A REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN MEMBER RELATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

The President Pages from September to December 2015 will be devoted to a description of the activities and related achievements of the leadership of the IEEE Communication Society during my term as ComSoc President (2014-2015).

The second page, October 2015, is coauthored by Katie Wilson, Stefano Bregni, and myself, and summarizes the activities in the areas of Publications and Member Relations.

THE MEMBER RELATIONS COUNCIL (TO BE RENAMED THE MEMBER AND GLOBAL ACTIVITIES COUNCIL IN 2016)

According to the current Bylaws of the IEEE Communications Society, the Member Relations Council (MRC) addresses all activities and programs related to members, chapters, membership development, marketing, industry relations, sister and related societies, and Society regions.

Chaired by the Vice-President for Member Relations, it also includes seven Directors, each chairing his/her own Board, viz. Marketing and Industry Relations, Membership Programs Development, Sister and Related Societies, and the four Regions (Asia Pacific; Europe, Africa, Middle East; Latin America; and North America).

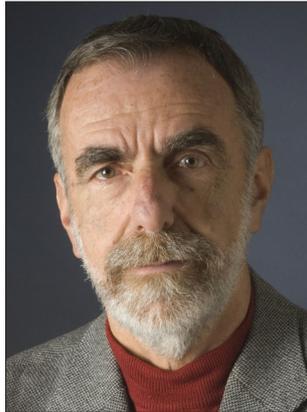The seven Directors who have been serving in this term 2014-15, now approaching its end, are:
• Director M&IR: Ashutosh Dutta, Columbia Univ., USA
• Director MPD: Koichi Asatani, Kogakuin Univ., Japan
• Director SRS: Curtis Siller, USA
• AP Director: Wanjiun Liao, National Taiwan Univ., ROC
• EAME Director: Hanna Bogucka, Poznan Univ. of Technology, Poland
• LA Director: Pedro Aguilera, Switch Comunicaciones Ltda, Chile
• NA Director: Merrily Hartmann, USA

In 2015 the ComSoc Strategic Committee discussed and agreed on a thorough revision of the leadership organization of our Society, which was approved by the Board of Governors last June. Effective from 2016, the MRC has been renamed as the Member and Global Activities Council (MGAC) and reorganized along a slightly different structure.

The focus of the MGA-C will be more specifically centered on member needs and interests. It will be chaired by the Vice President for Member and Global Activities (VP-MGA). The following appointed officers will report to the VP-MGA: Director for Member Services; Director for Sister and Related Societies; Director of Asia/Pacific Region; Director of Europe, Middle-East and Africa Region, Director of Latin America Region; Director of North America Region; Chair of the Women in Communications Engineering Standing Committee.

Strategies of the Member Relations Council

Beginning my term as VP-MR in 2014, I indicated five strategic directions for the ComSoc Member Relation Coun-

SERGIO BENEDETTO

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cil, which I envisioned as the Golden Pentagon: globalization, academia, industry, women, and students (see figure next page). During these last two years, several initiatives have been launched or revamped along those five directions.

Globalization means incorporating global culture and values in ComSoc, on the one hand by strengthening balanced participation of members from all regions, on the other by disseminating knowledge and technical skills in all countries worldwide, paying extra attention to disadvantaged areas.

Aiming at both industry and academia implies creating multidisciplinary linkages between ComSoc, universities, and industry. As a matter of fact, currently the participation from universities in ComSoc technical activities is largely prevailing over industry. Restoring a balanced participation from both industry and academia within ComSoc is a priority, while not disappointing the expectations of university students and professors, who rely on ComSoc publications and conferences as their primary reference.

