

Diversity and Inclusion in the IEEE

Tom Coughlin, President of IEEE-USA

Frankly, humanity needs all the help it can get. The daunting problems facing us in the near future, as well as the enormous opportunities, require our best efforts and diverse perspectives. Technology will be an important element in solving these problems and also seizing these opportunities. But we will only achieve the best results if we can harness the insights, creativity and energies of all the members in the diverse community of technologists.

As the largest technical professional organization in the world, IEEE should lead the way in enabling and listening to the insights of diverse peoples and cultures, and in particular, help to make sure that women feel welcome and accepted in the technology community. So, with that in mind, let me make a challenge to the IEEE community¹:

- What if IEEE could be a refuge for women in technology and help them remain and flourish in their technical careers?
- What if women felt a real sense of membership in a supportive IEEE community?
- What if we provided them a space where they were respected and given opportunities to shine?
- What if IEEE were to provide leadership skills and opportunities for advancing women's careers, and celebrate their success?
- What if we could help our women members feel empowered and encouraged to be their best selves?

We have a way to go in meeting all these challenges, but if we start now we can make sure that, in the near future, women feel more welcome in the IEEE and that IEEE is working to make sure that their perspectives are honored and their energies are harnessed to create a better world.

IEEE-USA is working on greater inclusion of women. We also seek women volunteers to help with our programs and to lead the IEEE-USA. Following are some of the things we are engaged in.

IEEE-USA collaborates with SWE and other organizations to raise awareness of Title IX's and to encourage diversity, inclusion and gender equity in federally-funded STEM education institutions. IEEE-USA is a partner in the 50K Coalition. Its goal is to graduate 50,000 female, Hispanic, Black and native American engineers annually by the year 2025. IEEE-USA supports STEM activities of many sorts that welcome girls to participate in the fun and adventure of technology.

¹ Thanks to Heather Skinner, an IEEE volunteer, who worked with me on this list of "what ifs..." at the 2019 WIE ILC.



IEEE-USA proactively supports legislation designed to enhance engineering and computing at the K-12.

- Supporting "combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act of 2019" (H.R.36/S.1067)
- K-12 STEM Outreach, e.g. engaging future rocketeers at Discover Engineering Family Day

On August 2-3, 2019 in Pittsburg, PA IEEE-USA is putting on its EVO19 Conference (The Evolution of You). EVO19 is a professional development event and people from all stages in their career are welcome to participate. You can find out more and register at: <https://evoconference.org>. Below are some of the speakers at the IEEE-USA EVO19 Conference



DEIDRE DIAMOND

Founder & CEO, CyberSN
Founder, Brainbabe



AMY PECK

Founder and CEO, Endeavor VR, a leading global VR/AR (XR) strategy & consulting firm



SONITA LONTAH

Global Head & Vice President of Marketing of HP Inc.'s 3D Print & Digital Manufacturing



CAROLINE STOKES

Founder, FORWARD, an executive search/coaching firm specializing in helping innovation leaders prepare for the AI revolution

IEEE-USA also puts on multiple webinars and publishes ebooks as well as audiobooks, many of which focus on developing soft skills and leadership skills that can benefit you in your career.

Following are some recent webinars that may be of interest to women. You can check out our webinars at: <https://ieeeusa.org/careers/webinars/>

- How to Get Invited Into the Boy's Club – And Why It's Important
- Good Girls Ask – Negotiations for Women
- Helping You – and the Children in Your Life – Learn STEM Subjects More Efficiently

IEEE-USA has over 250 ebooks available for download and 20 titles available in our award-winning Women in Engineering ebook series. You can find out more about our ebooks at: <https://ieeeusa.org/shop/>

The long-running IEEE-USA salary and benefits survey provides a resource for seeing how your salary and benefits rank compared to comparable peers, including men and women. The salary and benefits survey is free to take and IEEE members who take the survey get several free uses of the survey data to answer questions that they may have.

IEEE-USA also puts on an annual Congressional Visits Day, usually in April, that train IEEE volunteers and make appointments for those volunteers to meet their representatives and their staff in their offices in Washington. This year we had 70 people, with a good mix of men and women participating. Participants meet other folks talking with the representatives as well as IEEE volunteers from throughout the US. The selfie photo below is of volunteer Gloria See with Representative Alexandria Osasio-Cortez (NY).



Finally, IEEE USA is heavily engaged in public policy, and with its Washington, DC office has several staff registered as lobbyists and hosts a number of public policy committee, with volunteers working to generate white papers, amicus briefs and other documents to share with our representatives in the US government. Of particular note, in July 2019 we are forming an ad hoc policy committee to advocate government action to foster STEM diversity and prevent harassment of STEM professionals and students. If you are interested please contact Brendan Godfrey, VP of Government Relations of IEEE-USA, brendan.godfrey@ieee.org.

IEEE has a way to go to meet the challenge of full inclusion and embracing diversity, but IEEE-USA is working to increase this inclusion and to harness the power of all our members to deal with today's challenges and enable tomorrow's opportunities.

Thanks for reading. I'll be seeing you!

Tom Coughlin

