IEEE Student Activities Committee Report April 2009

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1. General

1.1 Officers

- Chair: Eva Lang eva.lang@ieee.org
- Past Chair: Martin Bastiaans m.j.bastiaans@ieee.org
- Student Representative: Pablo Herrero pablo.herrero@ieee.org
- Awards & Contests: Yasemin Baser yasemin@ieee.org
- Student Branches: Amélie Anglade amelie.anglade@ieee.org
- Counsellor Programme: Saurabh Sinha ssinha@ieee.org

1.2 Goals and Objectives

- Create more student membership benefits at all IEEE levels
- Develop student activities (including contests, awards and promotion programs)
- Foster Student Members’ awareness of IEEE activities and existing benefits
- Support students’ initiatives and inform other IEEE organizational units about them
- Represent student interests and voice student concerns
- Help with the formation of new Student Branches, Chapters, and Affinity Groups
- Help with communication between existing Branches, Chapters, and Affinity Groups
- Increase student membership and develop retention strategies
- Bring more fun to IEEE!

1.3 Membership

March 29, 2009: 16500 Student and Graduate Student Members (7555 StM, 8945 GSM) in 303 Student Branches
(January 2009: 18 719 (9899 StM, 8820 GSM))
(February 2008: 19 685 (10 846 StM, 8 839 GSM) in 288 Branches)

1.4 New Student Branches and Student Branch Affinity Groups

- Mamoun Private University of Science & Technology, Syria Section
- Michigan State University – Dubai, United Arab Emirates Section
- Université des Sciences et Tec en Lille, France Section
- Politecnico di Bari, Italy Section
- Jerusalem College of Engineering, Israel Section
- Arab Academy for Science – Cairo, Egypt Section
- Manipal University – Dubai, United Arab Emirates Section
- Women in Engineering Student Branch Affinity Group at IEEE Princess Sumaya University for Technology Student Branch, Jordan Section
- Women in Engineering Student Branch Affinity Group at Polytechnic of Namibia
2. Awards and Contests

2.1 General Awards for Active IEEE Student Members

2.1.1 IEEE Student Enterprise Award
The IEEE Student Enterprise Award, with funding from corporate partners and individuals, was created by the IEEE to support Student Branch projects. Beginning 2006, a generous donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, is providing $9,000 annually to fund the award for the next five years. Up to $1,500 in funding is available for project proposals developed by teams of IEEE Student Members from Student Branches established at over 1,400 universities and colleges around the world.

Deadline for the 2009 award: 15 November 2009. No nominations have been received for the 2009 award yet. Cairo University IEEE Student Branch has received the 2008 award with 75% funding.

2.1.2 IEEE MGA Larry K. Wilson Regional Student Activities Award
The purpose of this award is to recognize annually, in each Region of the IEEE, the student most responsible for an extraordinary accomplishment associated with IEEE student activities. The value of a pattern of dedicated, ongoing service to a branch is certainly recognized. This award is designed to reward a particular event or product of IEEE activities.

Deadline for the 2009 award: 19 April 2009. So far one nomination has been received for Zhijia Huang from the UKRI Section.

2.1.3 IEEE President’s Change the World Competition
The award recognizes students who develop unique solutions to real-world problems using engineering, science, computing and leadership skills to benefit their community or humanity.

Deadline: 28 February 2009. Nominations are sent directly to the IEEE Headquarters. No official feedback was received about nominations within Region 8.

2.2 Student Branch Awards

2.2.1 IEEE Regional Exemplary Student Branch Award
The purpose of this award is to recognize annually the exemplary IEEE Student Branch operations in each region without any numerical limit. To qualify for the award, a branch must conform to IEEE Bylaws, have an active program and support IEEE goals.

Deadline for the 2009 award was 31 January 2009. Three nominations have been received from the student branches in Bilkent University (Turkey), Middle East Technical University (Turkey) and Queen Mary University of London (UKRI).

One of these branches will be nominated for the global IEEE Outstanding Student Branch Award in the next online SAC meeting. However 2006, 2007 and 2008 nominations for Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Benelux, and Aalborg University, Denmark, and Middle East Technical University, Turkey have still not been announced.

