



THE POCKET SCOPE



The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

Volume 56, Number 4

December 2005

SCOPE NOTES

December Houston Section News

Where:
HESS (Houston Engineering
and Scientific Society)
5430 Westheimer@Yorktown

When:
Thursday, December 1, 2005
6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Social
6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Cost:
\$10.00 - IEEE Members with 48-
hour advance reservations.
\$20.00 - non-members
\$5.00 - students
Call (713) 207-IEEE to make
your reservations.



The Chairman's Message

Scott Ballew

The Chairman's Message

Scott Ballew
Houston Section Chair

See Page 3
for the Continu-
ing Education
Schedule!

IEEE WEB
ADDRESS

[http://
\(www.ieee-
houston.org\)](http://www.ieee-houston.org)

IEEE Houston Section
P.O. Box
460443
Houston, Texas
77056-8014

Chair Message-Cont.

Houston Section Meeting

Thursday, December 1, 2005

Topic:

EMPLOYMENT LAW: Everything* you wanted to know, but were afraid to ask. . . This presentation will provide an overview of employment law – a short consciousness raising exercise — what are the basics and what steps can be taken to prevent employment litigation (and related costs) from happening. As many of the following thoughts that can be touched within one hour will be reviewed:

- Do you find it difficult to navigate employee relations issues when you have an engineering deadline to meet?
- With so many laws out there, would it be helpful to have some of the basics of employment law in hand when you deal with others at work?
- How can you head off employment litigation and the related “black holes” of costs and time loss?
- Bottom line: What’s right? What’s wrong? What should I do?

Speaker: Andrea M. Johnson, a Houston employment litigator, will speak at the December 1, 2005, meeting on this always timely topic, addressing these and other employment questions that you may have. She will powerpack an hour-long discussion and question and answer session to help you address quickly and efficiently these sometimes thorny issues and head off problems before they become expensive difficulties.

AJ, as her friends know her, is a partner with Powers & Frost, L.L.P., and head of the firm’s Employment and Commercial Litigation Section. Her diverse management-defense practice includes representing Fortune 100 and 500 companies both here in Texas and in several other states. She has tried employment cases in federal and state court and has worked on cases of first impression and cases cited by the *Texas Lawyer*, including a listing in the “Biggest Suits of Texas” (complete defense verdict in a case where \$ 52 million was demanded). AJ also represents employers in binding arbitration and on appeal. A significant part of AJ’s work involves developing best practices employment strategies for employers and assisting in company training for employees. She is a frequently invited speaker and has published several articles

Where HESS Building, 5430 Westheimer at Yorktown **Time:** 6:00 - 6:30 PM Social - 6:30 - 7:30 PM Dinner - 7:30 - 8:30 PM Presentations **Cost** Dinner \$15.00 for members who register 48 hours prior to the event, \$20.00 for members who do not register 48 hours prior to the event and for non-members; \$5.00 for students.

IEEE CONTINUING EDUCATION ON DEMAND

2005-2006 REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____
 Company: _____
 Mailing Address: _____ City/State: _____
 Zip: _____
 Email: _____
 Telephone: _____

Fax: _____
 IEEE Membership Number: _____
 Mail a copy of your completed registration form along with your check payable to
IEEE CED SEMINARS at the following address:
 IEEE CED SEMINARS
 PAT ROGERS
 SOUTHWEST POWER / HUGHES SUPPLY CO.
 425 BLUEBERRY STREET
 HOUSTON, TX 77018
patricia.rogers@hughessupply.com

Registration receipts will be available upon request at the seminars.
 For a cancellation refund, telephone Pat Rogers by the Friday before the seminar at:
 Phone: 713.696.9922
 Fax: 713.696.9983
 Email: patricia.rogers@hughessupply.com

IEEE Continuing Education on Demand Completion Certificate with Continuing Education Units (CEUs) is provided after receipt of both nightly questionnaires and seminar evaluation sheets.

