



In Memory of Prof. MO EL-HAWARY

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PAYING TRIBUTE TO FORMER SMCS ENEWSLETTER EiC Prof. MO EL-HAWARY

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Dear readers,



With a heavy heart and great regret, I pass along sad news to you that our great colleague and friend, IEEE life fellow, former IEEE Canada President fellow SMCS Board of Governors Member, EiC of our SMC Magazine and past EiC of our eNewsletter, Prof. Dr. Mohamed El-Hawary (Mo for everybody) passed away on July 26th, 2019.

I met Mo in February 2016 in San Diego during my first ExCom meeting of the SMC Society where I was formally appointed EiC of the eNewsletter, taking a role that had been his until then, since he had recently been nominated EiC of the SMC Magazine. During these years we have met many more times and exchanged numerous emails and messages where I was seeking for guidance and he generously helped me fulfill my new role as EiC. I will always remember his enthusiasm and wit, in particular when that first day in San Diego he gave me admittedly his best tip: do not let anybody stop you! Go proudly your way as an EiC! I have always since followed his wise advice, not only as an EiC.

THE INSTITUTE

Mohamed “Mo” El-Hawary was the president of IEEE Canada from 2002 to 2003. He was an active volunteer who held many high-level positions throughout the organization. He died on 26 July at the age of 76. El-Hawary was a professor of electrical and computer engineering at Dalhousie University in Halifax, N.S., Canada.

“IEEE was his second family, a family he believed strongly in,” says IEEE Canada President Maike Luiken, a senior member. “The IEEE and our community of volunteers have lost an important member. IEEE was a big part of Mo’s life, and Mo was a big part of IEEE.”

El-Hawary is survived by his wife, Ferial, an IEEE Life Fellow and also a dedicated volunteer and by three children, eight grandchildren, and two sisters.

“His wonderful family, his many students, and contributing to the goals of IEEE were of paramount importance to Mo,” Luiken says. “He was a great friend, mentor, and leader. Along with his plentiful professional contributions and service, his outstanding and quirky sense of humor, his always positive outlook, and his stories will stay with us.”

LONG ACADEMIC CAREER

Born in Sohag, Egypt, El-Hawary received a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering in 1965 from Alexandria University, in Egypt. He also earned a Ph.D. in electrical engineering in 1972 from the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alta., Canada.

El-Hawary began his academic career in 1972 as an associate professor of electrical engineering at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. He left there in 1974 to join the faculty of engineering at Memorial University of Newfoundland, in St. John’s, Canada, becoming chair of the electrical engineering program in 1976. He joined the Technical University of Nova Scotia, in Halifax, in 1981 as a professor of electrical engineering. The school merged with Dalhousie University in 1997. El-Hawary served as associate dean of engineering at Dalhousie from 1995 to 2007. He was also the chair of the university’s senate from 2001 to 2007. He served as director of the school’s international and external relations for the faculty of engineering in 2008 and 2009.

ACTIVE VOLUNTEER

El-Hawary joined IEEE in 1968 and held many positions. In addition to serving as president of IEEE Canada, he was also IEEE secretary in 2004 and 2005. He also served on the IEEE Fellows Committee and sat on the board of IEEE’s honor society, Eta Kappa Nu, of which he was a member. He was also a member of the IEEE Power & Energy Society and the IEEE Power Electronics Society and served in various roles with the IEEE Newfoundland and Labrador Section.

“Mo was consistently active in IEEE Region 7 during the more than 20 years that I knew him,” says IEEE Fellow Celia Desmond, who served as IEEE Canada president in 2000 and 2001. “He organized many events and encouraged a tremendous number of people to volunteer. In fact, it is very impressive that within the last few weeks of his life he contacted me with questions about the process of nominating people for awards.

“But Mo was not only active in Region 7. He also held many positions at the society level and on various IEEE committees. He was well known and will be sorely missed worldwide.”

El-Hawary was also vice president of development for the IEEE Canadian Foundation, a registered charity associated with IEEE Canada.

“Mo was always ready with cheerful and relevant anecdotes to enliven meetings and personal conversations,” says IEEE Life Senior Member David Whyte, who is president of the foundation. “He took on various tasks supporting the philanthropic purposes of the IEEE Canadian Foundation, including taking the lead in updating its promotional materials.”

El-Hawary also received many honors from IEEE, including the IEEE Educational Activities Board’s 1999 Meritorious Achievement Award in Continuing Education and the IEEE Power & Energy Society’s Outstanding Power Engineering Educator Award. He also is the recipient

of several awards from IEEE Canada, including its A.G.L McNaughton Gold Medal and W.S. Read Outstanding Service Award.

“We honor Mo, his exemplary service to IEEE and IEEE Canada, his distinguished contributions to the engineering profession, and his lifelong passion for, dedication to, and support of his students,” Luiken says.

SUPPORTER OF IEEE PRESS

El-Hawary authored more than 10 textbooks and almost 200 journal papers, so it’s no surprise that he became active in IEEE’s publishing programs as well. He served on the IEEE Publication Services and Products Board and was the founding editor in chief of IEEE Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Magazine and PES Letters.

El-Hawary was a leading member of the IEEE Press community and distinguished himself as editor in chief from 2005 through 2007, which were critical years for IEEE’s premier book-publishing unit, according to Ken Moore. He is the former director of IEEE Book and Information Services, which oversaw the IEEE Press program, and now part of IEEE Publishing Operations.

El-Hawary also served as a member of the IEEE Press editorial board from 1996 to 2004 and then again from 2008 to 2011. In 2005, El-Hawary served on the Ad Hoc Committee on the IEEE Press of the Future, a team composed of both volunteers and staff members that proposed several measures to reinvigorate the program, Moore says, including the digitization of all IEEE Press books for distribution through the IEEE Xplore Digital Library.

“Dr. El-Hawary advocated passionately to secure the future of IEEE’s book program, particularly for its benefits to members as a source of practical knowledge and technical currency,” Moore says.

El-Hawary served as editor of the IEEE Press Series in Power Engineering. In developing the series, Moore says, El-Hawary attracted and mentored scores of authors and established the series as the number-one source of books in the power engineering field.

“Dr. El-Hawary enjoyed a reputation as the most productive of all IEEE Press series editors,” Moore notes. “He will be remembered for his collegial relationships and for his convivial personality.”

OUR TRIBUTE TO MO

To honor his memory and legacy, we here publish again an interview to him that was published on the eNewsletter issue number 53, which is still very relevant for the Society.

Mo, thank you for everything, we will sorely miss you.

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