

**Midwest Symposium on Circuits and Systems Steering Committee**  
**Minutes of meeting held in Columbus, Ohio, Monday, August 5, 2013**

Steering Committee members present: Hoda Abdel-Aty-Zohdy, M.O. Ahmad, M. Ahmadi, Magdy Bayoumi, Thomas Chen, Jose Delgado-Frias, Shervin Erfani, Robert Ewing, Igor Filanovsky, Paul Furth, Annajirao Garimella, Randy Geiger, Mohammed Ismail, Tae Wook Kim, Neeraj Magotra, Wasfy Mikhael, Carla Purdy, Nader Rafla, Maher Rizkalla, Jose De La Rosa, Jose Silva-Martinez, Michael Soderstrand, Mona Zaghoul

**Guests Present:** Steven Bibyk, Amr El-Chouemi, Reyad El-Khazali, Ayman Fayed, Mona Hella, Valencia Koomson, Antonio de la Serna, Sleiman Bou-Sleiman

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m. by Prof. Mikhael, who welcomed the attendees. He circulated an attendance sheet and a Steering Committee membership list for updates and asked guests to sign the list. Prof. Purdy agreed to take the meeting minutes.

The minutes from the 2012 meeting in Boise were approved.

Prof. Jenkins presented the treasurer's report. On August 6, 2012 the balance was \$22,812.62. The committee received \$1,846.00 from MWSCAS 2012 and there were no expenditures, so the balance on August 5, 2013 is \$24,658.62. Prof. Jenkins reminded the committee that the money is in a gift account at Penn State. There is no interest but also there are no administrative fees. With this type of account, we do not have to verify to the IRS each year that we are a not-for-profit organization. The treasurer's report was accepted by the Committee. Prof. Mikhael thanked Prof. Jenkins for his work and reminded the committee that if the conference makes a profit, the organizers are asked to contribute \$5.00/registration to this account. Funds are used to help support MWSCAS in years it loses money, which has happened a couple of times.

**Old business:**

**2012 symposium:** Prof. Rafla presented the final report for the 2012 symposium in Boise, Idaho. The conference, held at the Grove Hotel in Boise, was publicized at the MWSCAS 2011 conference and through emails using lists from recent MWSCAS conferences and from IEEE. There were a total of 406 submissions, including 369 regular papers and 37 invited papers, from 40 countries. There were 15 tracks, including one track for invited papers. Paper submission was managed through the epapers.org site, run by Alliance Management Group LLC. A total of 421 reviewers participated in the paper review process, with each paper receiving 3 reviews. The committee accepted 299 regular papers (70.02%) for publication. Papers were scheduled for presentation in 42 lecture sessions (27 regular sessions, 6 special sessions, 7 invited paper sessions, and 2 student paper contest sessions) and 24 poster sessions. Prof. Rafla expressed his thanks to the track chairs, the session chairs, and the reviewers for their thorough and outstanding work. Three keynote talks were presented. In addition, a special presentation on "Surviving the Early Professional Years" was given during the Monday lunch by Dean Klein, VP, Memory System Development, Micron. On Sunday, seven half-day tutorials were presented to a total of 59 participants. Altogether, a total of 284 participants attended the conference (193 IEEE members, 23 nonmembers, 47 student members, 7 student nonmembers, and 4 accompanying persons). The registration process was smoothly managed by Meeting Systems, Boise, ID. For the student paper contest, held in 2 sessions Monday morning, 10 finalists were chosen, based on written papers. Overall standings were based on both written and oral presentations. Each participant in the contest received a certificate of participation. Four awards were presented at the Tuesday evening banquet: two first place awards (tie) of \$300 each, one second place award (\$200), and one third place award (\$100). The Myril B. Reed Best paper award, to a team from MoSys Inc. and Xilinx, Inc. will be presented at the 2013 banquet on Tuesday, August 6. The conference banquet, which was well-attended by 200 people, featured a presentation by the Onkari dance group of the Basque Center of Boise. The conference generated revenues of \$138,260.00 and had expenses of \$101,652.51, and thus a surplus of \$36,607.49. This enabled the organizers to donate \$6.50 per registration to the MWSCAS Steering Committee. The remaining surplus will be split equally between the two sponsors, Boise State and CASS. Prof. Mikhael thanked Prof. Rafla and his organizing committee for a successful conference and led the committee in a round of applause.

