

IEEE ComSoc WOMEN IN COMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING

IEEE Communications Society (ComSoc) is committed to taking on the path to position the Society as a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Therefore, IEEE ComSoc signals its female members and the next generation of diverse engineers that it values their membership and participation in IEEE ComSoc activities. Women in Communications Engineering (WICE) is an IEEE ComSoc Standing Committee under the Member & Global Activities Council (MGA-C), and its mission is to promote the visibility and roles of women communications engineers and to provide a venue for their professional growth. In this President's Page, I am pleased to introduce Dr. Baek-Young Choi, the Chair of Women in Communications Engineering for 2022–2023, to share with us the status of WICE and related activities.

BAEK-YOUNG CHOI is a professor of computer science in the School of Science and Engineering at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. She received her Ph.D. degree in computer science and engineering from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Her research interests generally lie in the broad area of networking and communications, with specific emphasis on the Internet of Things, smart city technologies, and mobile security. She has published three books on network monitoring, storage systems, and cloud computing, and more than 100 papers and 2 awarded U.S. patents. She has been a faculty fellow of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory's Visiting Faculty Research Program (AFRL-VFRP), and Korea Telecom's Advanced Institute of Technology (KT-AIT). She has been an Associate Editor for the *IEEE Internet of Things Journal*, *IEEE Consumer Electronics Magazine*, the *Springer Journal of Telecommunication Systems*, and the *Elsevier Journal of Computer Networks*. She chaired the IEEE International Smart Cities Conference (ISC2) in 2018, the flagship conference of the IEEE Smart Cities Initiative. She has also served for a number of conferences and workshops in various capacities, including as a keynote speaker, Workshop or Symposium Chair, Technical Program Chair, tutorial speaker, and in many other roles as an organizing committee member.

FEMALE MEMBERSHIP STATUS IN COMSOC

In IEEE ComSoc Membership, there is a wide gender gap. As reported in the November 2022 issue of *IEEE Communications Magazine*, only 13 percent of IEEE ComSoc members identify as women. The representation of women becomes smaller in higher ranks of membership. Among the IEEE ComSoc Student and Graduate Student Members, 25.6 percent are women. Only 5.7 percent of IEEE ComSoc members are women with the rank of Member, Senior Member, Fellow, Life Member, Life Senior, and Life Fellow. The IEEE ComSoc Membership has 0.31 percent women who are Fellows or Life Fellows. 1.71 percent of all IEEE ComSoc Members are women Senior Members (Senior Member plus Life Senior Members). There are 7.6 times as many men who are Fellows, and 49 times as many men who are Life Members, 32 times as many Life Senior



Xuemin (Sherman) Shen



Baek-Young Choi

Members, and 40 times as many Life Fellows. IEEE ComSoc can benefit from retaining women Students Members transitioning to professional members, and encouraging elevations of women to Senior Members or to Fellows. WICE aims at addressing the very issues of retention and promotion of women ComSoc members.

MEMBERSHIP

Any IEEE ComSoc woman member is automatically a member of WICE. This does not prevent others from joining WICE. Anyone supporting gender diversity, equity, and inclusion is welcome to join WICE. We strive to ensure gender-diversified panels at all meetings including the WICE committee itself, where we have male committee members. The central strength of the WICE committee is the collegial and passionate team working together toward our mission. The current WICE committee roster is shown in Table 1.

WICE BENEFITS

WICE offers a number of benefits to its members, including the following.

- WICE events at major ComSoc conferences: The WICE events offer free professional development programs for ComSoc members at any career stage, and promote the visibility of women ComSoc members.
- Student Travel Grants: The grants are offered for ComSoc flagship conferences such as ICC and GLOBECOM.
- Awards: We recognize the achievements of women ComSoc members, and promote their visibility through awards. The award categories are
 - Outstanding Achievement Award
 - Early Achievement Award
 - Outstanding Service Award
 - Mentorship Award

Mentoring and networking sessions: WICE provides support and advice to students and young women in telecommunications through a mentoring program. It is also an opportunity for highly experienced WICE professionals to serve other IEEE ComSoc women members. We use the IEEE Mentor program implemented via IEEE Collabratec and its guidelines to follow through.

Child care program: We offer childcare grants for ICC and GLOBECOM attendees who bring young children to the conference.

COMSOC WICE ACTIVITIES IN 2022

WICE has been very active in recent years, both online and offline. We have been promoting IEEE ComSoc women members and WICE activities via social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn. After the online conferences in the first couple of years of the pandemic, now conferences are held in hybrid mode, and in-person attendance is increasing. Accordingly, more conference activities have been planned. In 2022, WICE events were held at a number of conferences, including WCNC, ICC, MeditCom, TenCon, LatinCom, and GLOBECOM. In particular, diverse programs of two panels, a mentoring session, and two professional career coaching sessions took place at GLOBECOM '22.

As a special project in 2022, under the leadership of MGA-C, 50 IEEE ComSoc women interview videos have been produced. WICE also supported other committees' activities by ensuring IEEE ComSoc women members' participation in the organization or operation of these activities. For instance, WICE helped with multiple activities and competitions for pre-university and university students.

This year, in addition to continuing our regular activities, we hope to be able to extend childcare support via conference-hosted childcare so that it will be more amenable for ComSoc parents of young children — male or female — to attend the conference.

In closing, toward gender diversity, equity, and inclusion within IEEE ComSoc, the leadership and members can endorse WICE through their attention, participation, and support of WICE activities. The WICE Committee is always open to suggestions and ideas for its mission.

Baek-Young Choi	Chair
Toktam Mahmood	Vice Chair
Tina Marie Slivka	Secretary
Bige Deniz Unluturk	Publicity Chair
Aleksandar Mastilovic	Student Competition Representative
Sinem Coleri	Awards Sub-Committee Member-at-Large
Angela Yingjun Zhang	Members-at-Large
Yessica Saez	Members-at-Large
Shahrnaz Azizi	Members-at-Large
Megha Quamara	Members-at-Large
Kuljeet Kaur	Secretary (Deputy)
Mallellu Sai Prashanth	Publicity (Deputy)
Devika K M	Student Activities
Paulina Chan	Industry Relation Liaison
Rute C. Sofia	Industry Relation Deputy
Joyce Mwangama	Young Professional Liaison
Anupma Thakur	Young Professional Deputy
Maite Brandt-Pierce	Past Chair

TABLE 1. ComSoc's WICE Committee Members (2022–2023).