



An Interview with Roque J. Calvo

ECS Executive Director Marks 20 Years of Service

At the ECS Honors and Awards session this past October, Acheson Award recipient Larry Faulkner reminded the audience that it was nine years ago when the Society last met in Phoenix. He also noted that the fall 1991 meeting was his first meeting as ECS President and Roque Calvo's first meeting as Executive Director. Faulkner went on to congratulate Roque on the excellent job he has done for the Society.

Roque Calvo joined the Society staff in 1980 as the Accounting Supervisor, managing the financial operations for the headquarters office. After two years, he was promoted to Assistant Executive Secretary. In 1991, he became the Executive Secretary, only the fourth in

the Society's 98-year history. The title was changed to Executive Director in 1994. We asked Roque to reflect on (within this short space in *Interface*) the many changes he has seen—within the Society and in the environment in which non-profit scientific societies operate.

Interface: *When we last interviewed you (in 1995), many exciting things have been happening at the Society. Can you give us the highlights?*

Calvo: The launching of *Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters* was a significant step in itself, but also launched the Society's electronic publication initiatives. *Letters* is the original, and only, electronic-first, rapid-publication tech-

Roque holds a Master's degree in Business Administration from Rider University (Lawrenceville, NJ) and was named a member of the Sigma Iota Epsilon Honor Society. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Lebanon Valley College (Annville, PA). In 1991, he became a Certified Association Executive (CAE) through the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). He maintains membership in ASAE and the New Jersey Society of Association Executives (NJSAAE).

Roque is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Federation of Materials Societies (FMS), and is also serving a term (1997-2001) on the Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide Meetings Advisory Board.

Also very active in the Council of Engineering and Scientific Societies (CESSE), Roque is currently serving as the organization's president for the 2000-01 year. He has served the organization in various capacities: on the board of directors (1995-98), as secretary (1998-99), and vice-president (1999-2000). He also served on the Task Force on Member Satisfaction (1991-94), was chairman of the Membership Credentials Committee (1996-98), and was chairman of the CESSE 2000 Program Committee.

CESSE is the Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives and celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Over 150 associations send representatives to attend seminars and workshops on trends and changing conditions. CESSE publishes a newsletter, surveys member organizations to gather information on industry trends and best practices, and has a voice when significant issues face the technical-professional community in the national legislative arena. CESSE provides a forum for the mutual exchange of experiences, ideas, and solutions for common problems in operating a professional society.

A native of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Roque lives in Lawrenceville, New Jersey with his wife Marianne, daughter Amy, and son John.

nical journal in its field. The recently released first ISI Impact Factor for *Letters* is testament to the high-quality content of this peer-reviewed journal. In retrospect, launching this journal was labor-intensive but clearly it was the right thing to do. The co-sponsorship from the IEEE Electron Devices Society (EDS) in this exciting new venture helped ensure its success. The Society is now well-launched in bringing the *Journal* to e-first status (online publication, one article at a time) and well on its way to vastly improving the functionality and distribution of both technical journals.

The first joint international meeting between ECS and ISE (International Society of Electrochemistry) in Paris was significant both geographically and programmatically. It represented a major step up in ECS's collaborations with its sister societies and paved the way for future meetings and other jointly-sponsored programs. ECS has gradually but surely moved toward the global orientation so prevalent today in all aspects of business and academia.

The Society's activities in the last few years reflect growth pressures from

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the outside as well as the inside. The submissions to the ECS technical journals have been growing by an average of 7% each year for the last ten years. Meeting attendance has climbed steadily, and the ability of presenters to submit their abstracts electronically has been an attractive feature, with electronic submission now at over 99%. Membership has grown to its highest-ever numbers, over 7800 as of October 1. The many new and changing programmatic demands on the Society—electronic publications, joint-

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ly-sponsored meetings; as well as other significant events, such as the Society's Centennial in 2002—have required growth in the headquarters space and staff. The Society's staff and volunteer leadership have risen to meet the added tasks and responsibilities.

In keeping with so many new initiatives and so much progress, another highlight has been the adoption by the

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Society of the official use of its *de facto* acronym, ECS. The new logo better reflects the Society's position in the world of scientific societies; better reflects the broad range of technical interests; wet and dry (the Society's areas of electrochemistry and solid-state technology); and will help to achieve greater brand recognition for the Society and its services.

Interface: *What have been the two greatest challenges facing you in the job as Executive Director?*

Calvo: Serving a broad and diverse constituency has probably been the number one challenge. The technical areas of interest that ECS encompasses has expanded beyond anyone's expectations of even ten years ago. Take the Internet. Who would have predicted the thing itself and all the technological changes (devices and applications in computers, memory, bandwidth, long-life compact batteries, just to name a few) necessary to support it? ECS has experienced tremendous growth in the geographic diversity of its constituents as well. In 1980, the year I started with ECS, the percentage of constituents from outside the U.S. was 15%; in 2000, that number was 40%.

These numbers have been telling us for a long time that our global audience has been expanding, but it has been daunting to try to respond more quickly to the demand for our programs and services outside of North America. This has led to the second challenge, that of dealing with the cost and changes associated with technology. We have had to, and continue to, change the way we do business and serve our members and constituents. In this area, we have been aggressive and have invested substantially in our information systems infrastructure. We plan to remain aggressive, providing more comprehensive access to all ECS programs and services.

Interface: *What are some of the things you are involved with on behalf of the Society that members might not know about?*

Calvo: Collaboration has become such an important part of our operation. Much of what I do now involves building relationships and creating awareness about ECS programs and services. Organizations like CESSE and FMS put me in regular contact with many other professional societies, creating opportunities to learn, but also to establish relationships that have led to joint ventures with organizations such as IEEE and

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SPIE. Members will soon learn about an exciting new relationship with another sister society, the American Institute of Physics (AIP).

Interface: *If you had to choose a few words to describe the kind of change ECS has undergone, what would they be?*

Calvo: Focused, thoughtful, aggressive, and driven. Through all the demands of living in a technologically-driven age, the Society has remained focussed on its core objectives and competencies. Chiefly, this has been the maintenance and care of the Society's long-standing reputation of disseminating the highest-quality content in electrochemical

and solid-state science and technology. That focus has been thoughtful—well researched and planned. After careful research, planning, and consensus-building, the Society has been aggressive in follow-through and implementa-

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tion. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Society is driven by member needs, communicated through the Divisions and Groups and committees, and through to the Board of Directors. The Society's volunteer leadership has remained true to the Society's ideals, while facilitating the vision necessary to plan for the next 100 years of the Society's life.

Carl Osburn, ECS President, when asked about Roque's 20 years with the Society, had this to say. "Most members are probably not aware of the essential role that Roque Calvo and the headquarters staff play in the smooth operation of the Society. We are fortunate to have Roque as our Executive Director. He has led the Society to a new plateau in terms of membership, joint international meetings, electronic publications and communications, and satellite meetings. To a very large extent, he makes it possible for us to succeed; and what's more, he does it with flair and style."

The Society congratulates and thanks Roque for his many years of service! ■