Please direct seminar questions to Paul Barrett at 713.598.0790
 Please check the IEEE Houston Section website for the latest schedule and course information.
<http://www.ieee-houston.org>

IEEE CONTINUING EDUCATION ON DEMAND

The purpose of IEEE Houston Section Continuing Education on Demand is to provide modern practical industrial power application topics that supplement the daily work activities of the practicing graduate electrical engineer.

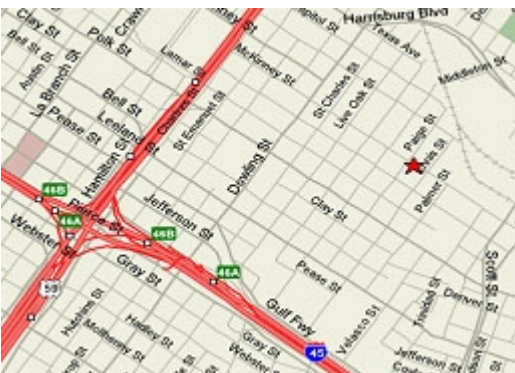
The seminars are intended to stimulate further study and discussion for learning continuance throughout the working career. Topics apply to heavy industries: oil and gas, petro-chem, cogen, pulp and paper, etc.
 Instructors are application engineers, manufacturing specialists and expert consultants who provide a blend of diverse engineering perspectives.

The cost of each seminar is \$70.00 for IEEE members. Non-members \$140.00. The check must be received the Friday before the seminar start date. "Pay at the door" is discouraged due to many "no-shows". If you have a special situation contact Paul Barrett (713) 598-0790. Signing up the week of the seminar does not guarantee seminar presentation documents or meals.

The following 2005-2006 seminar schedule defines the topics, dates and times. A course syllabus is available on request. Minimum class size is twenty for each seminar. Seating is limited and filled on an as received basis. Presentation documents are provided. A buffet is served from 5:00PM-6:00PM.

Seminar location 2005 - 2006

Summit Electric
 2929 McKinney
 Houston, TX. 77003



Seminar Title	Code	Date	Amount
Grounding Techniques, Industrial Power Sys	402	Oct. 4 / 5	\$
Electrical Safety in the Workplace	921	Oct. 18/19	\$
API Motor Standards Update	620	Nov. 1/ 2	\$
Protective Relay 5 ABB Relays	315	Nov 15/16	\$
HV Substations For Industrial Applications	125	Feb. 7/ 8	\$
MV Cable Considerations Thru 69kV	130	Feb. 21/22	\$
Protective Relaying for Large Generators	306	Mar. 7/ 8	\$
IEC Standards for Large Power Transformers	950	Mar. 21/22	\$
IEEE 1584 Arc Flash Calculations	340	Apr. 4 / 5	\$
Residual Bus Auto Transfer Schemes	140	Apr. 18/19	\$
Total Paid:			\$

Enter amount for each seminar:

IEEE member early signup: \$ 70.00
 Non-member registration: \$140.00

Fall of 2005 IEEE Seminar Schedule
Grounding Techniques—Industrial Power Sys (402)

Jack Woodham, Jedson Engineering
Tony Locker, Post Glover Resistors
 Oct. 4/5, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
 Reviews and explores the four types of grounding for industrial power systems 480 – 4160 V. [0.5 CEU]

Electrical Safety in the Workplace (921)
Danny Ligget, E.I. DuPont Co.
 Oct. 18/19, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
 A detailed focus is on electrical workplace safety coupled with comprehensive safety training. [0.5 CEU]

API Motor Standards Update (620)
David Rains, WEG & Doug Gehring, Siemens
 Nov. 1/2, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
 An overview of large motor design considerations for compliance with latest API 541 and API 546. Review and comparison of IEEE 841 and API 541. [0.5 CEU]

Protective Relay 5 – ABB Relays (315)
Robert Wilson, ABB
 Nov. 15/16, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
 Review of ABB protective relay design fundamentals and special application considerations. [0.5 CEU]

Spring of 2006 IEEE Seminar Schedule
HV Substations for Industrial Applications (125)
Allen Xi & Charles Pulay, Burns & McDonnell Engrs
 Feb. 7/8, 2006 6:00-8:50PM
 An overview of industrial substation design considerations, layout, protection, grounding and controls. Testing and commissioning considerations. [0.5 CEU]