2.2.2 Outstanding Branch Counselor and Advisor Recognition Programme
Aware of the unusual and dedicated efforts of Student Branch Counselors and Branch Chapter Advisors, the Regional and Technical Activities Boards sponsor a cash award to each of approximately ten outstanding Counselors and Advisors throughout the world. Winners will be those individuals who,
through their work as Counselors and Advisors, exemplify the Institute's commitment to the educational, personal, professional, and technical development of students in IEEE related fields of interest.

Deadline for the 2009 award was 28 February 2009. One nomination was received from IEEE Student Branch Graz, Austria.

2.2.3 IEEE Darrel Chong Student Activity Award
This award serves to change the mindset of our student groups from being number-driven to become value-driven and acknowledge exemplary student activities around the world. The eventual goal is to improve the quality of the activities and foster knowledge sharing among students. Ultimately, the initiative is targeted at improving student membership growth. This will encourage and motivate students to continue to innovate and implement meaningful ideas.

Submissions are welcome throughout the entire year; decisions are made once a year during the MGA SC meeting. Activities submitted after 30 September will be judged the following year. No submissions have been received in 2009 until now.

Results of 2008 award: Silver: Alexandria University (Egypt) with “Interact with Today's World”, Bronze: Bilkent University (Turkey) with “Road to University”, University of Jordan (Jordan) with “MoveIEEE Series”.

2.2.4 MGA Student Branch Membership Growth Award
Each year a Student Branch in each region is recognized as having achieved the highest rate of growth. The greatest level of growth is based on a composite rating, considering the highest increase in membership and highest increase in new elections relative to other Student Branches in each Region.

The 2007 recipient was University of Padova in North Italy. 2008 results have not been announced yet.

Information on these and other awards and recognition programs for Students and Student Branches are available on the R8 SAC web site as well as on the IEEE Students page.

2.3 Contests
2.3.1 IEEE Region 8 Student Paper Contest
The 2009 IEEE Region 8 Student Paper Contest received 13 papers from 11 Student Branches in 10 countries:

- Austria, Technical University of Graz
- Belgium, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
- Egypt, Cairo University
- Germany, University of Technology Ilmenau
- Iran, University of Tehran (3x)
- Israel, Technion, Israeli Institute of Technology, Haifa
- Netherlands, Eindhoven University of Technology
- Russia, Saint-Petersburg Electrotechnical University
- Slovenia, University of Ljubljana
- Slovenia, University of Maribor
- South Africa, University of Pretoria

The oral finals will take place in Saint-Petersburg, Russia, on 19 May 2009, as part of EUROCON 2009 (18-23 May 2009).
The jury has selected the following five papers (in alphabetical order of the author) for presentation at the oral finals:

- Jef Beerten (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium) Comparison of three-level torque hysteresis controllers for Direct Torque Control
- Bernhard Geiger (Technical University of Graz, Austria) Ranging in the IEEE 802.15.4a standard using energy detectors
- Hossein Hajimirsadeghi (University of Tehran, Iran) A hybrid IWO/PSO algorithm for fast and global optimization
- Ralph Hermans (Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands) Low-complexity model predictive control of electromagnetic actuators
- Khaled S. Refaat (Cairo University, Egypt) The support vector machined kernel

The five jury members for the 2009 Student Paper Contest are

- Martin Bastiaans, Eindhoven, Netherlands, IEEE R8 SPC coordinator
- Carlos López-Barrio, Madrid, Spain
- Andrzej Pacut, Warsaw, Poland
- Djordje Paunovic, Belgrade, Serbia
- Irina Borisovna Vendik, Saint-Petersburg, Russia

Deadline for the 2010 Contest: 15 December 2009

2.3.2 IEEE Xtreme 24 hour Programming Challenge

130 teams participated in the 2008 challenge with 57 teams from Region 8. Seven teams from Region 8 made it to the top 10. The date of the 2009 challenge has not been announced yet.

