. ◆

IEEE's Virtual Museum will bring history to life

by Greg Kohn

The power and promise of the World Wide Web and the global reputation and resources of the IEEE have combined to form what stands to be one of the most robust information resources about the history of electrical and computing technologies.

In November 1999, the IEEE Foundation awarded the IEEE History Center a two-year, $230,000 grant to construct the IEEE Virtual Museum. The Web-based portal, scheduled to open in late 2001, is part of the IEEE's overall plan to promote technological literacy on a global level.

"We're still very much in the planning stages of the project," says Michael Geselowitz, director of the History Center. "Now that we have the funding in place, our next steps are to bring in a curator for the Virtual Museum and find a vendor to help design and develop the site."

Mike, who will manage the project until the new curator is recruited, says the IEEE Foundation funding is only applicable toward the development of the Virtual Museum.

"After the Virtual Museum officially opens, it will become an ongoing IEEE program housed within the IEEE History Center," Mike says. "That means we will need to develop self-funding mechanisms to operate the museum beyond 2001." Mike explains that funding will likely come from a combination of IEEE operating funds and external grants.

To develop a plan for the Virtual Museum, which was first proposed by 1999 IEEE President Kenneth Laker, the IEEE History Center and the IEEE Foundation co-sponsored the IEEE Virtual Museum Workshop in June 1999. The meeting, whose attendees included IEEE staff and volunteers and virtual museum experts from around the globe, determined that the focus of the museum should be on the people who created technology rather than technology itself.

The Virtual Museum is expected to include artifacts such as oral biographies, milestone information, historical bibliographies and exhibit texts. The content, most of which will be aimed at non-technical researchers, will be culled from the IEEE History Center's existing archival database, various IEEE products and services, and pertinent outside sources.

For more information on the Virtual Museum, contact Mike at m.geselowitz@ieee.org. ◆

Welcome to the "cool" new ad campaign

by Evelyn Hargrove

What better way to promote IEEE membership than to feature real members? That's the concept behind the IEEE's first membership advertising campaign, which ran from November 1999 through January with ads in *EE Times*, *Portable Design*, *Today's Engineer*, *EDN* and *IEEE Spectrum*. The campaign also included ads on U.S. National Public Radio in three markets with high concentrations of IEEE members and potential members: New York City, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco.

"The goals of the ad campaign were to enhance the image of IEEE members as innovators and to improve membership retention and recruitment efforts by presenting IEEE membership in a fresh, new light," explains Carol Coffey, Sales & Marketing.

To accomplish this, the campaign team wanted ads that were non-traditional in design and content. New York City photographer David Corio was chosen for the job. His signature collage-style photos have appeared in *The New York Times Magazine* and leading music industry publications.

Each ad in the campaign takes an up-close look at an IEEE member involved in a life-changing technology. "We wanted to expose the advances made by engineers and IEEE members because, too often, their contributions go unnoticed and underappreciated," says Natalie Thigpen, Sales & Marketing.

Models were selected by surveying volunteers, members and staff. The team also used the IEEE Awards database and a number of technical and news publications to help them select the right individuals to fit the "innovator" profile. Evangelia Micheli-Tzanakou, IEEE Fellow and chair of Rutgers University's Biomedical Engineering Department, was chosen for her contributions to biomedical engineering. She established the first computer-to-brain link now used in the surgical treatment of Parkinson's Disease.

When asked why she was interested in being part of the campaign, Micheli-Tzanakou quickly replied, "As I often tell my students, it's not only what the IEEE can do for its members, but what the members can do for the IEEE."

The other models in the campaign were Fellow Ya-Qin Zhang, Beijing, China, and Senior Member Ronald Sega, Colorado Springs, Colo.

To see the ads, go to http://www.ieee.org/innovators/. ◆

PROJECT PROFILE

Planning for Sections Congress

by Laura Durrett

What do you do when you finish a four-year project?

Start the next one, of course!

Although memories of the October 1999 Sections Congress are still fresh, Regional Activities staffers are well underway in planning SC 2002, to take place 18-21 October in Washington, D.C. And preliminary plans for SC 2005 are in the works as well.

The triennial Sections Congress (SC) is a gathering of Section leaders from the ten IEEE Regions. It provides the IEEE grassroots leadership a priceless opportunity to affect the future of the IEEE through meetings, networking and recommendations. At SC 99, the delegates recommended 40 action items that will help guide IEEE programs and services well into the 21st century.