IEEE
Houston
Section

2005-2006

Continuing
Education
On Demand



MV Cable Considerations thru 69 KV (130)
H.R. Stewart HRS Consulting
 Feb. 21/22, 2006 6:00-8:50PM
 Review of design application considerations related to MV power cable projects. [0.5 CEU]

Protective Relaying for Large Generators (306)
Wayne Hartman, GE Multilin
 March 7/8, 2006 6:00-8:50PM
 Reviews large generator design characteristics, application problems and reliable protective schemes. [0.5 CEU]

IEC Standards for Large Power Transformers (950)
Tom Malone & Martyn Hildreth. Areva T&D
 March 21/22, 2006 6:00-8:50PM
 Detailed review of current IEC standards related to large power transformers. [0.5 CEU]

IEEE 1584 Arc Flash Calculations (340)
Jim Bowen, Powell Electrical Manufacturing Co. & Daleep Mohla, DCM Consulting
 April. 4/5, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
 A two part study focuses on NFPA 70E flash hazard analysis requirements and IEEE 1584 formulas to satisfy 70E requirements. [0.5 CEU]

Residual Bus Auto Transfer Schemes (140)
Roy Cosse, Powell Electrical Systems Inc. & Robert Spiewak, PolAmex Engineering
 April 18/19, 2005 6:00-8:50PM
A focused review of the residual bus auto transfer schemes, examples, why they work and do not work. Traditional and modern applications. [0.5 CEU]

Senior Members

Looking for Senior Member Nominations

READ THIS SECTION TO BECOME A SENIOR MEMBER IN THE IEEE.

A goal of our Region is to sponsor as many Senior Members as possible and I am asking your help. The IEEE criteria for Senior Member status is ten years of professional practice including five years of significant performance, and references. (See the nominator letter and application form for clarification on the IEEE website.) If you know an IEEE member who qualifies for Senior Membership, I would like you to nominate him or her by forwarding their nomination to one of the Houston Section Excom members. If you qualify and are not a senior member please reply to one of the Section Excom members. If your are retired and have met the criteria at one time lets get you nominated. Section meetings are the best networking tool to achieve Senior membership.

As an alternative process, you can direct the prospective Senior Member to one of the Houston Section Excom Members. We have a list of several Fellows and Senior Members which we can use for references. The Section will nominate all those qualified who provide a resume and significant performance vita.

Senior Membership in IEEE promotes the value of membership and enhances the status of the member. The is an achievement award lets honor our deserving members.

IEEE Houston Section Officer Nominations

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS NOMINATIONS FOR 2006

The following Houston Section members have been nominated by the Nominations Committee to serve as Executive Officers during the year 2006

Past Chairman - Scott Ballew

Chairman - Donald Dunn

Vice-Chairman - Polo Gutierrez

Secretary - Justin McCaskill

Director - Charles Benard

Treasurer - Gil Dolor

Be sure to attend the December 1, 2005, IEEE Houston Section Meeting to participate in the election of the Officers. Nominations for these positions can also be made from the floor that evening.

The members of the Nominations Committee were: Gil Dolor, Justo Benitez and Dwayne Lowry.

Texas A&M Faculty Openings

Faculty Openings - Non Tenured

Texas A&M University: Visiting Faculty / Senior Lecturer position in the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering: The Electrical & Computer Engineering Department at Texas A&M University, College Station Campus, is seeking a full-time faculty member in a Visiting Faculty (non-tenured) / Senior Lecturer (non-tenured) position.

The primary responsibility will be teaching and coordination of undergraduate senior design projects and serving as the coordinator or department representative on interdisciplinary senior design projects. Additional responsibilities from time to time include seeking corporate project sponsorship, speakers for weekly lectures and teaching ECE freshman and junior courses: Introduction to Electrical & Computer Engineering; Electric circuit theory; Introduction to digital design, etc.

Requirements are a Ph.D. in ECE and a broad knowledge of the electrical and computer engineering discipline, with experience in electronic product development and management skills. Industry experience is highly valued.