2.3.3 IEEE Student Branch Web Site Contest

39 submissions were received in the 2008 edition. The deadline for the 2009 edition is 15 April 2009. So far 5 submissions have been received from:

- Cairo University, Egypt
- Queen Mary University of London, UKRI
- Universidad Politecnica De Madrid, Spain
- Beirut Arab University, Lebanon
- Alexandria University, Egypt

2.3.4 IEEE Region 8 Student Promotional Multimedia Contest

A call for papers is to be sent to all Region 8 students and Student Branches. Participating branches will need to create promotional multimedia for advertising IEEE to students, outlining basic benefits. There will be no defined technology, and participants will be allowed to use any software for desktop publishing such as Corel or Photoshop to produce images, any kind of video editing software to produce short movies, possibilities on producing Flash animations, PowerPoint presentations, leaflets and flyers. The content of the promotional item must be constructed such that it will be applicable to most or all Student Branches in Region 8, and not just locally. All received promotional items will be displayed on the R8 SAC web site. The winning branch will be awarded $ 500, second best $ 300, and third best $ 200. The action will be coordinated by members of R8 SAC. Results will be made a part of an electronic promotional package, which will be put on the R8 SAC web site for all branches to use. This contest is to be scheduled in the next online Region 8 SAC meeting.

2.3.5 IEEE Region 8 Ethics Competition

The IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee (EMCC) want to raise the ethics awareness of IEEE members while they are still in school. To this end, the committee is launching the IEEE Student Ethics
Competition, which is designed to provide student members with experience in applying ethical concepts to situations that might arise in the workplace. The competition also wants to increase the visibility of the IEEE Code of Ethics, according to EMCC member Gerald Peterson, chair of the ad hoc committee that developed the competition program.

The competition for 2009 is not scheduled yet.

Information on these and other contests is available on R8 SAC web site as well as on the IEEE Students page.
3. Coordinating Student Branches

3.1 Twin Student Branch Program

- This program has already been announced to some Student Branches and triggered interest.
- It will be announced soon on the Region 8 SAC website and in the Region 8 News (April issue).
- A full webpage dedicated to this Program is in preparation: We will publish on this page the “requests for twins” that we receive from Student Branches along with contact information of the Student Branches and their “level of experience” (new Student Branch or experienced Student Branch). The Student Branches will then find each other on this page and contact each other and if they decide to be twins notify us.
- We will measure the efficiency of this program through the twin student branches reporting and statistics.

3.2 Working on getting an accurate list of Section Student Representatives (SSRs) and Section SACs (SSACs)

Finding such a list is not easy and so we would like to encourage all the Section Chairpersons to report their SSRs and SSACs to us as soon as there is a change. The communication between the Region 8 SAC and the SSRs and SSACs is essential to reach the Student Branches that do not directly contact Region 8 SAC. Whether the SAC officers are almost always reported, Section Student Representatives are still an issue in many sections. The benefits for your sections of having a SSR are tremendous. SSR has close contact with branches and student volunteers and their particular problems and solve these fast and accurately. A recommendation will be elevated to global SAC to flag these on sarlIEEE and that they can be online reported.

3.3 Towards the R8 SBC 2010

- Announcing the call for SBC venue proposals:
  1. An article has been written for the Region 8 News (April issue)
  2. In preparation: A webpage (in the Region 8 SAC website) containing this call, some guidelines for the proposal and previous SBC proposals as examples
- Deadline for sending a proposal to our team is likely to be: 30th June 2009
- Attended the Spanish SBC (CNR09) and gave a talk on the benefits of hosting the Region 8 SBC.