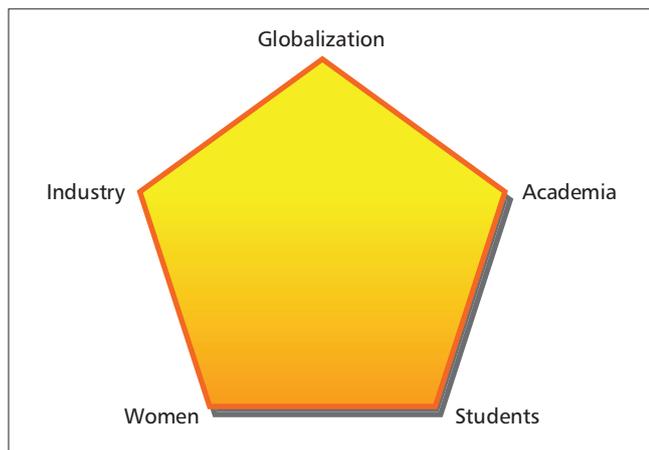Due to a number of historical reasons, women are significantly underrepresented in most engineering disciplines and senior leadership positions, although to varying degrees in different countries. Communications engineering is not an exception. In our Society, significant effort has been made to grant true equal opportunities to genders.

Students truly represent the future of our Society. Therefore, one of our most important strategic directions has been toward promoting initiatives to involve young students in ComSoc activities. Online education, special programs dedicated to students (e.g. the Student Competition Award, now running its third edition), ad-hoc activities organized for students at major ComSoc conferences, and Student Travel Grants, have been pursued to encourage participation by the young generation and to improve the retention of student members. Special attention should be given to young students living in disadvantaged areas of the world, who have fewer opportunities to meet international experts at major conferences. Online webinars and the Distinguished Lecturer Program are two key programs to also serve this important social mission of ComSoc.

During 2014-15, the Member Relations Council worked cohesively along these five strategic directions. After having been re-elected for the next term 2016-17, I can ensure that we will continue to pursue these goals in the next two years. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all ComSoc members who trust in me. Your support is essential.

Chapters and Regional Activities

There are currently 211 ComSoc Chapters worldwide! Specifically, 41 are in the AP Region, 52 in the EMEA Region, 25 in the LA Region, and 93 in the NA Region. The

The Golden Pentagon of ComSoc's Member Relations.

The new *Global Communications Newsletter*: The Voice of the Chapters.

oldest Chapter, according to IEEE records, is the Mohawk Valley Section (NA), formed in 1955. In conrast, the newest Chapter as of this writing is the Windsor Joint Section in Canada, just formed in August 2015. Welcome!

Some Chapters are very active and succeed in organizing high-impact initiatives reaching out to both industry and academia. Others struggle with a small base of local members. In response, we started an effort aimed at identifying and contacting less active Chapters, in order to support Chairs to analyze the situation.

The Regional Chapter Chair Congresses (RCCC) are the chief opportunity for Chapter Chairs to meet, compare experiences, and express their wishes to ComSoc leaders. The North-America RCCC was organized at IEEE GLOBECOM 2014 in Austin. I had the pleasant opportunity to meet 20 Chapter Chairs, who are enthusiastic and strongly motivated volunteers who spend a significant share of their time to serving ComSoc.

Regional Conferences: Key to Pursue Globalization

Our priority is to encourage participation of members from all regions, striving to reach out to all countries and paying extra attention to disadvantaged areas. ComSoc Regional Conferences are instrumental in this strategy. They may be the only opportunity for members in disadvantaged areas to attend first-level international events, saving the cost of travelling overseas.

Certainly, the key is to ensure that Regional Conferences meet the same quality requirements that are established for the global portfolio conferences of ComSoc. The ComSoc Conference Council is well focused on this issue and ensures, among other tasks, that the Technical Program Committees of Regional Conferences include qualified members from around the world and cover all technical areas of ComSoc (in particular, nominated by the Technical Committees).

Among ComSoc Regional Conferences, I wish to mention in particular the case of the IEEE Latin-American Conference on Communications (IEEE LATINCOM). The sixth edition was held successfully in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia in November 2014, attracting authors and attendees from around the world, thanks to a high-quality technical program and world-class keynote speakers (Maurizio Decina, Hikmet Sari, Neeli Prasad, Edward Knightly). The seventh edition will be held in Arequipa, Peru. IEEE LATINCOM has now become a regular meeting venue for students and engineers in Latin America.

