



ACS Division of
Professional Relations

BULLETIN

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2009 Officer Election Results

Our election was conducted between September 15, 2008 and October 3, 2008. 163 out of a total of 791 (or 20.6%) votes were cast, which is slightly better than last year's 138/734 or 18.88%.

Congratulations to our new officers!

Chair-elect	John C. Crawford
Treasurer	Peter (Pete) M. Smith
Councilor	John Massingill
Alternate Councilor	Linette M. Watkins
Members-at-Large	Robin J. Hood Jacqueline Erickson Lynne Greenblatt

Message from the Chair

Adam C. Myers, 2009 Chair

Greetings division members, and welcome to 2009. I must first take this opportunity to thank Dave Chesney for the great work he did as the 2008 chair. His leadership of the division was wonderful, and I hope to be able to follow in his footsteps this year.

My main focus throughout this year is to illustrate that the Division of Professional Relations is relevant to all chemists, not just a select few. This can be accomplished in a few different ways. First, we have to make ourselves known within the society. The upcoming poster session in Salt Lake City, the Henry Hill Award reception, excellent symposia (both primary-sponsored and strategically cosponsored), and the partnership with the committee on ethics are just a few ways that we are already getting informing people about DPR. However, one of our most valuable resources is you, the division membership. We represent different technical arenas within the chemical sciences, thus we affiliate with others outside of DPR in the ACS. As you collaborate with other entities within the society, seek ways we can interface

with them. Attend a session with sponsorship or cosponsorship by PROF and invite a colleague. Last fall at the division summit, I had opportunities to interact with the leadership of other ACS divisions, and they were enthusiastic about possibilities to partner with DPR for future projects.

A second way to be relevant is to determine the needs of the chemists of the society, and not to just assume them. We are working out the details of doing this through a town hall forum, but again I come back to the fact that we all have the ability to ascertain the needs of the other members and entities of the society by talking with them one-on-one and communicating that back to PROF leadership. All division members should feel empowered to do this. We are in a rapidly changing economy and workforce, and what we bring to the society has never been more relevant. However, to be relevant, we must both seek out the information and actually do something with it. Do other divisions want to incorporate DPR talks into their symposia, allowing for more collaboration and cosponsorship? How can our subdivisions reach out to others and determine their needs?

I greatly look forward to serving as your chair for 2009, and I hope you are also excited to serve. To fuel the engine of the division, we need your input and participation. You don't have to be an executive to contribute to our success. Let's join together in the revolution of relevance for PROF. Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in anything discussed here, or have other issues related to the division you would like to discuss. My email is amyers@BASInc.com and my inbox is always open to you.

Past Chair's Comment

Dave Chesney

My desk top doubles as a horizontal filing system. I clean it off once every two years, whether it needs it or not. Lo and behold, what do I find but my campaign

statement from Fall 2006 when I ran for Chair-Elect of PROF. Much to my relief, at least I hadn't promised a chicken in every pot. I am chagrined, however, to realize that I only accomplished about half of what I stated I would do. In my classes, this translates to a "C" grade. Oh well, at least that's passing...

I indicated that I wanted to do two things: Achieve dissemination of PROF symposia content to a wider audience and boost the PROF presence at regional meetings. While my podcasting/talking points idea has not yet come to fruition, I did manage to video record most of Lisa Balbes' excellent symposium on "New Technologies for Finding Employment" in Philadelphia. Now all we have to do is find a server to host it...

PROF sponsored the ACS Ethics Committee workshops on professional ethics at both NERM and SERMACS this past year. These workshops were funded through an Innovative Programming Fund grant awarded to the Division two years ago. I will be submitting another IPF application to support these workshops at two regional meetings in 2009. The "Ask DPR" regional meetings booth concept didn't get off the ground. I still think this is a good idea, but it really relies on local participation by PROF members. A PROF subcommittee on regional meetings to oversee these efforts at regional meetings is a concept that I will be pushing for.

On the other hand, there were a bunch of initiatives that came up during the year that I had not anticipated but to which I made some contributions. The Town Hall Forums will be, I think, an excellent venue for ACS members to communicate their concerns to PROF and making PROF more relevant to chemical professionals. We have had phone and email surveys in the past with limited success. There is some discussion about taking the Town Hall Forum to regional meetings and even hosting it on the web, both of which should enhance participation (and PROF membership).

As the PROF representative to the Multidisciplinary Programming Planning Group, I pushed the concept of "embedded programming" whereby PROF could partner with another technical division to have a PROF-sponsored non-technical (yet on-topic) talk in the middle of a technical symposium. This appears

to have been accepted at this point, so it is now up to PROF to identify quality speakers and engage other divisions.

We are working to have a Henry Hill Centennial celebration worthy of his memory. This is targeted for 2015 at the Boston meeting and will hopefully involve a number of ACS units as well as a possible NOVA special. Jim Walsh is to be commended for envisioning this centennial celebration and for spearheading the effort to this point. There will be another meeting of the HHC task force in Salt Lake City. If you are interested in helping further this very worthwhile effort, please contact me or Jim.

