



FRONTLINE

R E P O R T



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A Newsletter for PACE and Section Leaders

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IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee

CHAIRMAN

Richard L. Riddle
910-765-9702 (O)
r.riddle@ieee.org

REGION 1

Irving Weiner
617-784-5393 (O)
617-784-6394 (H)
i.weiner@ieee.org

REGION 2

Warren A. Wickes
216-656-2799 (O)
w.wickes@ieee.org

REGION 3

Richard L. Riddle
910-765-9702 (O)
r.riddle@ieee.org

REGION 4

Alan B. Showalter
219-665-2348 (H)
913-539-4296 (voice mail)

REGION 5

Gary Johnson
713-274-2289 (O)
gary.johnson@ieee.org

REGION 6

Paul A. Willis
818-354-1714 (O)
pwillis@kilroy.jpl.nasa.gov

IEEE-USA

William R. Anderson
1828 L Street, NW, Ste. 1202
Washington, DC 20036-5104
202-785-0017 (O)
w.anderson@ieee.org

WORLD WIDE WEB

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

FRONTLINE is a bi-monthly newsletter published by the IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee and is sent to US PACE and Section Leaders. The editorial objectives of FRONTLINE are to provide its readers in a timely and objective manner with information they may in turn pass on to their members about IEEE employment assistance services and programs and engineering employment trends.

Immigration Reform — Or is it?

IEEE-USA Supports Simpson Immigration Reform Bill

Recent debate over the employment-based admissions provisions of Sen. Alan Simpson's immigration bill has generated more heat than light, with opponents making reckless charges that the legislation would cripple American competitiveness and cause US businesses to send American high-tech jobs overseas. Apparently, these opponents hope to scuttle reasonable reform by fueling the fears of working Americans concerned more than ever about losing their jobs — fears, ironically, which are exacerbated by our current, out-of-control immigration system.

In the view of the US Activities division of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc. (IEEE-USA), Simpson's legislation will establish a much-needed balance between employers' needs for access to high-tech professionals and the public need to safeguard job opportunities, wages and working conditions in the United States — for US citizens and for foreign nationals who are legally admitted to work in this country.

Some opponents of Simpson's bill contend that it will cripple US economic and technological competitiveness by preventing employers from hiring the cutting-edge talent they need to survive in global markets. We disagree. The bill essen-

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Background

- The Immigration Act of 1990 raised the ceilings on permanent, employment based admissions and assigned high priority to the entry of professional and skilled workers.
- The Act also streamlined temporary admissions procedures.
- In the period from 1986-1994, the number of annual admissions for engineers and scientists on both permanent and temporary visas more than doubled, from 11,000 to 22,000 (permanent) and from 28,000 to 60,000 (temporary).
- From 1990-1994, engineers were experiencing unprecedented levels of unemployment.
- The purchasing power of engineering salaries reached a 20 year low in 1994 (American Association of Engineering Societies).
- AT&T recently announced thousands of layoffs of professional and skilled workers — and has applied to the Department of Labor for immigrant visas.
- American International Group and Sea-Land Services fired hundreds of US workers, and required them to train the lower-paid foreign workers who replaced them.
- Last summer, under the temporary visa program, the Department of Labor approved hiring computer programmers for \$4.50 an hour, a fraction of what these programmers usually earn.

Entry-Level Employment Assistance on the Web

The IEEE-USA World Wide Web homepage <www.ieee.org/usab/> is now hosting a special section of employment assistance resources for engineering students and new graduates to use in their job search. Links to web books such as the "College Grad Hob Hunter," as well as the Entry Level Job Assistant and the Graduate Assistantship Directory provide

tools and advice tailored to the needs of the entry-level engineer.

This area (and all others) of the IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Web is being updated as new information becomes available. Check it out and if you have any suggestions, please contact Bill Anderson. ♦

Member Services**Cybersearching for a Job: Employment Assistance on the Web**

"This is the place to find a job" according to *Science & Engineering Network News*. Accessible through the IEEE-USA homepage, the Employment Assistance Web pages bring together a dozens of job search resources in a single location. Included at this site are links to

- National Job Listing Service,
- Resume referral services,
- Special entry-level assistance page,
- Employment assistance help files,
- Job fair listings
- *FRONTLINE* employment assistance newsletter, and
- Dozens of other Internet resident job search resources.

