

Membership Forum . . .

WHY I BELONG TO ASEE

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THE PROFESSION OF chemical engineering is in a period of rapid change, where the graduates of our universities are entering a much wider variety of industries than in the past. Employment is on the upswing in the areas of microelectronics components, biotechnology, environmental control, analytical instrumentation, pharmaceuticals, food processing, and various materials-oriented industries, while opportunities in the traditional chemical and petroleum industries have lessened. There is little likelihood that this trend will reverse any time soon.

In addition to these exciting changes, rapid developments in hardware, software, and networks for personal computing have created opportunities for instructional innovation which are only beginning to be identified and used.

The changing roles of our graduates and the potential of personal computers are just two of the reasons why it is imperative that chemical engineering faculties critically examine and revise their curricula and

pedagogical methods. Educators must communicate with one another. Good ideas must be spread so that they can be used elsewhere.

The Chemical Engineering Division of ASEE provides for this communication and exchange of ideas. In addition to full programs at all annual ASEE meetings, the division arranges a Summer School for Chemical Engineering Faculty every five years. The next one of these, to be held in North Dartmouth, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1987, specifically emphasizes changes warranted in response to the evolving uses of chemical engineers. It affords a fine opportunity to get a broad overview of possible new directions. Finally, the division's journal, *Chemical Engineering Education*, has for years very successfully relayed new educational concepts and teaching methods, and is a valuable resource for members.

Surely we cannot expect that every faculty on its own will conceive and implement the best curricular changes and developments. The Chemical Engineering Division of ASEE provides the only major forum in this area, and for that very reason we should all support it and add to and partake of what it has to offer. □

Editor's Note: In an effort to encourage non-member chemical engineering faculty to become members of ASEE, we invite members to submit short commentaries on their reasons for joining the organization and the benefits they derive from that membership.

outfielder, and an occasional pitcher, but at present he is satisfied just to play catch with his son-in-law. It's not difficult to imagine Schmitz as an athlete. Lean and self-disciplined, he is recognized as one of the two or three top handball players on campus. In addition, he has recently added to his regimen. South Bend winters permitting, he runs two to four miles every morning, perhaps inspired by his middle daughter Joy who is in training to run the marathon.

One last question reveals the heart of Schmitz's success—both personal and public. When asked what matters most to him, he muses, then speaks decisively. "There's no question. On the whole, the most important thing in my world is my family. That's where my pride and satisfaction are centered. As far as work is concerned, I like to feel that I'm doing

something interesting and important, that someone's benefitting from what I do, and that my work is more than merely a 'job.' Accumulating awards is not one of my priorities." Laughing, he concludes, "I'll accept an award or prize anytime anyone wants to give one to me. But it's not a big thing to me. My happiness and fulfillment don't depend on it."

To Arvind Varma, Roger Schmitz is "a quality person, a person who believes in high quality in everything he does: research, teaching, administration, interaction with people, handball, everything. I think the key word for him is 'quality.'" One can imagine Schmitz's reaction to such praise. Not one to invite eulogies, no doubt he would mask his discomfort with self-deprecating humor and, turning to the pile of papers on his desk, would ask, "What's next?" □