

Councilor's Report, Spring 2011

The council meeting for the 241st ACS National Meeting Anaheim, CA took place on Wednesday, March 30th. Councilors from the Central Texas Local Section participated in governance decisions and gathered information regarding several new and on-going programs of interest to members.

Anaheim continues to be a popular meeting locations and this meeting was no exception. Almost 14,000 attendees participated in the ACS meeting in March, where the theme was "Chemistry of Natural Resources."

The council selected nominees for President-elect were chosen at this meeting. In the Fall, all members will be given the option to vote electronically for the President-elect. The council candidates for President-elect are Dennis Chamot and Miranda Wu. No district directors will be on the ballot for our district this year. Candidates for the Directors-at-Large for 2012-2014 will be Ken B. Anderson, William F. Carroll, Jr., Charles E. Kolb and Barbara A. Sawrey.

All of the presidential succession reports and the candidates for President-elect addressed the most pressing problems in the chemical enterprise: the economic job losses and financial strains on universities. The immediate past president, Dr. Joe Francisco created a task force, chaired by Dr. George Whitesides, to address these issues. The task force recommended that the ACS create a "Technological Farmers Market" for entrepreneurs to help start new companies, increase advocacy at the local and national government level, partner more vigorously with academia to promote career pathways and educational opportunities in entrepreneurship, and increase public awareness of the value of early stage entrepreneurship. More information on the implementation of these recommendations should be at the Fall meeting.

Bassam Shakhashiri, the president elect of the ACS and a recent 50 year member made the pledge to donate monies saved in meeting registration fees as a 50 year member to Project SEED and ACS Scholars. Any 50 year members that wishes to donate monies saved on membership dues or meeting registration rates can do so at www.acs.org/giving.

The 2012 dues for membership will be \$148, which is in the middle of dues for other comparable professional memberships which range from \$120 to \$240.

The ACS Committee on Economic and Professional Affairs (CEPA) reported on the unemployment numbers for chemists and chemical engineers. The unemployment rates for chemists overall is the highest in 20 years, but is still more than half the overall unemployment rate of the US overall. Almost 4% of ACS members are unemployed. However, there are two disturbing trends that are being addressed by CEPA and the ACS. The first is the average length of time of unemployment. The average time of unemployment for ACS members has increased over the last ten years from 6 months to almost 11 months. The second is the unemployment rate for new graduates, which are currently about 15% for BS graduates and 9% for new PhDs. The higher unemployment rates have resulted in higher graduate school enrollments and an increased number of PhDs seeking postdoctoral appointments. Unemployed members are encouraged to take advantage of dues waivers, decreased meeting registration rates and the ACS career

resources for unemployed members (www.acs.org/unemployed and www.acs.org/careers). There are free job search and career webinars every other Tuesday. A virtual career fair for ACS members unable to travel to Denver will be held to coincide with the Denver meeting. Two hundred jobs were available at the virtual job fair that coincided with the Anaheim meeting.

The ACS Fellows program recognizes members that have contributed significantly to both the chemical sciences and the ACS. All nominees must demonstrate their professional contributions to the chemical enterprise and their service to the ACS at the national, local or divisional level. The third group of ACS Fellows will be named this year. To nominate an outstanding chemist go to the on-line registration form at www.acs.org/nominatefellow or contact the chair of the Central Texas local section (Chair@CentralTexasACS.org).

This year is the celebration of the International Year of Chemistry (IYC). As part of this celebration, ACS is conducting the IYC “Biggest Chemistry Experiment in History”, the Global Water Experiments. These experiments for students to conduct can be found at <http://Water.Chemistry2011.org>. The IYC was sung with dancing at the Anaheim meeting and can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/ChemDance>.

Members are reminded of the ACS presence in social networks and iPhone apps. The ACS Network (www.acs.org/ACSNetwork) is a social and professional networking site available to ACS members. The ACSMobile application that allows iPhone or iPod Touch users to read journal content and CEN on-line.

The 242nd ACS National Meeting will be held in Denver August 28 – September 1. Early registration for the meeting opens in May. The theme for the Denver meeting is “Chemistry of Air, Space and Water”.