

Jim Keller University of Missouri, USA

What's Cooking in CIS?



I all,
I like to cook, and I like metaphors. When I started thinking about what to write here, food came to mind. A meal that's a hit at the Keller house is old fashioned pot roast. There are many variations, but the recipe I particularly like starts with a lean cut of beef and an abundance of fresh vegetables, slow cooked for 8 hours in a rich brown gravy loaded with herbs and

spices. Yum! So, what does this have to do with our society? The eye of round roast itself reminds me of the core activities of CIS overseen by our talented Vice Presidents – the meat of CIS. That large variety of veggies I see as all of the cool programs (and the dedicated volunteers who run them) both in and across our specialties. There are way too many to enumerate in this short message, but it always startles me when I look through all the engagement we have with our members and with the broader engineering and scientific community. Check it out at https://cis.ieee.org/.

But what about those herbs and spices in the gravy? They add flavor and variety to the meal, and CIS has an equivalent – initiative programs. The IEEE maintains that we be good shepherds of our resources. However, since we are successful, there are rules that allow us to invest some of our surplus in programs that benefit our members and our Society. These are meant to be short term activities (at most three years) that provide recognizable value. There are many examples of initiatives from the past that have become veggies in the pot roast. For just a few examples, chapter funding, travel grants, and summer research grants are now regular items of our yearly budget but started out as pilot programs. The Grand Challenge is another successful startup that transitioned into a major activity each year. The CIS technical mentoring program is in its third year and is almost certainly moving to the standard budget.

This year is no different. There are several approved proposals for 2022 that include industry and government outreach to support the new I&GA Committee in making CIS more relevant and attractive to practitioners in industry and government. We have concrete plans for a CIS history portal to tell our story, a marketing initiative to put that story out to the wider community, new technologies to support our publications and conferences, and strategies for membership development that includes retention efforts, mentoring programs to move folks from "YP to VP", innovative competitions and educational outreach of various forms. If you have an idea for a novel activity to support CIS members, we're ready to engage with you. As one of my CIS mentors always reminds me, finding the funding is the easy part; what every initiative needs is a champion to guide its execution. That could be you.

Got an idea to modify the recipe? Please contact me at kellerj@missouri.edu with your thoughts, suggestions, questions, or with your innovative ideas. Please stay safe and healthy. I hope to see you this year.

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