Other ComSoc Regional Conferences are the IEEE Asia-Pacific Conference on Communications (APCC), whose 21st edition was held in Kyoto, Japan in October 2015, and the most recent IEEE BlackSeaCom, whose third edition was held in Constanta, Romania, in May 2015.

The *IEEE Global Communications Newsletter*: The Voice of the Chapters

In our Member Relations strategy, the *IEEE Global Communications Newsletter* definitely has a central role. After many years of highs and lows and various fortunes, we succeeded in revamping it, making it more appealing and better known by ComSoc members. My aim, since the beginning of this term, has been to truly make it the "Voice of the Chapters." Four lines of action have been pursued:

1) Each GCN monthly issue is distributed by email to all Chapter Chairs as soon as it is published (since July 2014), in addition to being printed in *IEEE Communications Magazine* and posted to the GCN web site for public access, which has been done since its beginning. Chapter Chairs are encouraged to distribute it further to local members. This ensures a thorough and pervasive distribution to all membership, as well as fostering a closer relationship between Chapter Chairs and "their" members.

2) Significant effort was made to make its contents more interesting, by selecting events worldwide and inviting specific articles. A new series of eight monthly interviews by the VP with MR Directors and Committee Chairs was published from September 2014 to April 2015. A second such series will be launched in 2016.

3) The graphic layout was fully redesigned, giving the GCN a fresh and contemporary look (since October 2014). The new layout follows the IEEE Visual Identity Guidelines and is definitely more appealing for readers.

4) A new Online Edition of the GCN is under development and will be launched soon. The Online GCN will feature a striking contemporary style. The contents of the Online GCN will include:
• The same articles published in the monthly printed issue.
• A blog where Chapter Chairs will post their announcements any time they have updates.
• A forum restricted to Chapter Officers, i.e. a confidential venue where Officers can discuss freely and exchange informally their experiences and ideas. Links to social media will facilitate networking among members.

The Distinguished Lecturer Program: A Member Favorite

Among ComSoc's programs for Chapters and Members, the Distinguished Lecturer/Speaker Program is definitely one of the most acclaimed by members! Personally, I have a special fondness for this program, because I served as a Distinguished Lecturer for seven years, visiting 14 countries and 29 IEEE Sections/Chapters in all Regions, some more than once. It was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, and certainly my ComSoc service I am most proud of.

In 2014 the Member Relations Council made an important decision. We extended the travel cost limit refundable by ComSoc from US$2000 to US$3000 (with the same total budget per year) thus facilitating longer tours, ultimately looking at those areas that, because of their geographic location, are seldom visited by lecturers. Our motto has been "Even less DLTs, but better DLTs!."

The Student Competition Award

In 2015 we are conducting the third ComSoc Student Competition, entitled "Communications Technology Changing the World," addressed to graduate and undergraduate students. I am the Co-Chair of this program with the past VP-MR Nelson Fonseca. This Competition is now a well established program of the Comsoc Member Relations Council and will be continued in future years.

The Competition has been established as a great success. In 2014 more than 70 projects were submitted and evaluated by an international committee made up of 40 ComSoc experts. The evaluation process takes into account social impact, technical content, originality, practical applicability and results, and quality of presentation. The winners receive their Award at GLOBECOM in a Plenary Session.

Women in Communications Engineering (WICE)

The mission of the WICE Standing Committee, chaired by Octavia Dobre, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada, is to promote the visibility and roles of women communications engineers. Among its major initiatives in 2014-15, I make note of: the institution of WICE Awards; the organization of a Women's Workshop and of social events at ComSoc flagship conferences with speakers and panels; a new web site and Facebook and LinkedIn pages to encourage networking; and finally, a mail list with more than 4000 subscribers.

I strongly support these efforts and I cordially invite all women communications engineers to follow Octavia and stay tuned for news!

Industry Outreach Programs

Industry is one of the five vertices of the Pentagon referenced earlier. Restoring a balanced participation from both industry and academia within ComSoc is our priority, for example by regaining the focus of membership program development on industry, or by designing new programs and services specifically oriented to industry.