Following Ray O'Donnell's lead, I have tried to engage and involve the PROF ExComm between meetings. We have, indeed, done a fair amount of business this way, particularly in debating issues that would otherwise occupy excessive time at the national meetings. I thank the members of the ExComm for their indulgence of my flurries of emails. In the future, I hope we can move to Collective X or some other means of communication for this purpose.

My present priority is to get the PROF election process back on schedule; I will have a slate of candidates for our 2009 election in Salt Lake City. Although there is nominally a nominations committee appointed to scour the membership for candidates, I will happily accept nominations from you, the readers of this newsletter. I don't know everyone in PROF, obviously, and would welcome suggestions of possible candidates. We will be electing a Chair-Elect, a Secretary, a Councilor, and three Members-at-Large for service starting in 2010.

In closing, let me say that the past year as Chair has been enlightening, educational, and to a large degree, entertaining – at least to me. I hope that my Chair's comments have provided you with some sense of where I think PROF should be heading. I am pleased to hand off the Chair's responsibilities to Adam Myers. Thanks once again to Ray O'Donnell and Jim Walsh for their guidance and advice to a green Chair-Elect. And, one last time, to quote Rudy Baum, thanks for reading.

Chair-Elect's Comment

John Crawford

I have always been astonished by the wonderful variety of professional development and networking opportunities that exist within our society, and the tremendous energy that ACS volunteers bring to advancing our profession. For me it was a peer and mentor at my first employer out of college who opened my door to the community of ACS. He showed me the resources available on the website, introduced me to others at the Local Section and encouraged me to volunteer. I can't thank him enough. There have been times over the years that I have followed his example – although certainly not enough. This New Year's I am recommitting myself to do the same. When is the last time you encouraged someone else to join the society, to browse the professional and career development tools or to activate their membership further by volunteering? What better time than now?

With the incredible pace of change in the chemical enterprise, the volatility in the job market and the society's drive to provide information and programming in a time of challenge and tight budgets, it is even more important that we endeavor to prioritize and deploy focused resources and professional programs that enable our members to keep themselves marketable and aware of the most current employment-related tools. In roles in the Younger Chemists and Membership Affairs Committees, I have strived to learn about members' professional issues and to identify solutions and collaborations within the ACS that address these needs. I am excited about continuing this pursuit as an officer in this division and look forward to being an advocate for you.

I want to hear about where you think we should be investing our time and energy. What is your vision for our division? What key issues and policies should we be influencing the society to champion? Where should we adapt our goals so that we can better meet your needs in the future? Please let me know how we can help you get the most impact from your membership and where you think we should be putting further emphasis (jcrawford@rohmmaas.com or 215-592-3797). ... And, by all means please consider reaching out to recruit another prospective ACS member. We've got some more doors that need opening.

Join Us in Salt Lake City!



2009 Henry Hill Award to be presented to Dr. William F. Carroll Jr.

Ray O'Donnell

Dr. William F. Carroll Jr. has been selected to receive the 2009 Henry Hill Award. Bill served as ACS president in 2005 and has recently been elected to continue his service on the ACS Board of Directors. He has been a very effective leader in his efforts to bring the ACS and its members into the new paradigm required by a global economy.

The Award ceremony will take place on Tuesday, March 24 in Ballroom A of the Little America Hotel in Salt Lake City. Please join us in celebrating Bill's selection, and his contributions to our chemical profession.

PROF Executive Committee Meeting

The Division of Professional Relations Executive Committee meeting will be held in the Arizona room of the Little America hotel on Tuesday afternoon, 3-5 pm. The ExComm meeting will be followed by the Henry Hill Award reception at 5:30 in the same room.

The ExComm meeting is open to all PROF members. This is an excellent opportunity to meet the people running the Division and find out what issues are currently of interest to PROF. We welcome and encourage your participation.

Town Hall Forum
Sponsored by the Division of Professional
Relations (PROF)

Little America Hotel, Arizona Room
Tuesday, 10 am – 1:30 pm
(same room as the PROF poster session)

Are you concerned about the state of your profession? Your career? Are there larger issues that you would like addressed?

The Division of Professional Relations is hosting a Town Hall Forum at the Salt Lake City meeting. In the spirit of a true Town Hall Forum, we are facilitating a gathering for a wide-ranging, unfettered discussion of professional and career-based issues.

This is YOUR chance to voice your opinions and concerns about the profession of chemistry, its practice, and its participants. It is our intent to bring like-minded people together and initiate grass-roots activism on issues outside the purview of the ACS governance structure.

Issues might include (but are not limited to):

- Age, gender, or racial discrimination in the workplace
- Ethics in the practice of chemistry
- Public policy issues important to chemists
- The corruption of science by political interests
- The influence of religion on scientific literacy

PROF Town Hall Forum at the Salt Lake City meeting

PROF will once again sponsor a Town Hall Forum at the Salt Lake City meeting. It will be held during the PROF poster session in the Arizona Room of the Little America hotel from 10 am – 1:30 pm on Tuesday. There will be a meager buffet available at noon.