In addition to the Employment Assistance pages, IEEE-USA hosts Consultants Network and Entrepreneur pages.

National Job Listing Service

Hundreds of job openings from companies and recruiters around the country are posted on the Internet. Geographically sorted text files list openings and opportunities. Listings, updated weekly, are available free of charge to IEEE members who may retrieve and scan the files, then contact the companies directly. Rated as one of the top sites on the Web by Pointcom, the JLS is available from the IEEE-USA homepage, or through autoreponse e-mail files.

Resume Referral Services

IEEE has entered an agreement with Resume Link to endorse their Electrotechnology Resume Referral Service, a national database that is accessed by employers with job openings. This service is free. Members who may submit their resumes to Resume Link via World Wide Web at <<http://www.resume-link.com/>> or by calling 614-529-0429.

Job Bank USA

IEEE members may participate in the Job Bank USA employment database at a special discounted rate. Job Bank USA is an all-purpose employment resource that allows individuals to maintain a personalized electronic career record that is matched against detailed search criteria from client companies. In addition, participating individuals receive access to Job

Bank USA's Career Fitness program and quarterly newsletter. Call 800-296-1USA.

Employment Guide for Engineers and Scientists

This practical job hunter's manual is available from IEEE-USA and contains advice for both the experienced and entry-level engineer, as well as tips on conducting a job search, writing resumes, working with employment services, networking with colleagues and friends, interviewing, evaluating the compensation package, coping with job loss and knowing your legal rights in the employment process. More than just another job search book, this guide has been written particularly for engineers and technical professionals.

Free IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Information and Services

Unemployed US members (non-student members) may obtain a packet of information to assist them in their job search. This packet includes information on a variety of job search services and a free copy of the *Employment Guide for Engineers and Scientists*. For all members, IEEE-USA provides (on loan) the videotape "How to Get a Better Job Quicker," information on accessing the Internet with free demonstration software, reviews of various job search tools and advice on local employment assistance programs such as job/skills banks.

Job Fair Calendar

IEEE co-sponsors job fairs in many areas of the country. A calendar of these events, including information on many other technical career fairs is available via the IEEE-USA homepage or as an autoreponse file.

Region 3 Services

IEEE's Region 3 provides a variety of employment services and job postings via their electronic BBS. Region 3 members (outside Atlanta) call 800-555-REG3, all others call 770-446-0740. Region 3 also provides the "Electro-Technology Database" containing information on hundreds of engineering employers in the Southeast area. E-mail <empaccess.r03@eng.uab.edu>.

Career Alternatives

The IEEE-USA homepage provides information on a range of career related issues including:

- Consultants' Networks
- Entrepreneurs and
- Career development and policy issues.

Reduced Dues for Unemployed Members

Unemployed members of IEEE are entitled to a 50% reduction in annual dues during the term of their unemployment. Contact 800-678-IEEE.

Kinko's Copy Center Discount

IEEE members receive a 10% discount at Kinko's Copy Centers nationwide. This discount applies to most Kinko's services including copies, computer rental, desktop publishing, resume production and stationery supplies.

Insurance

IEEE provides members with a variety of insurance programs, including term-life and major medical. Call 800-678-IEEE.

Section and Society Services**Regional Employment Assistance Coordinators**

Employment Assistance Coordinators are available to assist members and IEEE Sections, Societies and Student Branches with job search programs and services.

Funding for Programs

The IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee can provide a limited amount of funding to support Section, Society, or Region employment assistance programs.

FRONTLINE Report on Employment Assistance

This bi-monthly newsletter contains information on IEEE's national employment assistance efforts, successful Section and Society programs and employment news from around the world. Available as an autoreponse file.

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Job Seekers Workshop

The IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee sponsors the workshop "Successful Job-Hunting Today" available to IEEE entities. This one-day workshop covers job search techniques such as networking, resume writing and interviewing.

