

# Women in Control Newsletter

## November 1998

**Chair:** Cheryl B. Schrader  
**Newsletter Editor:** Fahmida Chowdhury  
**Database Coordinator:** Eunjeong Lee  
**Mailing List Coordinator:** Dawn Tilbury

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### 1. Editor's Note:

Dear Friends and Colleagues: Greetings! I hope all of you are doing well. I know everybody is busy at this time of the year. The main part of this issue of the newsletter is Bozenna's message to us. Let us join together in congratulating her on her excellent efforts to improve the situation of women in this extremely male-dominated community.

To find out just HOW male-dominated, read the results of our previous survey on the ratio of female: male in the controls groups all over the world. I received a number of responses (I was hoping for more, but I suppose a lot of you were too busy to respond). I have collected the responses and put them in item 3 of this newsletter.

Best wishes for all of you.

Fahmida Chowdhury  
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Dept. of EECE  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
Lafayette, LA  
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### 2. Message from Bozenna

The time is passing very quickly. It has been almost a year now since I took the Vice Presidency position for Membership Activity. Today, I am on my way to Chicago where the Executive Committee of our Society will meet for another long hour discussion weekend.

On the agenda we have an important item "Awards and Recognition for Women." When I was preparing the report about the status of women in our Society for the IEEE office, I found and I reported zero awards among women in all categories: distinguished members,

distinguished lecturers, outstanding contributions, even plenary lecturers at our main conferences.

I am going to Chicago with the proposal for an immediate change.

I have nominated Cheryl Schrader for Distinguished Member. ( I was nominated for this award two years ago by Dan Repperger, but I didn't pass the confidential voting by the Executive Committee.) I hope that Cheryl will pass. As a result of your response to my last letter, I nominate Ruth Curtain, Maria DiBenedetto, and Irena Lasiecka for Distinguished Lecturer and Ruth Curtain as a plenary lecturer at the 2000 CDC in Australia.

We now have five women on the Board of Governors: Linda Bushnell, Bonnie Heck, Cheryl Schrader, Molly Shor and Bozena Pasik-Duncan.

We have four women in charge of the Membership Activities Board Standing committees:

Cheryl Schrader - Women in Control  
Molly Shor - Membership and Admissions  
Linda Bushnell - History  
Fahmida Chowdbury - Engineers at Risk

and all of them do outstanding work.

We can attract more women to our Society; let us make it our mission. Many women are involved in programs and organizing committees of our major conferences . Bonnie Heck did outstanding work as a program chair of the last ACC. Some of you serve as Associate Editors (including M .DiBenedetto, I. Lasiecka, K. Rudie and J.Si) and you do outstanding work.

Many of you including F. Chowdhury are on the Conference Editorial Board. It is impossible for me to mention all of you and I appologize for that.

We need to change your status to Senior Member; let us establish a Permanent program assisting in this process. We need to work on improvement of a Fellow statistics which as you know is pretty dramatic.

Remember: All of us will meet at the CDC in Tampa to discuss important issues. Cheryl and I will come up with an agenda. I need your help with bringing other Societies closer to the CSS.

Congratulations to Mary Horn for being elected as Vice Chair of the SIAM Control group. I believe that Mary will help me build a better bridge between these two groups.

Congratulations to all of you who have been recently recognized, promoted, etc., we would like to hear from you about your success. Please write to us. Also write to me if you want to be involved. There is a lot of opprtunity for your good work .

I would appreciate any comments and suggestions that I can use to improve future Society matters. Also, please encourage your female students to join our Society.

Below, please find Cheryl's report to the BOG about Women in Control Group.

Finally, THANKS to Cheryl and all of you who have recognized my work for our group and gave me this very thoughtful certificate which declares that I am (Jolly Good) Fellow. It is in front of my eyes in my office and it is a continuous inspiration and motivation for my work. You will hear from me after our meeting.

From the bottom of my heart, I wish you all the best in your personal and professional life -

Bozenna Pasik-Duncan

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From Cheryl:

Dear Dr. Pasik-Duncan

Please accept this report on behalf of the IEEE Control Systems Society Women in Control (WiC) Committee and the following officers:

Chair: Cheryl Schrader  
Newsletter Editor: Fahmida Chowdhury  
Database Coordinator: Enjeong Lee  
Mailing List Coordinator: Dawn Tilbury  
Advisor: Bozenna Pasik-Duncan

Recent committee activities include luncheon meetings at the 1998 American Control Conference and at the 1998 Mediterranean Conference on Systems and Control. These meetings, as always, were productive, inspiring, and a great opportunity for networking. In particular, participating students are encouraged to join the control systems society and WiC when they see so many successful women. This is uplifting for us all. The next WiC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16th at the 37th IEEE Conference on Decision and Control.

