**One IEEE**

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With over 400,000 members worldwide the IEEE is the largest technical organization in the world.  The IEEE has three broad divisions of activities—Technical Activities (TA), Members and Geographical Activities (MGA) and a well respected Standards group.

In TA there are 38 professional societies spanning a great many engineering disciplines.  In addition there are 7 technical councils, 2 technical committees and a number of affinity groups such as GOLD, Life Members, Consultant Networks and Women in Engineering.

The MGA consists of 10 regions with 6 in the US and the balance in other countries.  Each of these regions is broken into sections and these sections may have both regular chapters and student branches of societies, technical councils and affinity groups.   There are

IEEE Standards comprise standard groups from many of the technical societies and works on a great variety of technical standards covering topics as diverse as network communication to digital rights.  Clearly there are a great many things that an IEEE member can get involved in and these are some of the strengths of the organization.

While this variety of IEEE activity allows volunteers to find something that they like to do and that can further their career, the many splits within the IEEE can lead to valuing one type of activity over others (usually the one a volunteer is currently engaged in).  A narrow focus on a single part of the IEEE can lead to missed opportunities for synergistic opportunities that span the interests of several official groups and could lead to beneficial and interesting activities.

Likely one engineering discipline led you into the IEEE and sometime in your IEEE membership you have probably been a member of at least one technical society, council or affinity group.  Maybe you have helped your local chapter, section or even played a role in a technical society or IEEE standard.  That experience benefited many people within your group and likely benefited you personally as well.  If you are like many others you may have been involved in multiple parts of the IEEE—you aren't just a member of any one IEEE group.

Let's consider what we could if we interacted not just within the confines of one IEEE group but between IEEE groups.  We call this concept—One IEEE and it was

the unstated theme of the 2011 IEEE Sections Congress.  At that event, put on by the MGA, not only did IEEE sections participate (as usual) but all the IEEE TA groups, as well as Standards were invited to participate and most did.  There was much discussion at the Sections Congress and in both TA and MGA over the last few years on what we can do between the various "bunkers" in the IEEE to provide greater benefit to our members and volunteer and to "enable members to create the future."

Well, the future is now.  If the IEEE is to remain relevant and experience robust growth it needs to find new ways to interact between the divisions.  We must explore new cross-disciplinary activities and create a growing sense that IEEE members are valuable and worthy of respect by their peers and their greater communities.  We can participate in this process within Region 6.

Here are some things I would like to see done to create cross-disciplinary IEEE activities at the local and regional level:
- Create a Region 6 committee on overall IEEE resources within Region 6, whether these are TA, Standard or MGA activities and to encourage making these resources available within the region
- One example of the above would be to work with Region 6 societies and companies to find engineering student resources for our student members. These might include access to software and hardware development kits, on-site classes and tutorials and other such resources—that we can post on the Region web site and work through our various Region 6 areas to get out to students and their advisors
- Continue and expand our Region 6 conferences, with a more humanitarian or soft engineering or cross-disciplinary focus (and thus outside the usual focus of the IEEE societies and technical councils) and make sure that these events generate an net surplus as well as serve  previously unmet needs
- Within the MGA, to create a loose network of similarly minded Regions and sections that may be able to share resources, duplicate best practices and even work on projects that span sections and regions
- Create a central actively managed publicity resource in Region 6 for all interesting activity put on by the IEEE or that may be of interest to IEEE members
- Create a means for easy on-line participation in Region 6 activities such as those discussed above—for those who don't live near or cannot travel
- When appropriate create special interactions with interested technical societies and affinity groups to address concerns and interests within Region 6—perhaps we could make a standing committee between these groups and Region 6 on cross-group initiatives and interests
- Invite technical society leaders who live in region 6 to Region 6 activities when appropriate
- Find out what cross-disciplinary and cross IEEE group activity ideas that you might have

By creating new connections between the diverse IEEE entities in Region 6 we can create new value in being a member of the IEEE, raise overall awareness and respect for the IEEE and its members, benefit our communities and have a lot of fun!  Let's work together to work beyond the divisions to make this One IEEE.