

The Chicago IEEE EMCS Chapter's 3rd Fall 2009 meeting on November 19, was hosted by ITT Technical Institute in Mount Prospect and drew 25 members and 7 guests. It was jointly sponsored with IEEE-WIE (Women In Engineering ). The traditional cookies and soda was provided for the social-networking ½ hour. In the business meeting, the slate of incumbent officers was handily approved, with the addition of Louann Devine, Graduate Student at UIC, as Publicity Chair.

The featured speaker was Sharon Phillips of WIE-IEEE , Secretary to IEEE Chicago Section's Executive Committee and a former Motorola Corporate Research Engineer, with 8 patents, one named to the Essential GSM Portfolio, a first for a Woman Engineer. Sharon's topic " How EMC Benefits Society" began with some statistics illustrating the small numbers of women in Electrical Engineering and how that ~10% has not grown appreciably during her long career. She also discussed the stereotypical engineer's solitary social behaviors vs. careers where women have much larger representations, and "helping people" is perceived as a primary outcome. Sharon illustrated that great engineering and helping people can converge under the right circumstances by using a personal example of a new product development, the "Tie-Phone". It had both complex EMC needs and aggressive program development cycle-time-reduction goals . Her small team was able to reduce the typical 10 to 20 PC Board "spins" down to an unheard-of TWO ! They accomplished that by selecting the best EMC and antenna design practices at the beginning of the design. Painstaking multiple reviews of the paper design were conducted by the multi-discipline team, before any physical samples were made. The team included all the key technical skills and decision makers. Even though they did not always agree on a design approach at the onset, skillful leadership and constructive team dynamics moved them to the best decisions for the greater good of the design. Lessons-learned and best practices were captured by her Research group and then institutionalized into the traditional Product Design organization, benefiting future product and PCB design processes. When the finished product was reviewed by a "focus group" they were pleasantly surprised to have a truly fully working sample which met many of their previously unsatisfied needs. At the end of the day : engineers were able to work well together, Women made significant contributions, a product was created which was unique yet done in a very short design time and it had superior performance including the typically difficult EMC and antenna integration aspects. Sharon then fielded many questions from the audience , who were eager to share their own product development experiences as well..

Cheerfully submitted :  
jerry meyerhoff , chapter secretary



ITT's Dean Cox receives service recognition plaque from Tom Braxton, IEEE EMCS Programs chair .



Sharon Phillips , featured Speaker November 19, 2009 receives recognition plaque from Tom Braxton, Programs Chair.



Speaker Sharon Phillips describes the EMC and antenna design drawing of the "Tie-Phone" , pointing with the sample phone in her hand ..



Sharon Phillips continues the discussion with Bob Hofmann , EMCS Treasurer and Herb White, W. Herbert White & Co. Inc.