

## What May Become of Us?

In a recent email chain between members of the Santa Clara Valley Consultants Network (an IEEE Consultants Network) there was an interesting analysis of the decline in total number of electrical engineers and computer hardware engineers in the US over several years. The numbers from that chain are shown below:

Employment for Electrical Engineers and Computer Hardware Engineers:

- 2002 385,000
- 2004 343,000
- 2006 382,000
- 2011 310,000
- 2012 335,000
- 2013 300,000
- 2014 271,000

This table as derived from four widely quoted articles by Patrick Thibodeau  
<http://www.computerworld.com/author/Patrick-Thibodeau/>

Although employment over that period for electrical and computer hardware engineers seemed to remain in the 2-5% range the overall number of these engineers seems to have declined by almost 30% from 2002 to 2014. Although this list may not capture all those who could be or are IEEE members it is interesting to compare this decline to the overall loss of IEEE members in Region 6 over the same period, about 18%. Seen in this light and assuming that these US numbers for employment are also reflective of IEEE Region 6, perhaps our Region loss of members reflects a broader trend for fewer (at least hardware) engineers in the US and possibly in Region 6.

So if we actually do have a smaller pool of engineers who might be members of the IEEE what can we do to attract the people from that pool. There are IEEE USA members who use the IEEE insurance programs and other offerings to at least partially justify their membership but the way that we can attract and retain more members may lie much more in what we can do for each other as well as for our communities and the world.

We are in a very active campaign to get Region 6 local IEEE society and affinity group chapters to record and post their technical meetings to the new IEEE Region 6 chapter recording site. You can sign up to upload or view these recordings at: [www.nuxlabs.org](http://www.nuxlabs.org) and find resources and training on chapter meeting recording at: <http://ieee-region6.org/category/region-meetings/>. This is a way for our volunteers to create content of real value for other IEEE members and as this collection of informative and cutting-edge content grows, access to this content will be a real advantage of IEEE membership.

Our chapters, sections, areas and the region also provide lots of opportunities to get

involved in professional activities, STEM support and humanitarian activities. In addition our just completed Sustainable Technologies (SusTech) conference in Ogden Utah and our upcoming Global Humanitarian Technology Conference (GHTC) in Seattle in October are great opportunities to get involved in activities that allow IEEE members to support on-going public activities to promote a better world.

So although the total number of possible engineers and others who might join the IEEE in Region 6 may be declining we want to create activities that support our members and encourage more folks to join and remain in the IEEE. What may become of us? I think Region 6 might become the model of how to attract, retain and engage technical professionals and create a future that is better for ourselves, and the world around us.

Tom Coughlin  
Region 6 Director