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CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

IEEE ComSoc Austin Chapter, USA: Winner of the 2017 IEEE ComSoc Chapter-of-the-Year Award and North-America Chapter Achievement Award

By Fawzi Behmann, Chair, IEEE ComSoc and Signal Processing Joint Chapter in Austin

Since our last CAA and CoY awards in 2015, The Austin Chapter strived to a greater level in serving our membership and the local community, and extending our reach within the region, to North America and, when opportunities opened, internationally.

Through focused vision, high energy and passion, the core team led by Fawzi Behmann exhibited high capacity in executing many activities and programs. Such efforts were not only recognized by the Society but also by the region where the Chapter Chair received an outstanding member Award for three consecutive years 2013-2014 and 2015.

Our core focus is fulfilling the mission of IEEE and tailoring it to the societies we are privileged to serve. The ComSoc Chapter had the opportunity as a joint chapter with the Signal Processing Chapter to bring intriguing topics and speakers to broaden the advancement in technology, research and use cases in different vertical markets.

In 2016, the ComSoc (Austin) chapter carried out core activities that included conducting 19 sessions (11 technical and eight non-technical/professional/administrative), capitalizing on the DLT/DSP program, engaging with student activities, reaching out to the community for membership development, participating and supporting technical events, and supporting one member to a senior level.

Among the interesting talks was one related to drones given by Robert Youens on the topic, "New FAA Drone Regulations."

Among the Distinguished Lecturers we hosted were: Dr.



Lecture by Prof. Jäntti, held at the same time we celebrated IEEE Day on October 4. Left to right: Leslie Martinich, CTS Section Chair, Fawzi Behmann, ComSoc & SP Joint Chapter chair and Prof. Riku Jäntti, Aalto University, Finland.

Anthony Chan, Huawei, Dallas, TX; Prof. Riku Jäntti, Head of the Department of Communications and Networking at Aalto University, Finland; and Prof. Todd Humphreys, UT, Austin, TX.

The core value offering was enhanced by executing a number of steps:

- Conducting feedback survey after each session to capture attendees' evaluation for improvement, suggestions for future topics and presenters, as well as other ideas such as volunteering to assist in support activities.

- Conducting a leadership meeting for strategic planning and budgeting, setting the theme of the year and topics to be pursued, and assessing on a quarterly basis.

- Conducting a year-end assessment of achievements and lessons learned.

- Being creative and innovative in preparing personalized gifts (plaques with the speaker's name, title and date) for speakers as a token of appreciation of their time and efforts and sharing their experience.

- Having introductory slides that were presented at the beginning of each session promoting the IEEE brand, membership, most recent news and important chapter activities.

- Continuing to build the relationship with AT&T as the facility sponsor and ensuring that acknowledgments are made every time we hold the meeting at their facilities.

- Reaching out and collaborating with other Chapters, including the Computer Society, EMBS, Consulting Networks, and others.

- Preparing a process for re-election, sending information to members, and tabulating and announcing the results.

We have taken a proactive approach in managing Chapter activities on a quarterly basis. This approach helped define tangible steps in subsequent quarters to plan more events and attract higher attendance. As the subjects change, we see many new faces, helping us to ensure that the message is reaching a wider audience.

The Austin Communications Chapter sponsored, supported and participated in several local events and activities. Some examples include IEEE/NI 5G Day (August 3), NI Week (August 1-4), IEEE N3XT (September 17), and the Texas Wireless Summit (October 18).

Fawzi Behmann, Chapter Chair, participated at the R5 annual meeting and received the Outstanding Member Award at the banquet. He also supported the NA ComSoc region as a board member and vice chair in the planning, coordination and execution of the RCCC Regional Chapter Chair Conference held in December 2016 in Washington. Behmann also made a presentation at the RCCC as an exemplary Chapter with best practices.

The Chapter reached out and supported the student community by being part of the Advisory Board for the Westwood High School Ambassador Academy for Health and Science. The Chapter invited students and teachers to the Chapter meeting. The Chapter also extended support to Texas State University by participating in Senior Design Day, when senior students demonstrated their projects. During lunch, Behmann was a keynote speaker for the event.

