

V/C Student Activities **Efthymia Arvaniti (Chair), Ines Inacio (Student Representative), Sarra ben Rabii (Student Branch Coordinator), Jose Miguel Sepulcre (Electronic Communications Coordinator), Yara Melki (Awards and Contests Coordinator), Paul Micallef (Student Paper Contest Coordinator), George Papadimitriou (Projects and Initiatives Coordinator), Mona Ghassemian (Past Chair)**

Goals

The Student Activities Committee has set some common goals for the end of year 2018 that are aiming to achieve better knowledge transfer between the committees. The goals for 2018 for the Student Activities Committee that were stated in the previous report were distributed across the functions of the team, and were achieved as follows:

- 1) Awards&Contests: Successful campaign for the 2018 submissions and high submission of awards. Engagement of more applicants for the Outstanding Branch Counselor Award. Planned Awards Campaign to start in November for 2019.
- 2) Electronic Communications: SAC Website Restructuring and social media regular updates. Support the Awards&Contests Campaign, the Student Paper Contest Campaign, as well as other initiatives. Engage with students through Facebook Page and reach 10.000 likes in 2018 (in progress).
- 3) SPC: Successfully motivated many students to participate and submit more than 10 eligible papers for the Student Paper Contest 2018. Release the calls for SPC 2019 (ongoing).
- 4) R8 SYP Congress: Supported the efforts of the organizing committee and joined forces with YPs, in order to adjust the eligibility and selection criteria of the funded participants. The pilot year for reimbursements will determine the future versions.
- 5) Keep the database and all the contacts of Section SACs and Section Representatives, as well as the events up-to-date file with all the Student Branches' emails, on the interactive R8 Map.
- 6) The Cross-Sectional Congresses for 2019 to be better organized and successful.
- 7) To suggest 1-2 outstanding volunteers for the committee in 2019 and guarantee smooth transfer of knowledge and responsibilities.

Status

- 1) As expected, the highlight of 2018 was the IEEE R8 SYP Congress that was held from the 25th to the 29th of July 2018 in Porto, Portugal-to avoid repetition, a dedicated report has been submitted. The R8 SYP Congress was successfully organized and attracted over 250 participants. The R8 SAC Members represented the committee and the student activities and participated as speakers and instructors in plenary sessions and workshops. The value of the presence of the committee in this event was significantly high.
- 2) The Oral Presentations for the five finalists of the SPC 2018 were held on May 2nd at Melecon 2018 at Marrakesh, Morocco.
The marks of the oral presentation, (max 30) were added to the marks from the assessment of the written paper (max 70) to give the final result. The first three prizes have also a financial reward of US\$800, US\$500 and US\$200 respectively awarded from the IEEE Life Member Fund First Prize: Ahmed Abdelraouf Mohamed, Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport Cairo SB, Egypt, with the paper , "A Multi-Objective Distributed Generation Allocation and Sizing using Swarm Intelligence Based Algorithms"
Second Prize: Benjamin Chiêm, Universit Catholique de Louvain SB, Belgium, with the paper, "Supervised classification of structural brain networks reveals gender differences"
Third Prize: Marko Mihajlovic and Nikola Popovic, University of Niš SB, Serbia, with the paper, "Fooling a neural network with common adversarial noise".
The participation and call for SPC2019 has already started. The students having the best five papers will give a presentation at EUROCON 2019 in Novi Sad in July 2019.
All information on SPC Rules is contained on the website at <http://www.ieeer8.org/category/student-activities/>
- 3) MGA SAC and R8 SAC worked on clearing up the number of active Student Branches, and put the inactive SBs in probation.
The final number of them will be provided by MGA SAC.
- 4) Social media are playing a vital role in the communication with the Students, and the campaigns are engaging more and more participants.
- 5) Awards Campaign for the 2018 Awards was successful and the R8 was a leader Region in the Student Awards. The awards campaign for 2019 will kick off soon and the submission deadline closes on the 15th of February. Higher numbers than last years' are also expected. A better coordination from MGA SAC is also requested.
- 6) The reporting campaign for the activities and officer reporting of the regional branches is successfully continued with 204 reported SBs for the Academic Period of 2015-2016 and 202 for the Academic Period 2016-2017. The reporting process for 2017-2018 is still ongoing. Preparation for 2018-2019 is also scheduled.
- 7) R8 SAC Cookbook: A review of the current recipes on how to help students with easy-step guides is getting enriched with more guides and a FAQ section where students can check for answers, suggestions, ideas and help.
- 8) The Call for Cross-Sectional SYP Congresses for the year 2019 will be released soon. All SBs/YPAGs interested should apply with a proposal.

Outlook

The 2018 SAC plan, includes the fulfillment of the aforementioned goals and the development of strategic plan for the knowledge transfer to the 2019 SAC Team. Additionally, it is planned to organize the documentation in a simple yet understanding and complete level.

Points of Concern

- 1) One of the points of concern is how to better handle the financials of the congresses (especially the R8 SYP Congress) in order to avoid delays and problems during the organization. This topic is discussed with the treasurers to find appropriate solution before the next edition of the Congress.
- 2) Each year, it becomes more and more difficult to secure sponsors for the R8 SYP Congress, and a possible source of support can be the AFI Subcommittee and the Technical Societies and Chapters.
- 3) There should be a formal and legal committee/person within Region 8, responsible for assisting and covering the sponsorship and legal signatures (suggestion: IEEE Office in Vienna) for the Student Events and the Section Activities where IEEE is not recognized as a legal entity.
- 4) MGA SAC should shift the responsibility of the Student Awards from student volunteers to IEEE staff to ensure that the process is flowing as expected and the awards are handled on time.

Other Issues to report

No other issues to report.