

PES Membership Sets New Records and Expands Opportunities

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As we march closer to the 2010 PES T&D Conference and Exposition in April, where record numbers of attendees and exhibitors are expected to be present, it is a good time to reflect on the status of our membership and the excellent opportunities that we have to continue to grow as a society and to advance the value of membership for all PES constituents.

PES Sets New Records for Membership Levels:

In 2009, PES set new records for membership around the world, and this trend has continued into 2010. PES membership today is now at an all time high of 25,200! This represents an increase of nearly 7% from the beginning of 2009, and continues a membership growth trajectory for PES that began in 2006. Since then, PES membership has increased from 21,500 to the current membership level of 25,200 – this is an increase of more than 17% over that four year period and represents over 3,700 new members. At the current level, PES is the third largest of the 38 IEEE Societies, and we continue to grow every month!

Certainly there are a number of reasons for this increase in PES membership, and I believe that many of them represent the dynamic and exciting environment of the power and energy industries today. It is also a reflection of the hard work that so many of our society leaders, volunteers, local chapters, event coordinators, and many others have put into making PES membership a tremendous value. Some of the activities that have helped to advance membership in recent years and that we continue to work on today include:

- The new PES web-site, which was launched in 2009 and has made information on everything from meetings and conferences to publications and education more accessible and easier to find.
- The free student membership program, which was introduced in 2007 and re-established in 2009, to help make the transition as an IEEE and PES member easier for our future members, and to introduce the society to more individuals at an earlier stage in their careers.
- Membership related activities at the PES conferences and meetings, such as the Student-Faculty-Industry luncheons, Women in Engineering (WIE) and Graduates Of the Last Decade (GOLD) receptions, and other related events to enhance networking opportunities and to provide forums for more of our members to connect in a social environment.
- Local chapter membership contests and other activities, which have been a tremendous avenue for increasing membership worldwide and which provide more options, both

professional and personal, for all members to become more active in the society and for new members to learn about PES volunteer opportunities.

- The presence of PES membership exhibits and materials at all of our meetings and conferences, to help with recruitment and retention activities.
- Support at more of the PES international meeting and event venues, including activities to support the development and growth of local chapters around the world.
- Recent initiatives related to the power and energy engineering workforce collaborative, including a new initiative that is currently aimed at establishing IEEE PES scholarship programs for power engineering students.

These are just a few of the highlight activities of the PES Membership and Image committee over the past few years, and we continue to work on more programs that will help to enhance the PES membership experience and to attract new members from all parts of the globe during this dynamic period of positive change in the power and energy sector.

An Exciting Time to be Part of the Power and Energy Engineering Community:

Indeed, it is an exciting time worldwide to be a part of the power and energy engineering community. Considering that energy resources and electric power generation, delivery, and utilization are defining global issues of the 21st century and play a critical role in our society on many levels, it is imperative that PES members continue to bring innovation, advancement, and leadership to all aspects of the power and energy sector. The industries, utilities, educational institutes, and other entities that comprise the entire electric power and energy sector are a vital aspect of advancing our world's economic growth and productivity. The power and energy sector also provides opportunity for promotion of business development and expansion, and offers solid employment opportunities to workers everywhere. We are involved in a robust industry sector that contributes more than any other to the progress and prosperity of society. As one example, power and energy are a critical aspect of America's economic recovery plan, as evident by the emphasis on energy-related infrastructure and technology investments being made through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The need for modernizing and updating our vast electric power system and developing new and sustainable forms of energy resources has never been greater. However, over the past several decades, we have under-invested in technology, infrastructure, research and development, and education in these important areas. The result is a tremendous need not only for technology and infrastructure advancement, but also in the area of workforce development. With nearly 50% of our entire power and energy sector workforce eligible for retirement within the next 5 to 10 years, the 'next generation' of power and energy professionals is urgently needed to meet the immense challenges ahead. Our role in PES is to not only help identify these impending challenges, but to nurture and develop the future leaders of tomorrow through the services that we provide as a leading technical society.

When you consider all that is taking place around us, there has actually never been a more exciting time to be a part of the power and energy sector. Abundant opportunities exist to help

redefine our society's future and to be at the forefront of the new 'energy economy' that is taking place, along with the revolution towards a comprehensive 'clean-energy smart grid' approach. This presents exciting opportunities for PES members everywhere, and is also an opportunity to engage other industry participants that have not traditionally been active in the power sector. The challenges ahead are unprecedented and provide many avenues for advancement including the development of new smart grid, power electronics, and energy storage technologies; the growth and integration of renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, and biomass; the advancement of the nuclear renaissance and clean-coal technologies; the infrastructure expansion and reliability of the electric transmission and distribution grid; the role of government policy and market drivers; and the impact of energy efficiency, plug-in electric vehicles, global warming, and carbon constraints; to name just a few! How we meet these challenges in the decades ahead will have imperative global, societal, environmental, and economic implications, and will set the course for the sustainability of future generations. Many PES initiatives today are centered around these issues, opportunities, and advancements, including activities such as the new Innovative Smart Grid Technologies conference held this past January and the "Smart Grid Day" that will take place at the T&D Conference and Exposition in April. As PES plays an ever-increasing leadership role in all of these and other emerging technical areas, it offers new ways to engage more members from a diverse set of backgrounds and perspectives.

The Diversity of PES Members is a Strong Component of the Society:

PES members include a wide range of representation from industry, manufacturing, academia, and government having technical interests in the electric power and energy industry. We work hard towards our mission each and every day: "to be the leading provider of scientific and engineering information on electric power and energy for the betterment of society, and the preferred professional development source for our members." In fact, the society provides the world's largest forum for sharing the latest in technological developments in the electric power and energy industries, for developing standards that guide the development and construction of equipment and systems, and for educating members of the industry and the general public. Members of PES are leaders in this field, and they – and their employers – derive substantial benefits from involvement with our unique and outstanding association.

PES is a community full of people who have similar interests and goals, and who share a common passion for all things power and energy related. Thus, one of the goals of the PES Membership & Image committee is that everyone's involvement in PES provides an opportunity to network and to develop personal and professional relationships with fellow members, and to establish life-long friendships with colleagues around the world. The more diversity that our membership represents, the more views and opinions we can bring forward for the betterment of the society as a whole, and the more we all grow as individuals and collectively as a community. It's not just the diversity of our organizational and institutional representations, but even more importantly that of our individual backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. The more influences and perspectives that we can bring to PES committees, working groups, initiatives and other forums, the better we can serve each other and our communities. PES provides the opportunity to foster and embrace this diversity, and to help enhance the experience for all members.

Become Involved as a Volunteer:

Finally, as our society continues to grow during these exciting and dynamic times, we sincerely hope that everyone will take full advantage of their PES membership and get involved with our active society of volunteers. PES volunteers are the principal driving force behind so much of what our society can accomplish. PES provides many opportunities for members to network with the best in the field and to become involved in various activities. I believe you will all find your role as a PES volunteer to be rewarding and beneficial. We are always looking for more ways to increase our society's volunteer participation and to continually improve. Your input and contributions are very valuable to the entire PES organization. I hope to see you in April at the T&D Show in New Orleans, where you can visit the PES Membership exhibit and offer your ideas and suggestions.