Applicants should send a complete resume, including names and addresses of three references to:

Dr. Costas N. Georghiades
Department Head
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Texas A&M University
TAMU 3128, College Station, TX, 77843-3128.

The deadline for applications is December 1, 2005, but the position will remain open until filled. Texas A&M University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and actively seeks the candidacy of women and minorities.

More information can be found at the following link.

<http://www.ee.tamu.edu/Department/DepFacultyOpeningsNonTenured.htm>

IEEE USA in Action Update

****IEEE-USA IN ACTION **** Wall Street Journal Rebutts Engineer Shortage Claims, IEEE-USA Committee Chair Quoted

WASHINGTON (16 November 2005) — The Wall Street Journal today rebuts claims of a shortage of U.S. engineers by saying that difficulty filling positions is often caused by employers being too choosy in the hiring process.

In “Behind Shortage of Engineers: Employers Grow More Choosy,” author Sharon Begley writes that “... companies often create the very shortages they decry by insisting on applicants who meet every item on a detailed list of qualifications.”

Michael Teitelbaum, a demographer with New York’s Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, said, “No one I know who has looked at the data with an open mind has been able to find any sign of a current shortage.”

Paul Kostek, chair of the IEEE-USA Career & Workforce Policy Committee said, “Every few years there is a spurt of panic that we won’t have enough engineers in five years. And I say to myself, gee, I’ll still be here.”

IEEE-USA staff contributed information to Ms. Begley, directed her to Teitelbaum and arranged the Kostek interview.

Wall Street Journal subscribers can access the article at http://online.wsj.com/article_print/SB113210508287498432.html. Others can go to <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/05320/607304.stm>.

Chris McManes, Senior Public Relations Coordinator, IEEE-USA
1828 L Street N.W., Suite 1202, Washington, DC 20036-5104, USA
PHONE: + 1 202 785 0017, ext. 8356
E-MAIL: c.mcmanes@ieee.org WEB: <http://www.ieeeusa.org>

IEEE USA News

NEWS from IEEE-USA, 1828 L Street, N.W., Suite 1202, Washington, D.C.
20036-5104

U.S. IEEE Student Members Encouraged to Apply for IEEE-USA Mass Media Fellowships

WASHINGTON (4 November 2005) — IEEE-USA is for the first time seeking two U.S. IEEE student members to work as reporters, researchers and production assistants in newsrooms across the country by serving a 10-week mass media fellowship in the summer of 2006.

Administered by the AAAS in Washington, D.C., mass media fellows must have the ability to explain complex scientific and engineering principles in a way the general public can understand. The program helps strengthen connections between engineers and journalists, as well as increase public understanding and awareness of science, engineering and technology.

Applicants must at least be a senior in college majoring in a technical field, mathematics or social sciences. Mass Media Fellows receive a weekly stipend of \$450. Applications are due no later than 15 January 2006. For more information and an application go to <http://www.aaas.org/programs/education/MassMedia/>; or contact Stacey Pasco, at spasco@aaas.org, tel. +1 202 326 6441.

In 2005, AAAS Mass Media Fellows produced some 250 news stories on science and technology. Abby Vogel, a graduate student at the University of Maryland, served as IEEE-USA’s 2005 Mass Media Fellow. Vogel worked for the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch, and wrote articles on West Virginia wind farms and making shuttles safer. She also placed several articles on the front page of the paper. For more on IEEE-USA’s participation in this program, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org/communications/massmedia.asp>

IEEE-USA is an organizational unit of the IEEE. It was created in 1973 to advance the public good and promote the careers and public policy interests of the more than 220,000 technology professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The IEEE is the world’s largest technical professional society.

For more information, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org>.