"How-To" Guides

The IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee provides "how-to" guides for IEEE entities to help with employment assistance activities. Guides include information on establishing local skills banks, employer databases, job-seeker support groups and job fairs. ♦

Accessing IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Services**World Wide Web:**

IEEE homepage
<http://www.ieee.org/>

IEEE-USA homepage
<http://www.ieee.org/usab/>

Autoreponse files:

(send e-mail message — no subject or text necessary — file will be automatically returned)

Job Listing system
info.ieeeusa.jobs.r01@ieee.org, where "r01" corresponds to IEEE Region 1, "r02" is Region 2, . . . through Region 6, "other" is outside the US, and "cal" and "mass" are California and Massachusetts

Employment assistance information
info.ieeeusa.employ@ieee.org

Job fairs
info.ieeeusa.jobfair@ieee.org

FRONTLINE Report — employment assistance newsletter
info.ieeeusa.employ.newsletter@ieee.org

Phone, e-mail:

Bill Anderson or Marnie Clark
w.anderson@ieee.org
m.clark@ieee.org
202-785-0017

Regional Employment Assistance Coordinators
refer to p. 1 for listing

by Richard L. Riddle, Chairman

Over the last two years the USA-Employment Assistance Committee has made tremendous progress in providing employment assistance and services to our members under the energetic and able leadership of Jean Eason, 1994-95 EAC Chair. The National Job Listing Service, the Unemployed Member Survey, EAC Workshops at the 1994, 1995 PACE Conferences, and the EAC newsletter, *FRONTLINE* are a few notable examples of tangible services provided to our members during her tour as EAC Chairman. On behalf of the members and staff of EAC, I would like to express our appreciation to Jean for a job well done and to wish her our best as she moves on to her new job with USAB. I am happy to report that Jean has agreed to continue with EAC as a resource member.

Just when we think that the trend of unemployment for our members has bottomed out, and we start believing the propaganda put out by Washington and the media about how robust the economy is, we suddenly are brought back to reality by those little announcements that "it ain't over yet."

Announcements like: restructuring, downsizing, plant closing, buy-out, and layoffs at many of our major providers of power, communication, computers, and software make it hard to believe that things have improved that much for our members. Another concern that US working technical professionals have is their replacement by foreign nationals. This has recently received national attention in political circles as well as the media. Regardless of the terminology used, loss of employment is painful and to some, devastating. So what are we the EAC going to do in 1996 to help our members who become unemployed for what ever reason find employment?

1996 plans

The EAC will be meeting in Charleston, SC in March to develop our plan of action. As a general comment I would like to see us become more proactive in all employment issues. That is one reason we are meeting in Charleston. The recent downsizing at the Charleston Naval Base and the Savannah River Project has created serious employment problems for many local members. I hope that the EAC can find out first hand what the Sections are doing to help the membership and what IEEE-USA can do. As far

as specific items to be considered for action in 1996, I offer the following:

1. Continue the IEEE-USA Job Listing Service (JLS) and develop improvements such as an interactive search capability on the IEEE-USA Employment Home Page. Promote and advertise the JLS to electrotechnology industry leaders and urge their use of this service prior to seeking employment of foreign nationals.
2. Continue to develop the IEEE-USA Entry Level Employment Assistance Page on WWW and solicit feed back from graduating students for its usefulness.
3. Continue publication of *FRONTLINE* newsletter to Section and PACE Chairmen highlighting EAC programs and successful local employment assistance efforts.
4. Continue and improve communication with US members about the availability of employment assistance services via electronic media (E-mail, Gopher, Wide World Web, etc.) and in IEEE and Trade news media (Spectrum, The Institute, Impact, EE Times and etc.).
5. Develop a guide to help members evaluate early retirement and employment separation (layoff, buy-out) options and actions prior to the final termination decision.
6. Develop a tutorial on how to use the Internet to access job openings.
7. Develop a brochure on the employment assistance services available from IEEE-USA for distribution at US member meetings (see related article on p. 2).
8. Develop a presentation of available employment services.