A discussion on other possible ways to distribute any surplus followed. Prof. Rafla noted that it was very difficult to convince his university to be even a partial sponsor. Prof. Mikhael noted that there are no formal steering committee rules, we rely on the integrity of the organizers. Dr. Garimella noted that more support could be given to the student contest through the steering committee. He noted that the \$5/registration donation to the steering committee is just a suggestion and organizers can give more if they desire. Prof. Ahmad noted that the lack of a set policy gives flexibility to the local organizers. Prof. Geiger and Prof. Ahmadi both noted that if the steering committee received more of any surplus, this could be used for the conference in future years. Prof. Bayoumi suggested that the committee think about this and also find out if there is a CASS minimum level for sponsorship.

**2013 symposium.** Prof. Bibyk and Prof. Purdy presented the preliminary report for 2013. As of Friday, August 1, there were a total of 355 paid registrations, including 218 IEEE members, 55 nonmembers, 79 students, and 3 industry representatives (1-day registration). There is a relatively high number of no-shows, mostly due to visa problems which are probably caused by the U.S. government's sequester. A number of registrants have contacted the committee for assistance in having their presentations given. The organizing committee is printing posters and slide presentations for those who sent their materials by the Friday before the conference. Some last-minute arrangements for additional presentations have also been made. And a number of presenters have made their own presentation arrangements with colleagues who are attending the conference. Among those experiencing visa problems are three of the ten student contest finalists. One sent a video, one found a substitute presenter, and one sent slides which were made into a poster. These three students are effectively out of contention for prizes, since they cannot earn points for their presentations. It might be a good idea for future organizers to choose some runner-ups who could step in if necessary.

The conference received a total of 436 submissions from 36 countries. The paper submission process was efficiently managed by Tom Wehner of epapers. There were 23 tracks, including a special session track and an invited only track. Reviews were managed by track chairs, with a goal of 3 reviews per paper (an average of 2.4 reviews per paper was achieved). The technical program chairs accepted 372 papers for presentation in 10 special lecture sessions, 38 regular lecture sessions, and 27 poster sessions. Many of the sessions, including the special session on "Advancing the Frontiers of Solar Energy" and on "Power Management and Energy Harvesting", were especially relevant to the conference theme of "Advancing the Frontiers of Green Technology". Approximately 25

authors will be asked to submit extended versions of their papers for consideration for publication in a special issue of the *Journal of Analog Integrated Circuits and Signal Processing*. Six tutorials were offered on Sunday, with an average of 11 attendees at each. In addition, there are three keynote talks and two lunchtime plenary talks. A plenary discussion at the Wednesday lunch, to be led by Dave Freeman of TI, will address topics in circuits and systems education. Education will also be emphasized at the special session on "University and Industry Training in the Art of Electronics" on Tuesday. The conference has also added exhibits this year, including the Buckeye Bullet electric car, vendors of kits for education, Wiley textbooks, and an exhibit by Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi, with a focus on faculty recruitment. These exhibits are generating much positive feedback, and we hope future conferences will continue and expand this area. The conference has received support from the University of Cincinnati, Khalifa University, and Wiley, as well as gifts for student contest finalists provided by TI. The exhibits component has enabled much of this support and has offset the loss of support from more traditional sources such as the Air Force due to the sequester. Current projections are that we will have an income of about \$182,000 and expenses below \$160,000, so we expect a surplus. Prof. Bibyk noted that MWSCAS is competing with a number of conferences which focus on similar topics. He suggested that the emphasis on education this year could help to make MWSCAS stand out and could also help in building ongoing relationships with industry partners. Prof. Mikhael noted that the conference is going well and thanked everyone who contributed. He led the committee in a round of applause for this year's organizers.