An important area of high potential interest for industry is education and professional training. ComSoc already explored this area with the Wireless Communications Engineering Technology (WCET) education program, started a few years ago.

A significant initiative aimed at industry outreach is the organization of high-impact one-day summits focused on industry interests. The First IEEE International 5G Summit was held at Princeton University in 2015 (www.5gsummit.org), chaired by Ashutosh Dutta, Director of Marketing and Industry Relations. Approximately 300 engineers attended, with 17 talks given by industry, academic, and government leaders. More 5G Summits are being planned and organized to consolidate this success and ComSoc's leading presence in this area.

Sister and Related Societies

Sister Societies are national or international professional associations focused on communications engineering or equivalent disciplines, with charters similar to ComSoc, and with similar technical scopes. Examples of ComSoc Sister Societies are the IEICE in Japan, the Popov Society in Russia, the KIKS in South Korea, the VDE in Germany, and many others too numerous to list.

Related Societies are national or international professional associations with charters similar to ComSoc's, but complementary in technical scope. Examples of Related Societies are other IEEE Societies, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Optical Society of America (OSA), and others.

In 2014-15, the SRS Board made significant progress in furthering relations between Sister and Related Societies and Comsoc. The templates for new "Memoranda of Understanding" were refined. Approximately 15 agreements were renewed. Several new initiatives were launched, including co-sponsoring events, inviting SRS to publicize their events in the *IEEE Communication Magazine* Conference Calendar, inviting SRS members to register for our portfolio conference events, and providing local SRS officers with a complimentary one-day conference registration.

Biography of Stefano Bregni

Stefano Bregni is an associate professor of telecommunications at Politecnico di Milano, Italy. He graduated in electronics engineering in 1990. After nine years in industry he joined Politecnico in 1999.

Stefano is an IEEE Senior Member (1999). He was a IEEE Distinguished Lecturer for seven years (2003-2009), visiting 14 countries and 29 IEEE Sections/Chapters worldwide. In ComSoc he has served as: Vice-President Member Relations (two terms: 2014-15 and 2016-17); Member at Large on the Board of Governors (two terms: 2010-12 and 2013); Director of Education (2008-11); Chair of the Transmission, Access and Optical Systems TC (2008-09; Secretary/Vice Chair 2002-07); Member at Large of the GLOBECOM/ICC Technical Content (GITC) Committee (2006-09). He received the 2014 ComSoc Hal Sobol Award for Exemplary Service to Meetings & Conferences.

He is or has been Technical Program Co-Chair of ICC 2016, Technical Program Vice-Chair of GLOBECOM 2012, Symposia Chair of GLOBECOM 2009, Symposium Co-Chair in nine other ICC/GLOBECOMs, and Technical Program Co-Chair of IEEE LATINCOM 2011. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the *IEEE Global Communications Newsletter*, published

monthly in *IEEE Communications Magazine*, and an associate editor of *IEEE Communications Surveys and Tutorials*. He has contributed to ETSI/ITUT standards on network synchronization. He is the author of more than 80 refereed papers and of the book *Synchronization of Digital Telecommunications Networks* (Wiley, 2002).

PUBLICATIONS

The Publications team comprises the VP of Publications, the Director of Journals (Len Cimini), the Director of Magazines (Steve Gorshe), and the Director of Online Content (Elena Neira). It has been a busy term and we are delighted to share our work with you in this President's Page.

Every five years IEEE publications are reviewed by the IEEE Periodical Review and Advisory Committee (PRAC). All wholly owned ComSoc journals and magazines were reviewed in November 2014. The journals under review were: *IEEE Communications Letters* (George Karagiannides, Editor-in-Chief), *IEEE Communications Surveys and Tutorials* (Ekram Hossain, Editor-in-Chief), *IEEE Journal on Selected Areas in Communications* (Muriel Medard, Editor-in-Chief), *IEEE Transactions on Communications* (Robert Schober, Editor-in-Chief), and *IEEE Transactions on Network and Service Management* (Rolf Stadler, Editor-in-Chief). The magazines under review were: *IEEE Communications Magazine* (Sean Moore, Editor-in-Chief), *IEEE Network Magazine* (Sherman Shen, Editor-in-Chief), and *IEEE Wireless Communications Magazine* (H.H. Chen, Editor-in-Chief).

