

area. Sections are then assigned to one of ISA's 14 districts and regions.

ISA District 13 comprises the Eastern half of Canada. The provinces New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec are part of District 13. We have a total of five active sections, one formative section, and several student sections. Our active sections are Hamilton, Montreal, Saguenay - Lac St. Jean, Sarnia, and Toronto. Section programs are provided in either French or English, depending on the preferences of the local members.

Nasby: Over the years, I have been a section member and attended meetings of the Hamilton, Sarnia, and Toronto sections. The sections have been unique and similar to each other. The common thread between the sections is the willingness of section members to encourage mentorship, leadership, and camaraderie.

Insights: What sorts of industries are found in your district?

Nasby: We are fortunate to have a wide variety of industries in our district. However, despite the differences in the various industries and types of processes, there is the commonality of the automation body of knowledge. Our instrumentation, automated control, monitoring and process safety skills, and experience tie our members together.

Bovenkamp: Our diversity of industries is our strength. The members of our various sections value the knowledge sharing that their ISA membership makes possible.

Insights: You recently had your District Leadership Conference (DLC). What do you do at the DLCs?

Bovenkamp: The District Leadership Conference (DLC) is one of the foundations of the leadership development program ISA makes available to its volunteer leaders and members. Once per year, most ISA districts will hold a DLC for their members who are interested in developing their leadership skills and learning more about our Society. In District 13, we rotate the DLC location between each of our sections, and we typically schedule it for early May. Our 2011 DLC was hosted by our ISA Toronto Section. Over two days, we held leadership development workshops, brought people together for a social event, and conducted a District Council Meeting. During the District Council Meeting, each section makes a presentation to the District regarding their previous year's activities.

Nasby: The DLC is a unique ISA feature that I wish other organizations would consider. As a new ISA Hamilton Section Leader, the DLC was a great opportunity to learn about ISA Section activities and operations. I learned about how ISA sections are structured to present member meetings, events, and local exhibitions for their members. For our District 13 DLCs, the workshops are facilitated by ISA members just like me, so I got a chance to learn from my colleagues. The workshops also

3. Member spotlight: ISA District 13

Michael Bovenkamp and Graham Nasby participated in a District Spotlight Q&A with *ISA Insights*. Nasby is the vice president of ISA Hamilton Section located in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Bovenkamp is the 2011 ISA District 13 vice president.

Insights: Can you tell readers about District 13 and how it fits into ISA's membership structure?

Bovenkamp: In ISA's membership structure, members are encouraged to belong to a local section in their geographical

give the speakers a great opportunity to practice their presentation and public-speaking skills. Best of all, the DLCs give us an opportunity to meet fellow automation professionals from our district.

Insights: What sorts of events and programming do District 13 sections organize for their members?

Bovenkamp: Each of our sections hosts regular membership meetings that consist of a mixture of technical seminars, plant tours, hands-on workshops, and networking events. Section leaders also collaborate with high-school, college and university leadership to help students get excited about automation and offer ISA's support for young people who are considering careers in automation. Our sections have a strong mix of section exhibitions, training programs, technical programs, and special events.

Nasby: The golf tournaments organized by our sections are popular. For example, my home section, ISA Hamilton Section, hosts an annual golf tournament that routinely attracts over 140 golfers every year. Our other sections who organize golf tournaments report similar results.

Plant tours are also very popular. Throughout District 13, we have discovered technical people love to see the equipment and processes shown during section plant tours. For our members who are end users, it also gives them an opportunity to "show off" their facilities to fellow automation professionals.

Insights: In your district, what is the secret for having a good local Section Exhibition?

Bovenkamp: I would say, first and foremost, planning, followed by forming long-term relationships with vendors who exhibit every year. For our sections that host exhibitions, they typically have one or two strong leaders who lead a team of volunteers through planning and execution. The shows are typically one or two days in length and use the table-top format. Some exhibitions also have training or technical presentations adjacent to the exhibit hall. The section show size usually varies from 40 to 80 tables with a local vendor exhibitor focus. Vendors see our shows as a cost-effective and intimate venue to get to know their customers. Attendees support their employers through the technology knowledge exchange and are exposed to a friendly local atmosphere.

Nasby: In addition to planning, a successful exhibition must be announced well in advance and be effectively marketed. In the Hamilton Section, we have a dedicated volunteer who books the venue at least 18 months in advance. Table-top exhibitors are typically booked four to eight months ahead of time. We send out a save-the-date notice at least a year in advance and follow-up by using e-mail notifications, articles in local equipment news magazines, social media, and notices in our quarterly Section newsletter.

Insights: Can you tell us when you first became an ISA member?

Nasby: I have actually been an ISA member since 2004. At the time, I was in my final year of university, and someone had left a copy of a trade magazine in the engineering society's lounge. I can't recall what the magazine was about, but I do remember seeing an advertisement in it about ISA. The focus of the ad was ISA membership benefits and it included a small note at the bottom that said students could join for only \$10. A student membership for only \$10? I couldn't argue with that, so I took the bait and joined via the ISA website—I've been an ISA member ever since.

Bovenkamp: When I started my first full-time job after graduation, my colleagues encouraged me to attend ISA Section meetings and be involved in volunteer committee work. I quickly benefited from the quality technical presentations, society technical content, local exhibitions, networking opportunities, and section Committee work.

Insights: What do you see as the greatest benefits to ISA membership from the perspective of your district?

Bovenkamp: ISA membership has helped me support my employer, grow in my career, meet new and interesting people, and open doors to opportunities. ISA has also allowed me to get access to the vast collection of knowledge and experience from members and industry experts.

Nasby: I would say the networking and access to opportunities that compliment my day job are the greatest benefits of ISA membership. ISA has enabled me to get access to people, information, and contacts that I would never would have otherwise. Technology is something that comes and goes, but it is the people and relationships we form that enable us to move forward in our careers. The networking that comes with ISA membership is an incredible thing; the more you put into it, the more it gives back to you.

Michael Bovenkamp, P.Eng., CAP is the 2011 ISA District 13 vice president and a member of the ISA 2011 Executive Board. He has more than 11 years of experience as an automation professional in the steel-making industry for ArcelorMittal Dofasco in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Graham Nasby, P.Eng., PMP is a licensed professional engineer who has worked in various industries, ranging from IT and software development to pharmaceuticals and semiconductor manufacturing. He currently designs automated control and monitoring systems for the municipal water/wastewater sector at Eramosa Engineering Inc. Graham is the VP and president-elect for the Hamilton Section and a contributing member of the ISA18 Alarm Management standards committee.

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