Asia-Pacific IEEE Comsoc Summer School 2017 in Lahore, Pakistan

By Kashif Bashir, Chair IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section Pakistan

The IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section, in collaboration with the Al-Khwarizmi Institute of Computer Science (KICS), University of Engineering and Technology Lahore and Fast National University Lahore, organized the four-day "Asia Pacific IEEE ComSoc Summer School 2017."

Other collaborators are HEC Pakistan, IEEE UET and IEEE FAST. It was very inspirational for all who attended, particularly for the young engineers in Pakistan who very actively participated in the event. The summer school program was designed for new graduates, M.S. and Ph.D. students so they could advance their knowledge and research activities. The IEEE ComSoc Summer School has its historical background as well, as it first started two years ago in 2015 in Italy.

The opening ceremony of the IEEE ComSoc Summer School 2017 took place at FAST NU Lahore from 11–14 July 2017. The event began with a video message by Prof. Dr. Vincenzo Piuri, who is a full professor at the University of Milan, Italy. Dr. Piuri said it was his honor to address the participants of the IEEE ComSoc Summer School 2017. He mentioned that the event was a unique opportunity to learn new trends in communication technology since it provided a sharing experience for all. Dr. Vincenzo then said that events like this allowed all of us to improve and facilitate the citizens. He revealed that technology empowerment was benefiting not only Pakistan but also other countries. Dr. Piuri in the end congratulated the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section, KICS-UET and FAST-NU for conducting this event in Pakistan.

Prof. Fazal Ahmad Khalid, Vice Chancellor of the University of Engineering and Technology Lahore, was the honorable



Group photo of All Participants with COO Mr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Kashif Bashir Chair IEEE COMSoc Lahore Section, Dr. Amjad Hussain during Technical Tour to Punjab Safe City Authority Lahore.



COMSoc Speakers on Technical Visit to Punjab Safe City Authority. From left to right: Dr. Mahtab Alam, Mr. Kashif Bashir, Mr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Mr. Faisal K Sheikh, Dr. Amjad Hussain, Hussain Mahdi, Mr. Mehran Memon, Dr. Ali Hammad Akbar.



Prof. Dr. Waqar Mahmood Director KICS UET receiving souvenir from Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Fazal Ahmad Khalid. From Left: Prof. Dr. Waqar Mahmood, Prof. Dr. Fazal Ahmad Khalid, Dr. Amjad Hussain, Mr. Kashif Bashir.

chief guest. Prof. Khalid said that IEEE ComSoc was a good initiative and would surely bring lucrative results. He also mentioned that it would be beneficial for both industry and academia. He appreciated the technological advancements in the country and emphasized the efforts and contributions of our students who were active participants in smart world and smart technologies. Other guests included Prof. Dr. Waqar Mahmood, Director KICS UET and Sultan Qaboos IT Chair, Prof. Dr. Noor Muhammad Shaikh, GC University Lahore, Dr. Sayyed Aaun Abbas and Dr. Tariq Jadoon, LUMS, and the Chair of the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section, Mr. Kashif Bashir.

This year the IEEE ComSoc Summer School 2017 attracted 65 research participants from nine universities in Pakistan. There were 14 speakers, including five from abroad and nine from national universities. International speakers were from China, Saudi Arabia, Estonia, Ireland and Malaysia; national speakers were from LUMS, COMSATS Lahore, UET Lahore and Mehran University Jamshoro.

A number of talks coupled with speeches by the guests were seen at this year's summer school. Featured speakers were Dr.

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Group photo at the Opening Ceremony Day 1: all guests with Participants of COMSoc Summer School 2017.

Toward Development of IEEE ComSoc Activities in Kazakhstan

By Oleg Stukach, Tomsk Chapter Chair

The policy of energy independence is a strategic target of many states. Kazakhstan is the eighth largest country in the world in terms of territory, but not population. The only explored deposits of coal extracted from an open-cast mine surface is enough for 300 years. Nevertheless wind power engineering is widely developed in Kazakhstan. A possible reason is the high cost of constructing power lines to far away places. Also, the strong wind in the steppe blows constantly and mainly in one direction, in contrast with the weak breezes in Europe. However, it is necessary to monitor the remote power objects and to provide control and safety. It is effective only by wireless communications.

