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The continued existence of our Society is to a very large extent dependent on the volunteers who freely give up their time and energy so that, for example, we have meetings around the world, active technical committees and local Chapters, and peer-reviewed journal papers and magazine articles. We are not a large Society and lack the financial resources of some of our sister societies, but we do have wonderful dedicated volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for everything that they do for us. In the following paragraphs I have attempted to summarize their work for the Society, which goes on throughout the year to ensure our continued success.

If like me you regularly attend DEIS-organized conferences, then the reality is that the conference organizing committee, the paper reviewers, the local arrangements team, the webmaster, and so on are

all volunteers who have in some cases spent several years working in support of a particular conference series. They willingly have sacrificed their free time to ensure that the meeting is a success and the technical quality of the papers presented is high. The amount of work that goes into organizing an international conference is staggering, and it is a process that generally starts at least two years before the actual event. All of this work, the majority of which we are unaware of, is undertaken by groups of DEIS members whose dedication and professionalism often go unrecognized by those that benefit most from their activities, i.e. the attendees themselves.

As a Society we have a number of technical committees that are active in specific topic areas. This activity can take the form of maintaining relevant IEEE standards, publishing review articles summarizing the state of the art, organizing technical workshops, editing special issues of the *IEEE Transactions on Dielectrics and Electrical Insulation*, and so on. Again volunteers are giving their time and technical expertise for free in order to support our subject disciplines, not just for those who already work in these areas, but also through workshops and so on, ensuring that the next generation of dielectricians have access to specialist knowledge and understanding. At a geographical level, the Society has Chapters that organize activities in their respective local areas. Again Chapter committees are made up of volunteers, and the more successful the Chapter, the more active the Committee. Over the last few years, we have seen the formation of a number of new Chapters and increasing growth in Chapter activities, and again, this is due to the hard work of our volunteers.

We should also acknowledge the Society members who regularly agree to peer review submissions to the transactions, this magazine, and conferences. Being

a good reviewer is not an easy task; reviewers are expected to ensure that we maintain our standards, carefully assess the technical merits of the submission, and provide useful feedback to the author even when they feel that the work as written cannot be published or accepted. As an associate editor of the transactions, I am aware of several individuals who devote a significant amount of their time to this anonymous task and would like them to know that their efforts are deeply appreciated by all of us.

Then in order to function as a Society we need a series of administrative committees with a wide range of roles and responsibilities. These committees have responsibilities such as assessing applications for Fellowship of the IEEE, recommending individuals for awards, developing and enhancing our education program, and looking after our publications and website. Again the chairs and committee members are volunteers who work in a professional way to ensure that we provide the best value we can for our membership.

In summary, the true benefit to a member of the DEIS of our volunteers is that without all of their hard work and dedication, we would not be able to be as active as we are, nor would we be able to offer full membership in the Society for only \$26 for 2015. In truth, individual membership fees in total only cover the costs of producing and circulating the first three issues of this magazine each year; everything else you get as a member is in some part due to the hard work of our volunteers. Therefore, on behalf of all members of the DEIS, if you are active within the Society, regardless of what your contribution is, thank you.