I am sure that the committee members will have other items that they would like to see added and accomplished in 1996. The real test of how serious you are about an item or service is when you are asked to provide or develop it.

As always, if you or your members have any ideas for employment assistance programs or services, please contact us. Or, if you would like to know more about any of the services we provide, or just want some tips on successful job searching, do not hesitate to get in touch with anyone on the Committee. ♦

Immigration Reform

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essentially maintains the status quo with respect to permanent employment-based admissions, which have been averaging around 90,000 a year. Furthermore, the bill does not reduce the current 65,000 annual cap on temporary employment-based admissions under the H-1B specialty-occupation visa program.

Nor, as other opponents contend, is Simpson's bill "anti-immigrant." Far from it. The Immigration Reform Act includes provisions that will help to safeguard wages and working conditions for legal immigrants as well as for US citizens. As part of an international professional society with substantial numbers of foreign-born members in the United States, IEEE-USA firmly agrees with Simpson that it is just as wrong to exploit immigrants as native-born Americans.

The Immigration Reform Act proposes to balance the legitimate needs of employers and workers in cutting-edge, high-technology industries in three important ways. First, US employers will have to test the domestic labor market for availability of US workers before they can hire foreign workers. Second, they will have to pay foreign workers actual or prevailing US wages, whichever are higher. And third, they will not longer be allowed to replace American workers with foreign workers who will accept low pay in order to enter or remain in the United States.

These provisions will enable employers to hire foreign workers based on a demonstrable lack of appropriately qualified American workers, not simply because it is easier or cheaper to hire foreign workers. They will also provide much-needed incentives for employers to develop and make better use of America's own engineers, scientists and computer specialists.

We think that the legislation provides a solid basis for a properly regulated system of legal immigration, a system that – in the words of [the late] Barbara Jordan, chair of the bipartisan US Commission on Immigration Reform – will enhance the benefits of immigration and help to protect against potential harms.

Finally, we feel compelled to respond to the not-so-subtle threats that employers will move American jobs offshore if they are denied unlimited access to foreign workers. In fact, they can do that now. In our view, such employers don't want a high-tech workforce in the developing world. Rather, they want a first-rate technical workforce in the United States that will accept Third-World wages and working conditions. That's no way to develop the workforce that America will need to grow and prosper in the 21st Century. ♦

Companies Oppose Employment-based Immigration Reform

IEEE-USA Chair Joel B. Snyder and Workforce Committee Chair Roger Madden met on March 5 with representatives from Intel, Motorola, and Xerox to discuss IEEE-USA's position on legal immigration reform. Snyder praised the companies for their commitment to engineers' continuing education, but asserted the need for legislative changes that would curtail abuses of the nation's immigration system by less scrupulous employers.

On March 7, Sen. Alan Simpson threw his employment-based legal reform provisions over the side in an unsuccessful effort to blunt business community opposition to his legal reform bill (S. 1394). Subsequently the Judiciary Committee agreed to split Simpson's bill into 2 parts. The Committee is marking up the illegal reform component this week (Mar. 25) and expects to mark-up the employment-less legal reform bill next week. Both bills are expected to go to the floor in mid April.

Senator Kennedy (with encouragement from Senator Simpson) is preparing floor amendments designed to salvage some or all of the worker safeguard provisions contained in the original Simpson bill (the provisions that IEEE-USA has been supporting). IEEE-USA plans to work with other reform advocates to mobilize support for the Kennedy/Simpson amendments.

In the House, opponents are trying to split HR 2202 into illegal and legal parts and gut the already weak worker protections provisions in Titles V and VIII of the Smith bill. ♦

LINK IT!

DON'T FORGET TO
HAVE YOUR SECTION
WEB PAGE OR BBS
PROVIDE A LINK
OR REFERENCE
TO THE IEEE-USA
JOB LISTING SERVICE

<http://www.ieee.org/jobs.html>
or
info.ieeeusa.employ@ieee.org

IEEE-USA

1828 L Street, NW
Suite 1202
Washington, DC 20036-5104
www.ieee.org/usab/



R5 00 11 00
DENVER SECTION
David B Richmond
2921 South Sidney Court
Denver, CO 80231