The second advantage of Kazakhstan is the organic agricul-

ture. It is a very technological part of the economy where each plant growing is under control. Because of the distances that need to be covered on the steppe, control is possible only by wireless communication.

Hence, energy and agriculture development inevitably requires the design of wireless control and communication facilities. But IEEE activity has not been present in Kazakhstan until now. More correctly, Kazakhstan is a white spot on the IEEE map. It seems that ComSoc should not miss the opportunities in this market before it quickly becomes overcrowded.

To attract attention to these problems, the first Euroasian Conference on Future Energy, together with the International Siberian Conference on Control and Communications, was held in June in the capital of Kazakhstan. Another purpose was the propagation of IEEE development through the formation of Chapters and Sections. We are convinced that in the large industrial and academic cities of Kazakhstan (Astana, Almaty, Karaganda, etc.) it is necessary to have Chapters for the basic directions of strategic

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Participants of the SIBCON 2017 Conference, Astana.

CONFERENCE REPORT

A Series of Cyber Security Workshops at INTERPOL World 2017

By Leo Hwa Chiang and Ewell Tan, IEEE APO Office, Singapore

Today, we are living in a connected society and the world has become borderless. Law enforcement officials are therefore facing a challenging environment, as technology has created new opportunities for criminals. The INTERPOL World conference, which was held at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre 4-7 July 2017, brought together security professionals, experts and police forces from around the world, to gain knowledge, share experiences and address security challenges, to further safeguard the cities we are living in and manage cyber threats.

Leo Hwa Chiang, Director of IEEE Asia Business Development,



From left to right: Regional Sales Manager, Ira Tan; Client Service Manager, Alex Liu; Project Manager, Ewell Tan and the Director of IEEE Asia Business Development, Leo Hwa Chiang.

curated three cyber security workshops with the topics "Surviving and Thriving through and after a Cyber-security Incident," "Man of Mode: Fashion, Hacking Tool Reuse and Copycat Crime in Cyberspace," and "Forensic Computing" on the 5-6 July at the INTERPOL World Congress, on behalf of the IEEE Communications Society. More than 60 participants attended the workshop. Participants at these workshops gained knowledge on improving the risk management process to rapidly recover from cyber-attacks and minimize the impact to the organization. They also discovered the increasingly sophisticated criminal ecosystem and the Darknet. Through the workshops, participants should be able to identify internal and external threats, and enforce security resilience.

In addition to these informative workshops, IEEE ComSoc had a booth to promote IEEE to the security professionals, industry leaders and government agencies. Through the combined efforts of InfoHost (the IEEE dealer), the IEEE Marketing and Sales Department team (Ira and Alex), and the IEEE Singapore office staff (Leo and Ewell), visitors' enquiries were answered at the exhibition booth.

Last but not least, the Executive Director of the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation, Mr. Noboru Nakatani, presented a certificate of appreciation to the IEEE Communications Society, for organizing the three cyber security workshops successfully at this Congress.



Leo Hwa Chiang (right) received a certificate of appreciation from Mr. Noboru Nakatani, the Executive Director of INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation.

Mohamed-Slim Alouini, Dr. Momin Uppal, Dr. Zartash Uzmi, Dr. Ghalib Shah, Dr. M. Majid Butt, Dr. Faisal K. Shaikh, Dr. Ubaid ullah Fiaz, Dr. Muhammad Tahir, Dr. Sobia Baig, Dr. Hus-sain Mahdi, Dr. Waqar Baig, Mr. He Gang and Dr. Muhammad Mahtab Alam. The topics included, among others, Internet Cen-sorship Research, USAID Fulbright and other scholarship opportu-nities abroad, Smart Grid Communication technology, FM Radio Broadcast Using RTL Software, Internet of Things, Polar Codes, Shared Spectrum Access, 5G Wireless Communication Networks, Wireless Acoustic Sensor Network. Paper presentations were also presented. A panel discussion on the topic of how to elevate research in Pakistan was also a major highlight of the event.

Two visits were also arranged. The first visit was to the best eye-candy locales in the city of Lahore. Second, the participants were taken on a technical tour of Punjab Safe City Headquarters, where they were briefed by Mr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Chief Oper-ating Officer and Project Director PPIC3. He also showed how the city was monitored by hundreds of cameras and how all the emergency services are integrated into a single hotline.

