

New IEEE Award Honors Distribution Automation Engineer

By: Susan Frentz

The IEEE Foundation in cooperation with the IEEE Power & Energy Society (PES) recently created the Douglas M. Staszkesky Distribution Automation Award. This new award will initially be funded by the S&C Electric Company, where Staszkesky worked from 1989 until his untimely death in February 2008.

The purpose of the Douglas M. Staszkesky Distribution Automation Award is to recognize those in the industry who have significantly contributed to making the automation of distribution systems a practical reality. While terminally ill with cancer, Staszkesky learned about the creation of the award and said “It truly is the legacy I would have hoped to leave the industry.” He went on to add, “This has been one of my passions, trying to get folks to realize that they need to use current and future technologies - and push suppliers to develop and deliver those technologies to help utilities do their job better and easier than they could even hope to in years past.”

Staszkesky was passionate about his work, and a good friend to many in the business. Rick Bush, editor-in-chief of T&D World, described him as a “relationship guy.” Just prior to his death Staszkesky said to Bush,, “My friends really do care about me. My fraternity brothers from Georgia Tech are coming up to visit me. I’m amazed by how many people call me and keep up with me and express their love and concern. I know I’ve touched lives just as my friends have touched my life.”

A group of Staszkesky’s mentors will present the first Douglas M. Staszkesky Distribution Automation Award during the 2009 IEEE PES Awards Banquet in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Only in the years when a suitable recipient(s) can be identified will the Award be presented. Award nominees must show through testimony of those in the industry that they have created practical solutions that produce real improvements in terms of system reliability and availability to the benefit of an electric utility and its customers. The award includes a US\$2,000 scholarship donated in the recipient’s name to an engineering school of his/her choice, a plaque, and a travel stipend to attend the presentation ceremony.

Initial funding for the award of US\$70,000 was provided by the S&C Electric Company. Those who wish to help ensure the longevity of this new award and honor the memory of Douglas M. Staszkesky may make contributions to the fund held by the IEEE Foundation that will support the presentation of the award. Send gifts by check payable to the IEEE Foundation – Staszkesky Fund care of the IEEE Development Office, 445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ, 08854, USA or by visiting the IEEE Foundation website at www.ieeefoundation.org and clicking on the “Donate Online” Tab and selecting the Staszkesky Fund.