This is our second attempt at providing a forum for ACS members to voice their concerns about the state of the profession, their career, and any other issues that affect them as professionals. We are using the venue of the poster session to avoid the issues that plagued us in Philadelphia with our first town hall forum.

As before, we will be issuing invitations via email to the PROF membership as well as the Councilor email list. Please pass these invitations on when you receive them. In addition, Dave Chesney will be presenting a poster at Sci-Mix that will allow visitors to indicate in writing the issues that are of direct concern to them. Hopefully, this will generate an audience for the Town Hall Forum the following day as well as presenting an opportunity to recruit members to PROF.

Please support our efforts to involve more ACS members and increase PROF's visibility by attending this Town Hall Forum.

Website Promotes Post-retirement Science

Jack E. Richman

The new website rsvp3.net intends to help those of us who are research scientists approaching retirement find research nirvana after retirement. The URL suggests its interactive approach and stands for "Retired Scientists Volunteering for Pre-eminent Professional Projects."

This site is directed to those of us who are "working at the bench" and enjoying our careers in science. As we approach retirement, we know that we still have much to offer (and much fun to be gained) by applying our well-honed special skills for the advancement of science. Clearly, the operative concept here is "enjoyment." Those of us who truly do enjoy our careers in science see no reason why at some arbitrary (retirement) age we should abandon such rewarding careers!

Pathways for following projects in post-retirement research abound in academic labs, yet the vast majority of those of bench scientists work in industrial and government labs where retirement is mandated at a certain age. We may have little contact with academic research labs and may not know about their needs. This disparity defines the rationale behind rsvp3.net, a website designed for advocating, discussing, teaching and learning about the possibility of continuing our careers in scientific research after retirement.

The creator of the website explains his particular path over the past 15 years in pursuit of post-retirement research and invites contributions and discussions by others of us following alternative paths. Many possibilities exist. Stories of successes and disappointments will help those of us considering such a pursuit make wise choices. If you enjoy research, check it out. You may want to respond.

Sailing Out of the Career Doldrums

John K. Borhardt

How can you prevent your career from drifting into the doldrums? The career doldrums often strike in mid- or late-career when you have mastered the responsibilities of your job and no longer feel intellectually challenged. The career doldrums are different than job burnout and can develop in a low stress work environment. Burnout is defined as the “exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration” (Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary, <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/burnout>). The same dictionary gives one definition for the doldrums as “a state or period of inactivity, stagnation, or slump.”

To prevent the career doldrums, avoid becoming so buried in your current job that you don’t explore new options to enliven your career. Explore different aspects of your job and career. For example, asking marketing managers about new business opportunities for your company may give you ideas on how you could contribute to turning these opportunities into reality. Becoming more engaged in interviewing job candidates and mentoring young colleagues can be invigorating.

Using a skill apparently unrelated to your current job can enhance your career and get it out of the doldrums.

For example, my college roommate, a civil engineer, began taking photographs of his employer’s construction projects in progress. He included his photographs in customer reports, presentations and brochures used to promote new business.

Some scientists seldom attend conferences, particularly if their employers don’t subsidize their expenses. Open your wallet and take vacation if you need to and attend a conference that interests you. You may return to work refreshed, invigorated and with new ideas for your work.

Use meetings as opportunities to meet fellow scientists and laboratory managers. Make an effort to establish professional contacts with up-and-coming stars in your field as well as skilled veterans. They can be valuable sources of new research ideas and stimulate your own thinking. Joint research projects could even develop. For example, I met Professor Jan Miller, a University of Utah metallurgical engineer at a national American Chemical Society meeting. Our discussions led to an invitation to present a seminar at his university and eventually to joint research funded by a joint NSF grant. I met Professor Ed Thompson of the University of Maine chemical engineering department through a University of Maine chemist I met at an ACS national meeting. This eventually resulted in my employer joining a consortium of companies funding his paper recycling research. I traveled at least four times a year to the University of Maine to discuss Thompson’s research progress and conduct my own tests in the department’s pilot scale paper mill. I found these experiences professionally rewarding and intellectually stimulating.

Academics can teach different courses, modify the courses they currently present, develop new courses and experiment with different teaching techniques. They can engage in joint research with colleagues, even colleagues in different departments, to explore different research areas. Academics may have an advantage over their industrial colleagues in preventing the career doldrums because of the energy they drive from interacting with enthusiastic young research students and students in their classes.

We’ll discuss other approaches to preventing or curing the career doldrums in a subsequent issue of the newsletter.

PROF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – GIVE TO A COLLEAGUE!

Join the ACS Division of Professional Relations – the member oriented division. In addition to enjoying a newsletter, special symposia and other programming, sponsorship of the prestigious Henry A. Hill Award, and other activities with your colleagues throughout the chemical profession, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting the premier division within ACS that is concerned with the chemist rather than chemistry. All professional chemists belong in the Division of Professional Relations!

Send this form (or a photocopy) with \$10.00 annual dues, to the address below.

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

ACS number (if known) _____

Mail to: Allison Aldridge, Secretary
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