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NEWS BYTES

Benigni Chosen as 1997 IEEE-USA Chair: Daniel R. Benigni was elected as vice president for Professional Activities and chair of the United States Activities Board by the IEEE Assembly at its Nov. 7, 1996, meeting in Denver. Benigni, a computer scientist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Md., served most recently as Region 2 Director. See page 8C for his guest editorial. IEEE-USA's 1997 Congressional

Photo: Bernice Evans



Government Fellows Secure Assignments: Government Fellows John W. Stafford (left), Richard J. Bucke and Jaclyn A. Spear visited the IEEE-USA office during their orientation last fall. They begin their assignments this month, when Stafford will join N.Y. Republican Sen. Alfonse M. D'Amato's staff and Bucke will join the office of Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif. Spear was still interviewing at press time.

105th Congress Will Choose New Tech-Policy Leaders: The 105th Congress will sport a new look in its tech-policy leadership when it convenes this month. Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee Chair Sen. Larry Pressler, R-S.D., was defeated in his re-election bid, while House Science Committee Chair Rep. Robert S. Walker (R-Pa.) is retiring. Replacing them as chairmen of the two committees are Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. and Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis.

Labor Secretary Reich Leaves Cabinet: U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich announced in November that he will not be part of the second Clinton administration.

According to Career Policy Council Chair George F. McClure, "We have lost a champion for pension portability and corporate responsibility." Reich also fought for employment-based immigration reform and sponsored a retirement-savings initiative.



IEEE★USA PERSPECTIVES

News and Insights Relating to Professional Interests of U.S. Electrical, Electronics and Computer Engineers

Promoting Career, Technology Policy

IEEE-USA: A Year in Review

by Joel B. Snyder, P.E., past chair, IEEE United States Activities Board (USAB)



1996 was a busy and exciting year. Hard work from volunteers and staff helped USAB's programs achieve success. As IEEE vice president for professional activities and USAB chair, it was my privilege to work with you on important issues, including career policy, pension portability, technological competitiveness, technology policy, immigration reform, employment assistance, intellectual property rights, planning for a new professional activities magazine, increasing the use of electronic media, enhancing member communications, and reorganizing IEEE and IEEE-United States Activities.

In 1996, IEEE-USA met regularly with members of Congress and the Administration to improve pension portability and IRA deductibility. In recognition of our contributions, I was invited to meet with President Clinton at the White House last April, when he announced his pension reform initiatives. We also sponsored an invitational forum in December to forge alliances with other societies and develop plans to promote pension portability during President Clinton's second term. Additional career policy highlights included mounting a successful 9th Biennial Careers Conference and producing a revamped *Guidelines for Professional Employment*.

Taking Action for Careers and Technology Policy

In immigration reform, we stressed the need for a level playing field, and called for a reasonable balance between employers' needs for access to skilled foreign workers and U.S. workers' needs for safeguards against displacement and exploitation. IEEE-USA's support for employment-based immigration reforms will continue in the 105th Congress.

IEEE-USA's efforts with technology policy included our June 1996 Technology Policy Symposium on *The Role of the Federal Government in Technology Development* engaging industry and government leaders in an active dialogue. IEEE-USA tech-policy committees will continue to develop policy statements and disseminate them to public and private policy-makers.

On the employment side, IEEE-USA consultants' networks continued to grow, and held national workshops and conferences in Florida, Washington, D.C., and California.

Coming Soon: A New Magazine

Last year, a select committee laid the groundwork for a new IEEE-USA magazine. This flagship publication will be a primary source for the latest information on professional careers and technology policy issues. The subscription-based magazine will be a high-quality, must-read publication for IEEE's U.S. members and others. After final approval by USAB, you can expect to see the first issues this fall.

Communicating On-Line

Exciting changes also occurred within our existing publications. In 1996, we produced five *IEEE-USA Perspectives* in *The Institute*, and added a *Perspectives' Web Extra*, a monthly news supplement that is easily accessible on the Internet. Communicating by e-mail with the press resulted in increased placements, and our transition to electronic formats and resources enabled us to reach larger internal and external audiences at substantially lower costs. In an effort to communicate better with U.S. IEEE members, our new IEEE-USA table-top display was mounted monthly at various Section, Society and national meetings, and included a new videotape overview of our activities.

Launching A Fiscally Sound, Reorganized Future

In the financial arena, we were careful to secure full value for every dollar that we received from our assessment. We continued our efforts to achieve high quality at the lowest cost. As a result, we expect to show a modest surplus for last year.

As part of the Institute's continuing reorganization process, we modified IEEE-USA's structure to make it more responsive to U.S. members' needs. Under new bylaws, we will soon have an independent IEEE-USA, with its own president.

The first elections for the new structure will be held this year. This organizational change is a positive step forward that will give IEEE-USA added autonomy, more responsibility, and the strength of a truly national engineering society.

Again, thanks to all the volunteers and staffers for helping to make IEEE-USA a more vibrant and dynamic organization. Count on me to continue working for a better future for all of us.