

Chair's Column

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Happy New Year! 2012 marks my 15th anniversary as an IEEE member. My beginnings with the Institute started as a first-year graduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) studying control systems, receiving my monthly *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control*, and attending the *IEEE Conference on Decision and Control* and the IEEE-sponsored *American Control Conference*. Over the years, IEEE has afforded me opportunities to serve in my society's technical committee, review papers for conferences and journals, and participate in my Section's Executive Committee (ExCom), both on the West and East Coasts. Perhaps more importantly, I have been able to network and work alongside with my fellow members on common interests.

This year, I would like to promote two important themes within our Section: 1) membership, and 2) volunteerism. Membership is key to IEEE. Without its members, the Institute would cease to exist. It is important that we continue to work on both recruitment of new members and retention of existing members. It also means recognizing those members that qualify to be elevated to Senior Member or Fellow status. This should be emphasized in all Section activities and events. As Membership Development Chair, I will again be actively working on this in addition to my responsibilities as Section Chair. The second thing that I would like to see is an increase in Section volunteers. Our ExCom members have done a remarkable job over the years, putting together top-notch events such as the annual Summer Outing, Section Awards Banquet, the 2010 *IEEE Region 1 Northeast Industry Day* and the recent *IEEE Northeastern Area iSTEP* in Bedford. However, many of these folks are wearing multiple hats. I believe that by recruiting more volunteers, particularly folks like Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD), our Section will be even more vibrant and better off in the future. My challenge to everyone is to start thinking about these two things and how you can contribute.

Finally, I would like to thank Don Sherwood, our Past Chair, for his tireless devotion and leadership to our Section. Don has served as a mentor to me and I am grateful for his friendship and service.