

IEEE Power & Energy Society MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Presented to
Melvin I. Olken
28 July 2009



*For exceptional and sustained technical,
administrative, and professional contributions
to the IEEE Power & Energy Society*



PES MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

1972- Andrew R. Cooper
1974- Howard C. Barnes
1977- Thomas H. Lee
1980- Julius G. Derse
1989- Charles L. Rudasill, Jr.
1990- Charles L. Wagner
1991- Theodore W. Hissey
1992- William R. Brownlee
1994- S. Harold Gold
1995- Leo L. Grigsby
1996- C. John Essel
1997- John W. Pope
1998- Roger K. Sullivan
1999- Virginia Sulzberger
2001- Robert A. Dent
2006- B. Don Russell
2008- John W. Estey

Melvin I. Olken has been associated with the electric power industry for over 50 years. His contributions to the profession are numerous, including distinction in engineering practice, professional leadership and service to the IEEE Power & Energy Society. It is with great pleasure that the Society presents Mel Olken its Meritorious Service Award.

Upon graduation from City College of New York in 1956, Mel began his practice of electrical engineering with American Electric Power Service Corporation. He developed technical expertise in the design, construction and operation of coal, hydroelectric, and nuclear power plants. He rose to the position of Manager, Electrical Generation. In 1980, Mel joined Gibbs & Hill, Inc. as a consulting engineer. In recognition of his technical expertise, Mel was elected IEEE Fellow in 1988 for "contributions to innovative design of reliable generating stations."

As a PES member for over 40 years, Mel has been actively involved across the spectrum of society activities. He repeatedly served as a volunteer leader and chair of committees for the PES Winter Meeting. He chaired the PES Power Plant Control, Protection, and Automation sub-committee and chaired the PES Power Generation Committee. Mel was vice chair and chair of the PES Technical Council. Whether at the chapter, region, or technical committee level, Mel has demonstrated a consistent dedication to quality and leadership.

In 1984, Mel brought his considerable technical and PES volunteer experience to the IEEE in the position of Society Services Director for Technical Activities. He coordinated financial management of IEEE societies including conference and publication efforts. In 1990, Mel became Staff Director of Regional Activities for IEEE including staff management for IEEE regions, sections and chapters worldwide. He served as secretary of the IEEE Regional Activities Board.

In 1995, Mel was named the first Executive Director of the Power Engineering Society. Under his leadership, most of the current organizational structure of PES was created, including the outstanding staff support services we enjoy today. Mel held this position until 2002 when he became the first editor-in-chief of IEEE Power & Energy Magazine, a position he holds today.

Mel Olken exemplifies the ideal of service recognized by the Meritorious Service Award. No other individual has contributed in such a broad and sustained fashion in technical leadership, professional service, and society activities both as a volunteer and in staff positions. In all these activities, Mel Olken has demonstrated the highest standards of quality and served with distinction.

Born and raised in New York City, Mel is married to Ethel, his wife of 36 years, and has one daughter, Rosanne.