IEEE CareerAlert

IEEE CAREER ALERT for 15 Nov 2005

Your weekly report on jobs, education, management, and the engineering workplace, from the editors of IEEE Spectrum

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. The “I” In Team
2. Ready, Set, Negotiate
3. Do You Have to Go to Grow? Or Does It Pay to Stay?
4. Irish Government Shores Up Homegrown Software Research

1. The “I” in Team

If you’re a manager and no one on your team seems to be pulling their weight, you may want to heed the lesson of a Science Magazine article. It describes the situation of a respected scientist who complained that his research staff showed no initiative. But a friend and colleague realized that his subordinates had simply become resigned to the fact that he was trying to do their jobs for them. Instead of delegating tasks, being inclusive in planning, and using his expertise to help them become better scientists in their own right, he held the reins tightly. The result: he was overworked and his subordinates had given up. Read on at: <[http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/issue/articles/2005_11_11/lab_dynamics_doing_everyone_else_s_job/\(parent\)/13997](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/issue/articles/2005_11_11/lab_dynamics_doing_everyone_else_s_job/(parent)/13997)>

2. Ready, Set, Negotiate

Just like in football, where your team’s starting field position affects its chances of scoring, your starting salary makes a big difference in how much money you will earn over your career. In a Chronicle.com article, two graduate career counselors at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign chide job seekers not to be afraid of negotiation. Failure to do so could cost you upward of

US \$150,000 over your lifetime. Knowing that many job candidates operate out of fear, the career counselors debunk several myths about the hiring process and answer some important questions about when to begin negotiating and how. They reassure job seekers that, “Employers don’t withdraw job offers because a candidate attempts to negotiate. In fact, most employers expect you to negotiate.” Read on at: <<http://chronicle.com/jobs/2005/11/2005110801c.htm>>

3. Do You Have to Go to Grow? Or Does It Pay to Stay?

Conventional wisdom says that the most highly valued IT professionals are those who have gained a broad base of knowledge from changing companies fairly often. But in a ComputerWorld.com article, Adam Kolawa, chief executive of California-based computer software vendor Parasoft, challenges that notion. Kolawa contends that it is the most specialized developers who are most valuable. He says that software developers who find a niche and stick with it will find that companies prize their ability to step in and make an immediate contribution with little training. They’ll also find that companies

are willing to pay a premium for an easy transition.

What’s more, says Kolawa, by switching jobs frequently, you may be sacrificing your long-term development as a technologist on the altar of short-term pay increases. Read on at:

<<http://www.computerworld.com/careertopics/careers/story/0,10801,106031,00.html?SKC=careers-106031>>

IEEE Career Alert-Cont.

4. Irish Government Shores Up Homegrown Software Research

Science Foundation Ireland has reported that it will provide 11.7 million euros (US \$13.7 million) to support the newly-opened Irish Software Engineering Research Center, or ISERC. The center will be

housed at the University of Limerick in western Ireland. The center is intended to supply Ireland's software-dependant enterprises with skilled personnel and innovative ideas.

The center, which opened its doors on 1 November, will put researchers from industry and academia together on projects seeking approaches to improving their software development methods.

<<http://www.siliconrepublic.com/news/news.nv?storyid=single5652>>

The IEEE Job Site, available exclusively to IEEE members, can help you locate career opportunities easily and confidentially. Just complete a profile of your qualifications and requirements, and you'll be notified via email when a suitable job becomes available. IEEE Job Site was named one of the top online recruitment sites by Weddle's Guide to Employment Web Sites. And top employers know that

IEEE members are the most qualified electrotechnology and information-technology professionals in the world. Take a few minutes to register with the IEEE Job Site and check out your career options today! <<http://www.ieee.org/jobs>>

Manage Your Subscription to IEEE Career Alert IEEE Career Alert is prepared weekly by the editors

of IEEE Spectrum, the flagship magazine of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, read by more than 360,000 people worldwide. You'll find IEEE Spectrum's homepage at

<<http://www.spectrum.ieee.org>>

IEEE Career Alert is part of the What's New @IEEE email news service. For more information on subscribing to other What's New newsletters, visit <<http://whatsnew.ieee.org/>>

IEEE USA EYE on Washington

The latest issue of EOW is now available on-line. For complete text and links, please visit: <http://ieeusa.com/policy/eyeonwashington/2005/05eow21.asp>

Highlights include:

Senate Clears Deficit Reduction Bill, Approves H-1B Visa Increase - 3 NOV:

The Senate passed a sweeping five year, \$35 billion deficit reduction package, but its fate remains unclear as the House prepares to open debate on a vastly different \$54 billion version. Republican leaders hope to adjourn for the year at the end of November and are reluctant to prolong the session to resolve differences over budget details that face no hard deadline this year.