3.4 Communication

3.4.1 Communicate more on the Region 8 Student Branches activities

- Our idea: let everybody know about what the Region 8 Student Branches do. In addition to the short articles and announcements sent to us by the Student Branches we also try to add any information about events they organise we have heard of.
- A new webpage on the Region 8 SAC website called “It happens in Region 8!” has been created. It features past and ongoing activities of the Region 8 Student Branches. For now it is a list of short articles on one webpage but with the upgrade of our website we are thinking of a “Featured member” or “Featured Student Branch” box appearing on the side and randomly displaying these articles.
- We have increased the number of “News” published (on the home page of the R8 SAC website): any upcoming event organised by the Region 8 Student Branches is featured on this News page. We also post there any IEEE or IEEE’s partners event (e.g. the 9th BME International 24-hour Programming Contest supported by EESTEC) that might be of interest to the Region 8 Student Branches.
3.4.2 Upgrading the Region 8 SAC website:

- The migration of the Region 8 SAC website to Joomla! 1.5 is imminent
- A new version of our website is in preparation (but for technical reasons it can't be published before the migration). The Data Warehouse Project will be part of this new version. We will add a Wiki where all the Student Branches officers will be able to post useful Student Branches documents (in several languages) questions, best practices, solutions, etc.

3.4.3 Emailing

The SAC team has started to send out monthly email newsletters focusing on different membership benefits and announcing upcoming events and deadlines.

- Personalized Emails were sent to all IEEE Student and Graduate Student Members (12723 Active and 7239 in Arrears) in Region 8 on the 12th February 2009 containing
  - New SAC Team in place
  - Wanted: Your news, stories, feedback
  - Get the recognition you deserve!
  - Selected upcoming Student Branch events
  - News for SB officers and volunteers

- Personalized Email sent to 26080 Student, Graduate Student and GOLD Members in Region 8 (Active and in Arrears) on the 5th March 2009 highlighting Career Opportunities
  - Careers in Europe - Meet your employer
  - IEEE Job Site - A unique member benefit
  - GoldAroundTheWorld.com: Join the IEEE's 125th Anniversary viral video
  - Member-Get-A-Member Programme - The IEEE benefit that pays
  - Region 8 News - Tell us your story
4 Ongoing Programs and Activities

4.1 Membership campaigns
Since September/October (which is also the start of the academic year) is the best time of the year to join the IEEE, R8 SAC and participating Student Branches continue to organize membership campaigns in these months. In December/January our focus changes to retention. In April/June, joining as a Student Member for the second half of the year is beneficial, which is something that Student Branches can use in their membership campaigns.

4.2 Launch a new Student Branch initiative
A pilot project in 2005, it appeared extremely successful and was continued in 2006 and 2007. The project, which needs the cooperation with Section Student Representatives and Section Student Activities Chairs, will be continued in 2008. A branch (or group of branches) that helps a new branch to be established, will receive an amount of $ 200: $ 100 when the new Branch has been established, and the additional $ 100 when the new Branch has completed its first year of operation.

4.3 Waking up dormant Student Branches project
This is a slow, but successful project of contacting last–known Branch officers and Counselors (or other IEEE Members) at the Branch location in an effort to reactivate inactive Branches. On Region 8 initiative, RAB SAC passed an action item to develop a knowledge tool for helping SAC and the Branches keep continuity of previous activities. A ‘wake up kit’ is being prepared to be sent to Section Chairs, Section Student Activities Chairs, Student Branch officers and Counselors (also to be included in Student CD RAB SAC initiative).

4.4 Student Branch support
R8 SAC supports its Student Branches with seed money for their major activities. This is a successful program with increasingly more requests than we can handle. Only those activities may qualify for financial support, in which more than one Student Branch is involved and/or from which more than one Student Branch will benefit. R8 SAC expects the Section to support the activity with at least the same amount of money.

4.5 Section’s welcome to graduating Student Members
Section Chairs are invited to welcome recent graduates into the Section as voting members and possible new volunteers. We strongly believe that such a personal contact at the Section level is very important for retention. Not very successful up to now, we keep insisting on it in our Region Meetings.

4.6 Student professional activities
- SPAC/SPAV support. Student Professional Awareness Conference/Venture support funds are available.
- Region 8 Workshops. Workshops on Leadership skills and Project management are successfully organized throughout the Region, and are attended by many IEEE Student Members.