The PRAC review is an opportunity for publications to reflect on the health and future of the journals and magazines. We had the opportunity to receive helpful suggestions from the PRAC, e.g. updating official scopes that still have twentieth century research terms such as fax and dial-up modems. In general, the PRAC found that ComSoc publications are not only helpful but exemplary. We are very proud of the work of the volunteers, editors, and authors who produce the excellent publications that are a jewel in ComSoc's crown.

In the past two years we also initiated the incubation of two new publications: *IEEE Journal on Selected Areas in Communications: Green Communications and Networking Series* (Editor-in-Chief, Ender Ayonoglu), and the *IEEE Communcations Standards Supplement* (Editor-in-Chief, Glenn Parsons). The *Green Communications and Networking Series* has been very healthy, generating more than 100 submissions per issue. Given the continued success of this series, we plan to propose a stand-alone journal on Green Communications. The *IEEE Communications Standards Supplement* is a joint effort with the VP of Standards, Rob Fish, and the Director of Standards Development, Alex Gelman. A new *Communications Standards Magazine* based on this supplement is now being proposed. In addition, two new publications (co-sponsored with other societies) were launched: *IEEE Transactions on Cognitive Communications and Networking* (Michele Zorzi, Editor-in-Chief), and *IEEE Transactions on Molecular, Biological and Multiscale Communications* (Urbashi Mitra, Editor-in-Chief). If you have not checked out these publications, please do.

Online Content has blossomed in the past two years. Best Readings (http://www.comsoc.org/best-readings) was started in 2010. Sergio Benedetto and Len Cimini were the driving force behind it, and currently Matthew Valenti is responsible for the content and delivery of Best Readings. Best Readings is a collection of articles and books by experts in the field and is the first place one should go when researching a new topic. Len, Matt, and Elena Neira have worked hard to improve the content and look of Best Readings and ensure a good set of topics for our community. *Communications Technology News*

(http://www.comsoc.org/ctn) presents a set of high-quality articles on relevant areas in communications with a rotating set of Editors-in-Chief. In 2014 Steve Weber did an excellent job of collecting and editing a set of high-quality and intriguing articles on topics such as data pricing and network neutrality. Recently Alan Gatherer has curated an interesting and must-read series of articles on 5G. Elena Neira also introduced a series of fascinating interviews online called ComSoc Beats (http://beats.comsoc.org). ComSoc Beats has compelling interviews with communications colleagues on topics such as future research, future directions of the society, and what it's like to be a communications engineer. These videos are well-done and thought-provoking.

IEEE Communications Society publications continue to thrive, grow, and expand into new areas and media. I am confident that they will continue to thrive under the stewardship of the incoming VP-Publications, Nelson Fonseca, and I look forward to their future.

Biography of Sarah Kate Wilson

Sarah Kate Wilson earned her A.B. from Bryn Mawr College with honors in mathematics in 1979, and her Ph.D. from Stanford University in electrical engineering in 1994. She has worked in both industry and academia and has been a visiting professor at Lulea University of Technology, the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Stanford University, and Northeastern University. She is an associate professor at Santa Clara University. She has served as an editor for *IEEE Transactions on Wireless Communications*, *IEEE Communications Letters*, and *IEEE Transactions on Communications*, and as the Editor-in-Chief of *IEEE Communications Letters*. She is a Fellow of the IEEE and the Vice-President for Publications of the IEEE Communications Society.

OMBUDSMAN

COMSOC BYLAWS ARTICLE 3.8.10

The Ombudsman shall be the first point of contact

for reporting a

dispute or complaint related to Society activities

and/or volunteers.

The Ombudsman will investigate, provide direction

to the appropriate IEEE resources if necessary,

and/or otherwise help settle these disputes at an

appropriate level within the Society…

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