**2014 symposium:** Prof. Silva-Martinez presented plans for MWSCAS 2014, to be held in College Station, TX. The venue will be the Hilton Hotel. There are also a number of reasonably priced hotels and motels in the area. His department head has committed \$5000 to the conference. Company support is expected from NI, TI, and others. Prof. Ahmad suggested that it would be useful for the committee to see more details about the facilities where the conference will be held. Prof. Mikhael noted that the Future Symposia subcommittee could possibly make this a requirement. Prof. Magotra noted that it is good that the organizing team for the next year to attend the current conference, this will help the conference run more smoothly.

**Future symposia:** The subcommittee for future symposia (Profs. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy, Geiger, and Lie) currently has 4 proposals for 2015 and beyond: Paris (Prof. Iskander); Ft. Collins, CO (Prof. Chen); Boston (Prof. Soderstrand and Dr. de la Serna), and Peru (Prof. Chauca). The subcommittee presented brief reports on these proposals.

Paris: this proposal was being considered for 2015. But currently there is a problem with asbestos removal in the proposed venue. Prof. Iskander is trying to provide an update on the situation, but he will not be able to obtain this update until Thursday or Friday. The committee expects a full proposal by the 2015 conference and is considering this proposal for 2016. This would meet the requirement that the conference be outside the continental U.S. only every three years. Prof. Ahmadi noted that Paris will be expensive.

Ft. Collins (Colorado State): the subcommittee suggested the proposal be strengthened with stronger involvement from local industry. Also, the proposed student registration fee (\$300) may be too high.

Boston (Tufts): this is a viable proposal to consider for 2016. Prof. Soderstrand would be chair and Prof. Sherif Michael would be Technical Program Chair. The subcommittee has mixed feelings about the proposals' suggestion that more than half of the papers be invited. Also there is an error in the student rate in the current proposal.

Peru: this has been updated several times. It can be considered for 2016 or later.

Additional possibilities being considered are Ottawa, Denmark, Abu Dhabi, and Indiana. It was noted that Indiana is truly in the Midwest and that costs there would be reasonable.

The subcommittee recommended that the conference be held at Colorado State in 2015 and that the other proposers be encouraged to submit more detailed plans for 2016 and beyond.

Prof. Ahmadi moved that the 2015 conference be awarded to the Colorado State organizers, and Prof. Soderstrand seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

After some discussion it was decided by straw vote that no recommendation would be made for 2016 or 2017 at this time but that the subcommittee could make recommendations by email, after receiving revised proposals, if they so choose. Prof. Mikhael urged the proposers for 2016 and beyond to use the committee discussion to strengthen their proposals and noted that the aim is to strengthen the proposals so they can be approved. Prof. Mikhael noted that historically any group that has been willing to work with the committee to strengthen a proposal to meet committee concerns has eventually been approved to host the conference.

#### **New business:**

In new business, there were six nominations for new Steering Committee members:

Prof. Steve Bibyk (Ohio State), Pro. Mona Hella (RPI), Prof. Ayman Fayed (Iowa State), Dr. Sleiman Bou-Sleiman (Intel), Dr. de la Serna (Draper Labs), and Prof. Valencia Koomson (Tufts). These candidates were excused from the meeting for discussion and voting on the question of their membership. Prof. Geiger noted that the committee bylaws provide that there can be at most 50 members and suggested that this bylaw be revisited. Prof. Mikhael and Prof. Soderstrand both noted that this bylaw can be discussed at the next meeting. After a discussion of the candidates' vitas and commitment to working on future conferences, Prof. Ahmadi moved that all 6 candidates be approved, and Prof. Mikhael seconded the motion. The new members were approved and Prof. Mikhael welcomed them to the committee.

Prof. Mikhael expressed his gratitude for the committee members' service and their collegial participation. He also expressed his hope that this would continue for many years to come. There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carla Purdy