4.7 Students at IEEE technical conferences
- Region 8 Voluntary Contribution Fund. Not just intended for students, the fund helps also needy students to attend technical conferences (limit $ 1000 per person in a lifetime).
- R8 SAC Voucher Program. Student Members attending an IEEE technical conference in any year, may receive a voucher to be used for their IEEE membership dues in the subsequent year. The number of requests increases from year to year. We may have to end this program because of decreasing budgets.
- Organization of IEEE student events at technical conferences. Students organizing such events may receive a travel grant to the conference.
4.8 Help needy volunteers project

R8 SAC runs a project for subsidizing 50% of the IEEE student membership dues for needy volunteers. This program is very successful and has a low financial impact. We are currently developing new ideas for subsidizing IEEE student dues for needy Members at the global IEEE level.

4.9 Counselor support program

4.9.1 Background

This program has been pending for some years now and may be restructured in 2008.

The IEEE Region 8 Student Activities Committee (SAC) has always had a position for a student branch (SB) co-ordinator.

The IEEE Region 8 SAC however believes in a pronged approach, and has most recently launched an IEEE Region 8 SB Counsellor programme. The Counsellor programme aims to renew and continuously rejuvenate IEEE Student Branch Counsellors, for a long term outcome of strengthened and sustained co-operation between Faculties, IEEE Student Members and their Student Branches.

Over the period: Jan.-March 2009, the Counsellor Programme website has been launched. The site provides:

- IEEE Student Branch Counsellor Job Description
- IEEE Student Branch Counsellor Appointment Process
- IEEE Outstanding Branch Counsellor and Advisor Award Recognition Program

The Counsellor programme also aims to ensure that each SB maintains their officer reporting, and the newest Counsellor is listed on the IEEE database. The list as of March 2009 is also provided on the Counsellor programme website.

As part of the counsellor programme, we wish to establish a mailing list to reach Counsellors directly, and notify them of our new programme.

A recent notification to Counsellors focussed on membership development:

"On 01 March 2009, the IEEE runs a script called 'service deactivation' (previously or more commonly known as 'terminator'), where all those that have not renewed their IEEE membership loose their privileges as a member."

The notification reminded Counsellors to use the SAMIEEE database and our constant need for a personalized approach, enabling for an improved membership experience.

4.9.2 Action Items

- Section Chairs are requested to remind their Student Activities Chairpersons and Student Representatives to remind each student branch to ensure that every SB in a given section benefits from the guidance of SB Counsellor, and helps us to keep our Counsellor list updated.
- Section Chairs are requested to take note of the Counsellor programme Website: www.ieee.org/r8sac -- click on "Counsellor Programme"
5 Student Activities on Section and Cross-Section level

Sectional student branch congresses should also be supported in some way by the section. These events add a motivation plus to branches and highly prepared volunteers which can increase not only the number of student events in your sections, but also the membership. In addition, it is suggested the section officers attend the event or some part of them, and use it as a look-up for future section volunteers. Regional SAC will only fund this events if and only if the section also provides some funding.

In addition leadership training has been lectured there, where the students are encouraged to think about new member benefits that they could suit them but still don't exist. these will be compiled and forwarded to Global SAC.

5.1 Technical Conferences

5.1.1 Student Booth in Technical Conferences in Region 8
But not the big ones like EUROCON or IMS, where a student booth usually exists. We need to have these also in little conferences 100-200 people that take place in R8 and are typically R8 wide. This gives also the opportunity of the SB at the venue (if any) to show off a little. Many Graduate Students attend these events who are not yet IEEE members. In addition, students can help in the organization of these events as they have the necessary experience and skills.

5.1.2 Regional Robotics competition
We had contact with two candidates, and we have tried them to organize a regional robotics contest but we had some problems in having this contest regional wide. Funding is also raised by the organizing team, but participant Branches are always forced to pay for their own travel expenses (typically just the travel to the venue) which makes participation for them very difficult. We still have to work on this issue and see if we can have a real technical event of this kind Regional-wise. In the end, these contests took place, with great number of participants but the spreading was not very wide, only own section and nearby. This also supports the necessity of a SSR roster and a good infrastructure of Electronic communications.