The Senate bill (S 1932), approved on a 52 to 47 vote, finds its savings through cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, farm aid program and student lender subsidies. It adds revenues by, among other things, increasing pension insurance premiums, radio spectrum sales and employment-based visa fees. Of special interest to IEEE-USA members, the Senate bill boosts revenues by raising the numbers of foreign professionals who can be admitted to work in the United States on certain employment-based visas. In any year in which the annual 65,000 H-1B cap is reached, for example, the bill will allow employers to petition for an additional 30,000 H-1B temporary visas in exchange for an extra \$500 per visa fee. The current 140,000 annual cap on immigrant (legal permanent resident) visas available to extra-ordinary ability professionals, advanced degree professionals and baccalaureate degree professionals would also be boosted by up to 90,000 visas a year with an extra \$500 per visa fee.

Multi-national corporations that wish to transfer foreign employees to work temporarily in the United States on L (Intra-company transfer) visas will have to pay an additional \$750 fee. An IEEE-USA backed amendment introduced by Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) and supported by Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) was defeated 84 to 14. The Byrd amendment would have substituted a simple House Judiciary Committee proposal calling for a \$1,500 increase in L visa fees for the more complex EB/H-1B/L visa proposal included in S 1932 as passed by the Senate. If you would like to read the record of the floor debate, please visit our web site at <http://ieeusa.com/policy/reports/ByrdAmendment.pdf>

Latest Draft of Telecom Bill Gives Bells More of What They Want - The Bells appear to be getting what they want in the latest draft of the House Energy and Commerce Committee's legislation - circulated by the committee after they collected industry comments - aimed at updating telecommunications laws for the Internet era.

House Energy & Commerce Committee Cites Abuses in E-Rate Program, Vows Crack-down House Recognized October as National Cyber Security Awareness Month Digital Switchover Date is Subject to Pop Culture as Well as Political Wishes - Wariness, the Superbowl, indecisiveness, ... whatever is preventing it, Congress can't put it off forever. Ultimately, the House and Senate must agree on a specific date for the digital TV switchover.

House Passed Iran Nonproliferation Act To help U.S. Space Program Senate Bill Would Create Venture Capital Program Under The SBANSF Director Congratulates 2005 Nobel Prize Winners If NASA Were Bound by Sarbanes-Oxley, CFO Would Not Certify the Agency's Finances - According to a new GAO report, NASA has made very little progress in reforming its troubled financial management system. NASA's Chief Financial Officer, Gwendolyn Sykes, testified before a joint hearing of the House Science Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, and the Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance, and Accountability, that she would not certify the agency's financial statements if she were bound by Sarbanes-Oxley, the

EYE on Washington-Cont

federal law that provides severe penalties to private sector officials for financial misstatements.

USTR Report Says Japan's Tech Sectors Are More Open - 2 NOV: The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative issued a report today saying that reforms in Japan continue to expand market access for foreign U.S. firms that offer telecommunications services and e-commerce, and the reforms are improving U.S.-Japanese cooperation on intellectual property rights, according to a new report.

2007 Congressional & State Department Fellowships IEEE Student Members Encouraged to Apply for 2006 WISE Program - Next summer, the IEEE will sponsor three outstanding student members to participate in the 2006 Washington Internships for Students of Engineering (WISE) Program. The select candidates will spend nine weeks in Washington, D.C., learning how engineers contribute to the legislative the decision-making process. For more information, visit www.wise-intern.org, or contact Sharon Richardson at s.richardson@ieee.org. The application deadline is December 16, 2005.