While only a four-day event, every Sections Congress takes four years to organize. The first year is devoted to selecting a location, and three years are needed for planning and logistics.

Many IEEE employees and volunteers support the planning and implementation of

Sections Congress. This includes the dedicated and, at times, exhausted Regional Activities staff, and some 20 volunteers who make up the Sections Congress Program and Organizing Committee under the watchful eye of the Regional Activities Board.

The SC team's duties include choosing a theme, developing the program, selecting speakers, creating and distributing materials, and coordinating registration. The team's goal is to make the event a huge success while ensuring credit is given to everyone involved. After the meeting, the team must write and distribute a report.

The SC'99 staff team was led by Cecelia Jankowski, Tracy Hawkins and Cathy Downer.

You must have been a beautiful baby!

Who did this cuddly tot grow up to be? (Clue: This New York employee may grow up to be a mail list queen.)

Email your answer to Christy Bouziotis (c.bouziotis@ieee.org), and win a prize if you're the first to guess correctly. Prior contest winners are ineligible. The employee's identity and the winner will be announced in the next *Network News*.

The baby in the fourth-quarter 1999 issue was Chris Currie, IEEE-USA. The first person to identify him was Belinda Burden, IEEE-USA. ◆

Project profile

Fifteen Regional Activities staffers attended the meeting. On site in Minneapolis, they kept the meeting running smoothly, staying connected with two-way radios. A fully-equipped computer room allowed staffers and delegates to access email and the Web.

SC'99 was attended by 582 delegates and 82 partners, with representation from 73 countries and 263 of the 297 Sections. A highlight for many was the exhibit area, which gave the various IEEE departments the opportunity to showcase their products and services. According to feedback, SC '99 was a huge success, thanks to incredible teamwork and partnering. Unfortunately, Regional Activities staffers couldn't bask in the success of SC'99 for too long. They have the next meeting to plan! ◆

BENEFITS AT WORK

Homeowners and rental insurance

by Kathy Kowalenko

Fire caused by an unattended burning candle. Flooding from a torrential downpour. An apartment burglary during a business trip. These events can cause sleepless nights for homeowners or apartment dwellers without insurance. For anyone who owns a house or condominium, or rents an apartment, having homeowner's insurance is just as important as having car or medical insurance.

IEEE Financial Advantage can help make homeowner's insurance in the U.S. more affordable for employees through the Travelers Group Exchange.

"The process to get insurance is simple and easy," says Brian Anderson, IEEE Financial Advantage. "People don't think about a loss until it happens, and then it's too late."

The homeowner's policy provides coverage for houses and their contents. The renter's coverage insures furnishings and other possessions. Travelers also offers flood insurance, which is typically excluded from most policies. Through the Travelers' Personal Liability Insurance, employees can purchase supplemental coverage ranging from $1 million to $5 million. Valuable items such as jewelry, furs, fine arts and home office equipment can be insured. Discounts also are available for homes that have smoke detectors or alarm systems.

Free quotes

Travelers Group Exchange provides free quotes online or by telephone. Quotes are kept on file for 60 days.

To get an online quote, go to the IEEE Financial Advantage page, click on group insurance, and select "auto/homeowners program." From that page, link to the detailed insurance plans to get a quote on homeowners, renters, condo or flood

insurance. Or go directly to http://www.ieee.org/services/financial/fap/programs/insurance/auto.html.

For a quote by phone, call +1 800 842 0629.

For either option, be prepared to answer questions about the type of building material used in your home (such as wood or brick), the ground floor's square footage, and the number of miles to the nearest fire station. If you have an existing policy, have it available for comparison.

Payment options and hotline

Payments are spread evenly over the policy's term, and premiums can be paid through automatic deductions from your checking or savings account. There are no service fees or down-payments with this option. Premiums also can be billed.

A claim reporting hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to report losses. A customer service hotline also is open 24 hours a day to make policy changes or answer questions. ◆

Write in & win!

New Column

The answers to the following questions appear in this issue of *Network News*. Answer them correctly, and you could win a special prize!

1. Which two teams have been formed to focus on the IEEE's e-business efforts?

2. Name one type of artifact expected to be housed in the IEEE's Virtual Museum.

3. In selecting members for the ad campaign, what type of person were we looking for? (Hint: one-word answer)

Email your answers to Christy Bouziotis at c.bouziotis@ieee.org by 28 April. Correct entries will be placed in a drawing, and the first 10 selected will be winners. Good luck!