

Women in Circuits and Systems (WiCAS) at ICECS2021

November 29th, 2021

In conjunction with the 28th IEEE International Conference on Electronics Circuits and Systems (ICECS), the region 8 flagship conference of IEEE Circuits and Systems Society (CASS), a Women in Circuit and Systems (WiCAS) event was held. The event was in-person, after the COVID-19 outbreaks.

WiCAS events aim to inspire students, researchers, and young professionals in the field of circuits and systems at all professional levels. These events provide a golden networking opportunity, enabling discussions on

the challenges female professionals might encounter in their careers.

The WiCAS event at ICECS 2021 was held on November 29th, 2021, and was organized by Muna Darweesh, the WiCAS event chair for the ICECS 2021. More than sixty attendees joined the event, which included a panel discussion focusing on the theme “*Empowering Women in Technical Roles*”. The purpose of this discussion was to provide an interactive dialogue between the audience and the three invited panelists coming from both academia and industry fields. The invited panelists were:

- Dr. Fotouh Al-Ragom, a Manager of the Energy Efficiency Technologies Program and a research scientist at the Energy and Building Research Center of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research;
- Dr. Feda A. AlShahwan, Head of Electronics Engineering Technology Department, College of Technological Studies;

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Figure 1. WiCAS2021 Guest Speakers. From the left: Dr. Muna Darweesh, Dr. Feda A. AlShahwan, Her Excellency Sheikha Noora Humaid Al Nuaimi, Dr. Fotouh Al-Ragom.



Figure 2. A pleasant moment during the panel discussion.



Figure 3. Audience participation.



Figure 4. Panelists awarding ceremony.



Figure 5. Group photo after the event.

- Her Excellency Sheikha Noora Humaid Al Nuaimi, Director of AjmanX, Ajman Municipality, and planning Department.

They are all in managerial positions with recognizable achievements in their careers in the field of engineering and technology.

The panelists provided examples of how to empower women in technical roles. They all highlighted that such a goal comes from strong self-motivation, and the choice of the right circle of people around you. They shared their personal experience during their post-graduate research. Dr. Fotouh was a rising star: she provided her practical strategy for being a mother with the passion for research on power sector. Dr. Fedaa provided a valuable experience for the young graduates about time management. She engaged the audience a lot during the session. Her Excellency Sheikha Noora shared her PhD journey, and provided an interesting example on how she is managing herself between research, work, and family commitments.

This edition of the WiCAS event comes at the time of celebrating the 25th anniversary of the IEEE Women in Engineering. All speakers were very proud of the women's achievements and mentioned that more accomplishments must come. Besides, the date of the event coincided with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Day celebration. All guests congratulated the UAE researchers and professionals and, especially the women in all research fields. At the end of the event, all guest speakers received certificates of appreciation, trophies and chocolates. All attendees enjoyed the delicious buffet and received bluetooth speakers

as WiCAS gift. After the event, all guests and organizers went on a cruise trip.

Furthermore, two competitions that target female researchers were announced. The "Best WiCAS Paper Award" is one of them. All the ICECS papers with a female first author were considered for such award, which was eventually decided based on conference reviewers' scores. For ICECS 2021, this award went to Patricia Ucker Leleu da Costa, for her article titled "Boosting the Efficiency of the Harmonics Elimination VLSI Architecture by Arithmetic Approximations". Additionally, another award was assigned to the best female presenter. A team of two judges, namely, Dr. Rida Gadhafi and Dr. Alavikunhu Panthakkan, attended all the presentations that were delivered by female researchers. For this award, only in-presence presentations were accepted. The winner of this competition was Marcel Khalifa, for her paper titled "FiltPIM: In-Memory Filter for DNA Sequencing". The winner received a digital certificate and CASS membership.

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