**SOCIETY OF BROADCAST ENGINEERS, INC.**

***The Association for Broadcast and Multimedia Technology Professionals***

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Chris Tobin Recognized as 2021 Robert W. Flanders SBE Engineer of the Year**

**July 27, 2021**

The winner of the Robert W. Flanders SBE Engineer of the Year award for 2021 is Chris Tobin, of Brooklyn, NY. He receives the honor posthumously. The award is presented to a member who has excelled in his or her career while furthering the mission of the SBE. Candidates are nominated by their peers.

Chris Tobin had been an SBE member for more than 22 years. During that time, he had taken on many roles with the local New York City, Chapter 15. Tobin was an invaluable person and SBE member, which is recognized by this nomination that was supported by so many members of Chapter 15.

Chris’ fascination with radio began at an early age. “As a small tot, I enjoyed the magic of the box on the kitchen table in my house,” he recalled in a YouTube interview. He got involved in broadcasting at a young age thorough a school radio station. He was a self-taught engineer but also spent time behind the microphone.

Chris worked at ABC Radio Network, CBS Radio and Westwood One. In 2015 he became chief engineer at WBGO. Among a variety of other things, he helped to develop the station’s video capacities, streamlined their operations and handled the logistical curveball which was the 2020 pandemic lockdown. Unfortunately, Chris died in December 2020 from a heart attack while working on the installation of a new HVAC system at the station in Newark, NJ.

The SBE Awards Program also recognizes other achievements from SBE members, chapters and SBE sustaining member companies. Telos Alliance has won the Technology Award for the Axia iQs AES67 Mixing Console Software overview. Axia turned its existing iQx console into a software version that does not require a physical surface. iQs is the first soft console controlled by full HTML-5 interface, allowing you to not only control a mix from anywhere, but on any device – Mac, Windows, tablet, laptop and phone.

**Chapter and Individual Awards**

Chapters are the lifeblood of the SBE, and 2021 marks the eighth year that the Chapter Engineer of the Year Award has highlighted the achievements of members within their chapters. This year, 11 chapters selected their own award recipients. Each winner will be presented with a special plaque and be recognized nationally on the SBE website and in a future issue of *The Signal*. The 11 chapter winners also were automatically nominated for the national Robert W. Flanders SBE Engineer of the Year Award.

The SBE Wisconsin chapters and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association has won the Best Educational Event for their Wisconsin Broadcasters Clinic held in October 2020. One nominator noted, "They have consistently put on a highly attended event that has a strong mix of classic material, cutting-edge tech, and hands on presentations. They really try to make sure the wide scope of what is part of an engineering gig these days gets covered. Every year they seem to innovate even more with the presentation too. Starting in 2019 the whole event is now closed-captioned. How cool is that?! It's just the best event of the year in the area hands down. It was a shame to miss the hallway chats and lunch breaks with colleagues, but the information was just as good as any year and it worked!"

Chapter 17, Minneapolis, MN, won Best Chapter Communication for its website, sbe17.org.

**Statistical Awards**

These awards are determined with statistical information based on Dec. 31, 2020, figures on file at the SBE National Office. Chapters with 26 members or fewer are Class A. Chapters with 27 members or more are Class B.

*Percentage Growth of New Members:*A: 106 (Florida Panhandle)  
B: 17 (Minneapolis)

*Highest Percentage of Certified Members:*A: 7 (Jacksonville)  
B: 24 (Madison)

*Highest Percentage of Member Attendance at Meetings:*A: 85 (Central Western)  
B: 56 (Tulsa)

All the winners will be recognized at the SBE Membership Meeting and Awards Ceremony, planned to be held on Oct. 11 during the SBE National Meeting in Las Vegas. Nominations for the 2022 awards will open in February.

The Society of Broadcast Engineers is the professional organization of television and radio engineers and those in related fields. The SBE has 5,000 members in 115 chapters across the United States and in Hong Kong. There are also members in more than 25 other countries. Most chapters meet monthly and offer educational programs and an opportunity to network with other broadcast technical professionals. The SBE offers the preeminent technical broadcast certification program in the U.S. and an expansive list of educational programs for broadcast engineers, operators, technicians, and broadcast IT professionals.

For more information about the SBE, contact James W. Ragsdale, Executive Director, at [jragsdale@sbe.org](mailto:jragsdale@sbe.org) or 317-846-9000, or visit the SBE website, [sbe.org](http://www.sbe.org).

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Editors: Available high-resolution photos:

Chris Tobin

<http://sbe.org/images/hirez/Tobin_Chris.jpg>