WiC has developed an award recognizing individuals who demonstrate distinguished scholarship, exemplary character, and outstanding contributions to the advancement of women in control.

Congratulations go to Bozenna Pasik-Duncan as the inaugural recipient.

The Women in Control web site has been updated and moved. The new URL is

<http://voyager1.utsa.edu/~schrader/women-in-control/>

The links from the CSS home page have been updated to reflect this change. Please note our mission statement:

"The Women in Control committee shall be responsible for, but not limited to, promoting membership, gathering, and disseminating appropriate information about women in the IEEE Control Systems Society (CSS) and the profession and facilitating the development of mentoring and programs to promote the retention, recruitment, and growth of women CSS members."

We have proposed to list some member information on the web site. In light of the possibilities offered by electronic media, we are examining related security issues in the Member Activities Board. Finally, I would like to acknowledge interactions with entities outside of the CSS. WiC responded to the IEEE regarding the number and percentage of women society officers, women participating in technical and administrative program committees, and women society award winners. Our society has increased representation of women in the first two categories, but still has no women award winners. WiC continues to be a high profile and recognized resource for women and organizations that are interested in increased participation by those previously underrepresented. For example, we continue to participate in the development of leadership programs for women in engineering and in outreach programs encouraging girls to pursue careers in engineering.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl B. Schrader  
Chair, Women in Control  
schrader@ieee.org  
<http://voyager1.utsa.edu/~schrader/women-in-control/>

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### 3. Survey Result:

The survey question was: what is the ratio of female:male in your controls group?

Needless to say, the survey results confirmed my worst suspicions. Read on ... here are the responses.

- i. Jacqueliën Scherpen: 1 female , 36 male

Faculty of Information Technology and Systems  
Department of Electrical Engineering  
Delft University of Technology  
The Netherlands

- ii. At George Washington University there are no female control Professors and 5-6 female graduate students (including masters students) out of about 60 total graduate students specializing in control. Pretty bad odds....

Ann Reimers  
Institute for Magnetism Research  
The George Washington University  
Ashburn, VA 20147

- iii. There is one woman faculty member - myself. We have only a couple of graduate students in the control area and the other (male) faculty members now claim to be communications faculty.

The ratio of male:female in the control area in our department is : 4 to 1 (We have no female graduate students at all!)

Csilla BE1nyE1sz, PhD  
Computer and Automation Research Institute  
Hungarian Academy of Sciences  
H-1111 Budapest, Kende u 13-17  
HUNGARY

- iv. 22 males:1 female

Leslie Fowler  
Lord Corporation, Mechanical R&D

- v. In reply to your survey question- I am the only woman control engineer on the faculty staff here (I am Dean with responsibility for Schools of Engineering, Information Management and Computing) - the School of engineering has three members of staff who are broadly in control, all men. The School of Computing has one control engineer - also a man. On the research student side we fare marginally better - of three current grad students in control 2 are women and the last control PhD to be awarded (earlier this year) was also to a woman -

Gaynor Taylor  
Dean of Engineering, LMU  
UK

- vi. In our Dept., the current ratio is 11:3 (male:female) in the control area.

Yi Guo  
Department of Electrical Engineering  
University of Sydney  
NSW 2006, Australia

- vii. The approximate ratio of male:female in the controls area in my department is 10:1.

Hua Deng  
huadeng@mechanics.ucsd.edu

- viii. The ratio is 8:2

Ulle Kotta  
Control Systems Department  
Institute of Cybernetics  
Tallinn, Estonia

- ix. There is one woman faculty member - myself. We have only a couple of graduate students in the control area and the other (male) faculty members now claim to be communications faculty.

Molly Shor  
Dept. of ECE, Oregon State University

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4. New Survey Question:

The last response, that of Molly Shor, really intrigued me: is it true that in many ECE departments now controls is slowly taking a back seat to communications?  
Do you find that to be true in your school, department, or division?

Please let us know what you think and how you feel about this issue

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