WISE Program Seeks Senior Science & Technology Public Policy Advisor to Engineering Students (Nine Week Summer Position) - An outstanding individual capable of teaching and mentoring engineering students on the interaction between engineering, technology, and public policy is sought to serve as Advisor-In-Residence (AIR) for the 2006 WISE Program (Washington Internships for Students of Engineering). For more information, please visit: <http://www.wise-intern.org/advisor.html> View a PDF of the announcement, here: <http://www.wise-intern.org/FMR/WISEAdvisor.pdf>

Telecom Regulation Updates - TX, NJ, MI Rhode Island Action Plan Calls for Improvements in Science and Math Education

Louisiana Negotiating For E-Voting System

New Virginia E-Recycling Plant Will Add Jobs to the Area

Massachusetts Lawmakers Concerned About Proposed Implementation of IT Standards

What's New @ IEEE-USA's Eye on Washington highlights important federal legislative and regulatory developments that affect U.S. engineers and their careers. In addition to this biweekly newsletter, subscribers receive legislative bulletins and action alerts on IEEE-USA priority issues, including: retirement security, employment benefits, research & development funding, computers and information policy, immigration reform, intellectual property protection and privacy of health/medical information.

EDITOR: Erica Wissolik, IEEE-USA, 1828 L Street, N.W., Suite 1202,
Washington, DC 20036-5104

IEEE USA News

IEEE-USA Applauds Rep. Pascrell for Introducing H-1B Reform Legislation

WASHINGTON (21 November 2005) — IEEE-USA applauds Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-N.J.) for introducing legislation that attempts to correct some of the "serious problems" in the H-1B temporary visa program.

Rep. Pascrell's bill, H.R. 43278, the "Defend the American Dream Act of 2005," introduced on 17 November, is designed to provide greater workforce protections for U.S. citizens and H-1B visa holders. It would require all employers, not just so-called "H-1B-dependent companies," to attest to good-faith efforts to actively recruit U.S. workers for jobs employers propose to fill with H-1B workers. And it prohibits the outplacement (i.e., outsourcing, leasing or contracting) of H-1B workers by H-1B employers to other companies.

"In report after report, government investigators have found serious weaknesses and failings in the H-1B program," IEEE-USA President Gerard A. Alphonse said. "Contrary to the law's intent, the program can be used to fill any job at almost any wage, and the vast majority of employers are not required to recruit American workers first. IEEE-USA applauds Rep. Pascrell for drafting a bill that addresses these serious problems."

In evaluating the H-1B program for the FY 2006 budget cycle, the federal Office of Management and Budget found, "The [current H-1B] statute waives a labor market test, does not require submission of supporting documentation by employers, [and] limits the Department of Labor's authority to review or question [applications]... [leaving] the program vulnerable to fraud or abuse." According to IEEE-USA, Rep. Pascrell's bill will fix these flaws and ensure that the statute aligns with the intent of the program.

The bill also seeks to strengthen prevailing wage protections for foreign workers because, as viewed by IEEE-USA, the current protections are ineffective and can be easily taken advantage of by employers seeking to pay lower wages than they would pay to comparably skilled Americans. Rep. Pascrell highlighted the bill at a news conference held earlier today (on 21 Nov.) in Paterson, N.J. IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of the more than 220,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 360,000 members in 150 countries. For more information, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org>.

CONTACT: Chris McManes

IEEE-USA Senior Public Relations Coordinator

PHONE: + 1 202 530 8356

E-MAIL: c.mcmanes@ieee.org

CONTACT: Pender M. McCarter

IEEE-USA Communications & Public Relations Director

PHONE: +1 202 530 8353

E-MAIL: p.mccarter@ieee.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HOUSTON SECTION IEEE

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Daniel Mittleman, Rice University, LEOS.....	713-348-5452

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Roy Cosse, Powell Electric, Continuing Education-Consultant.....	713-948-4019
Justin McCaskill, WH Linder, Continuing Education-Administration Co-Chair.....	832-274-5116
Roy Cosse, Powell Electric, Continuing Education-Consultant.....	713-948-4019
Shannon Quadros, Choice Condominiums, LLC, Engr Council of Houston.....	713-790-7907
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Newsletter Staff

Editors:	Lisa Nichols-Dunn, 281-426-4784
	E-mail: lnicholsdunn@aol.com
Advertising:	281-426-4784



THE POCKET SCOPE
IEEE Houston Section
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