The chief guest of the closing ceremony was Engr. Jawed Salim Qureshi, Chairman of the Pakistan Engineering Council. He said that the Pakistan Engineering Council was closely work-ing with the government and industry for the betterment and future of the students who were appointed as interns. Mr. Jawed Salim Qureshi also said that Pakistani engineers had been doing great not only in Pakistan but also across the world to prove their mettle. He said that the formula of success was being a champion. Mr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Chief Operating Officer of the Punjab Safe City Authority, said that what he learned from his education was leadership and it was what took you to the heights of success. Mr. Edward Zhang, Vice President Huawei Technologies China, spoke about the CPEC and Huawei's ICT contribution in Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Fazal Ahmed Khalid, Vice Chancellor UET Lahore, expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Chair of the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section (Kashif Bashir) and volunteers for organizing this mega event between KICS-UET and FAST NU successfully.

Other guests were Prof. Dr. Waqar Mahmood, Director of KICS UET Lahore; Prof. Dr. Suhail Aftab Qureshi, Dean of EE at UET Lahore; Prof. Dr. Amjad Hussain, Director of FAST NU Lahore; Mr. Kashif Bashir, Chair of the IEEE ComSoc Lahore Section, and Mr. Usman Munawar, Secretary of the IEEE Lahore Section. The guests were given souvenirs and shields, while the participants and the event organizers were given certificates.

development: communication, power energy, control, and future agriculture.

The conference supports interdisciplinary discussions and interaction among scientists and engineers, establishing interna-tional cooperation through participation in the activities of the professional communities of IEEE.

The Conference was held at Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agro-technical University in Astana. The University has a strong Power Energy faculty with a Radio Engineering, Electronics and Telecom-munications Department. Financial support has been provided by the administration, namely, the Rector Akhylybek Kurishbayev, the Vice-Rector on strategic development Sergey Mogilnyy, and the dean of faculty Sultanbek Issenov. Employees of the Radio Engineering Department volunteered as organizers of the Con-ference, including Arman Mirmanov and Botagoz Khamzina. The Vice-President of the creation and operation of space systems, the Kazakhstan cosmonaut A. Aimbetov, and professor of the School of Engineering of the Nazarbaev University, IEEE Member Mehdi Bagheri, provided invited welcome lectures. Ordinary reports were presented within two days at 32 sessions in eight tracks, including Communications, Control, and Power Electronic Devices. The Proceedings of SIBCON-2017 are published in IEEE Xplore in the form of full papers.

National Instruments Russia R&D is the old partner of the SIBCON conference. Representatives of the company organized the following hands-on classes: "Basics of LabView," "MyRIO Plat-form for quick support of the engineering projects," and "New generation of the graph design of applications on LabView Soft-ware Technology Preview." In the special session "Computer Measurement Technologies" some questions on the introduction of innovative technologies for decision making for engineering problems in communications, automation of manufacturing, mod-eling, and processing of experiments were discussed. KATU is completely equipped with NI tools, and students fulfill class proj-ects on communication systems.

The social program included a banquet, technical excursions and a sight seeing tour. The International Exhibition ASTANA EXPO-2017 devoted to future energy technologies was open in the capital of Kazakhstan during the Conference, and all par-ticipants could visit the exhibition. Astana is the new capital of Kazakhstan, and it is a historic but very modern city. The rich history, huge cultural heritage, and modern technologies harmo-niously intertwine here. It is practically the second Singapore, and maybe the first. The capital is dazzlingly beautiful. Walking around the city, you can admire unusual modern installations, which give Astana its special charm: Bayterek, the symbol of Astana, the Green Water Boulevard "Nurzhol" recreational pedestrian zone with the avenue of singing fountains, the Independence Palace, the Palace of Peace and Convent, the Palace of Arts, the National Museum, the Astana Opera, etc.

ComSoc is actively present in Europe, but it is necessary to expand into new territories and new markets. We invite to Astana all who are interested in extending the development of ComSoc activities. Above all, we suggest locating a future ICC in Astana. We are sure you will not be disappointed.

GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS NEWSLETTER

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