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IEEE WOMEN-IN-ENGINEERING

Issue No. 2

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The IEEE Steering Committee on Women in Engineering publishes this electronic newsletter to focus on the activities of women in our profession. Those wishing to contribute articles should send via e-mail to: [women@ieee.org](mailto:women@ieee.org)

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[02.01] WHAT ARE WE DOING TO CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT?

"...The number one factor in my career choice was an interview that my father set up for me with a fairly talented female scientific programmer..."

"...My guess is that students don't want more reading materials...But they might like meetings where they could get to know people working in the field..."

"...I feel extremely uncomfortable at meetings where I am usually the only woman. This is very disturbing to me as I am now 36 years old and the situation hasn't changed since I was 22!..."

Sound familiar? Comments like these, relating to role models, attracting young women into the profession, getting women involved in activities in a comfortable social/professional environment were recurring themes in the responses received to our original request for input.

In this issue we'll take a look at what some of IEEE's technical societies and local sections are doing.

The IEEE CHICAGO SECTION has a multi-point program in place, including recognizing women in engineering as one of two special interest groups (the other being Life Members); setting up an [ieee.org](http://ieee.org) e-mail alias for internal and external communication; supporting and encouraging the establishment of a corporate technical women's network; establishing contact with other entities in the Region to identify groups with common interests; identifying schools in the area with IEEE recognition and offering to help develop student branches with particular emphasis on attracting women into the profession.

COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETY editors, among others, are making a concerted effort to see that women are well represented on their editorial boards.

Three women on the ENGINEERING IN MEDICINE AND BIOLOGY SOCIETY (EMBS) AdCom placed a notice in the society magazine announcing their willingness to correspond via e-mail with junior colleagues.

EMBS set up a subcommittee to come up with proposals to increase participation of women in society activities.

EMBS, ULTRASONICS, FERROELECTRICS AND FREQUENCY CONTROL (UFFC) SOCIETY and SIGNAL PROCESSING (SP) SOCIETY have all sponsored women's events (luncheons, dinners, sessions) at their conferences.

The SP Society is working on a directory of women to facilitate networking.

Is there a better way to demonstrate how far women can go than by holding leadership positions? In 1993 the LASERS AND ELECTRO-OPTICS SOCIETY (LEOS) not only had a woman president, but 25% of the elected Board of Governors were women. In the same year one third of the SP Society's elected AdCom members were women. Six of the COMPUTER SOCIETY's 21 elected Board of Governors members were women; 10 of 21 editors of "Computer" magazine were women; 3 of 36 editors of "Trans. on Computers" were women; 2 of "Software" magazine's 22 editors were women, and 5 of 28 members of "Software's" Industrial Advisory Board were women.

The COMPUTER SOCIETY has long been concerned with assuring diversity of membership on its boards and committees, including actively encouraging the participation of women. As a result, the society has taken a variety of proactive steps to assure that diversity in recent years, including:

- amending its nominations committee policies to require that the committee strive to develop slates of candidates that represent the diversity of the society;
- creating an award, the Grace M. Hopper Award, specifically for women who have made significant contributions to the concepts and developments in the computer or information processing fields which have clearly advanced the status of others in the information technology profession. An important intent of the award is to make visible the exemplary role of women in this field.
- initiating a double-blind experimental review process for articles submitted to COMPUTER magazine, to determine if there is bias based on gender in the review process, and if so to remove it from the process;
- encouraging and developing numerous women leaders in the society;

Readers wishing to receive additional information or with comments on any of these activities should send an e-mail message to [women@ieee.org](mailto:women@ieee.org). Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate party.

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