- Robotica 2009
  Robotics contest held in Spanish section with students attending from several branches within Spain and Portugal.

- RoboMAC
  International Robotics competition hosted by Skopje IEEE Student Branch and BEST student group. 30 international teams were present.

5.1.3 First IEEE Germany Student Conference in Electrical and Computer Engineering, Hamburg, Germany, 14-15 May 2009

5.2 National Branch Congresses

5.2.1 Spain Section Student Branch Congress, March 6-8 2009
The Spanish National Student Branch Congress (CNR'09) was held between the 5th and 8th of March in the University of Castilla de la Mancha, Albacete. 7 Spanish Student Branches were represented at this event. For the first time one Portuguese Student (Isidoro Gomes) also attended the event and his presence led to a proposal of organizing an Iberian Student Congress were all the Student Branches from Spain and Portugal could meet. The congress concluded with the election of the new Spain Section Student Representative: Juan Romero Raposo (also Secretary of the University of Sevilla Student Branch).
5.2.2 4th Annual Student Professional Awareness Venture: Leading Your Career, Leading Your Society 2009, Alexandria, Egypt, 3-7 February 2009

This year a new theme was added to the SPAV making it differ from conventional Career Initiatives. Its program now addressed the engineering careers in depth, pointing out the different options of work for Electrical and Computer Engineering graduates. Detailed sessions were presented by successful engineers in the Telecom, Electronics, Automation and Software Development fields, where they highlighted diverse options within each sector and the skills needed to progress in these careers. This information and interaction with practicing engineers provided the students with the ‘big picture’ of the professional world, motivated them to stretch their knowledge during their undergrad years and recharge their batteries!

The event saw roughly 1000 participants from Alexandria and nearby branches in Egypt.

5.2.3 Careers in Europe Forum, Berlin, 13-14 May 2009

Twice a year (Berlin in May and Brussels in December), Careers in Europe holds a unique, invitation-only event at which top international employers meet and interview the very best graduates and early-career professionals for a wide variety of positions throughout Europe. This is a unique opportunity to meet the people that can build our GOLD Members’ international careers – at no charge for them. For more information see http://www.careersineurope.com/.

5.2.4 The First IEEE Middle East Student Branch Congress, Amman, Jordan, 11-14 May 2009

Organized by IEEE- Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT) Student Branch, in partnership with IEEE- Texas A&M University at Qatar Student Branch, and Hosted at Princess Sumaya University For Technology (PSUT), the ME-SBC will be a unique opportunity for IEEE volunteers from more than 100 different student branches in more than 10 different Sections in Region 8, to socialize and interact, develop their soft skills, enhance their insight into technology, discuss the common obstacles faced by their branches in the region and get equipped to tackle them in the upcoming year.

The First IEEE ME-SBC will honor and celebrate a great achievement: 125 years of Engineering the Future.

It will include the following major events:
1. The Volunteers Enrichment Program (VEP)
2. The Delegation of Aspiration (DOA) Contest
3. The IEEE 125th Anniversary Celebration Gala Dinner
4. The ME-SBC Award Ceremony
5. The Middle East Job Fair

Each student branch will be represented by a delegation of 4 delegates.

5.2.5 International Students Meeting in Graz, Austria, 5-7 June 2009

Further information will become available soon.

5.2.6 Egyptian Student Branch Meeting 2009, Cairo, Egypt, 27-29 March 2009

About 100 Student Branch officers gathered in Cairo. The event provided leadership training.

5.2.7 EESTEC Meeting, Belgrade and Sarajevo, 20-30 March 2009

The congress gathers each year international board, oversight committee, representatives of all local committees, international trainers and other members (bodies) who are also responsible for quality functioning of organization. 120 members from 23 countries of Europe were attending! Most important issues about the working of organization of EESTEC were discussed during the Congress. Yasemin attended this event as the IEEE Region 8 SAC representative and gave a presentation to emphasize the
benefits of IEEE membership and the value of being a member of a professional organization which is 125 years old. Collaboration and joint activities between EESTEC and IEEE were encouraged both in local and regional level, referring to the previous successful examples.