

Portland Section ACS Summer/Section Corporate Meeting

Attendees: Ken Schriver, David Reingold, David Terrell, Marcie Merritt, Angela Hoffman, Jim Tung, Warren Ford, Elaine Nam

The 2020 Summer/Section Corporate Meeting was held via ZOOM July 25, 2020, from 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM.

The meeting was divided into two sessions: business meeting and planning meeting

Business Meeting

- **Finances.** With Covid, many expenditures were cancelled resulting in unused funds. OSSF used only about 1/8th of its budgeted funds in five hour-long ZOOM sessions. The Section plans to spend \$9,000 for scholarships in the Fall (three legacy scholarships, VanSanten, Zeh, Anderson awarded to three students entering their last year of undergraduate study). Excess funds in several **grants** will rollover to 2021. ACS incurred losses from the cancelled Spring (Philadelphia) meeting and likely incurred losses during the Fall (August) San Francisco meeting, therefore Local Section allotments may be affected. The 2020 Pauling Medal Symposium, hosted by the Puget Sound Section, is being planned as an in-person event for Spring or Summer 2021. The EC voted to change the Pauling Medal Symposium (hosted by Portland Section) from 2021 to 2022. The Section budget allocates \$2000 each year to fund the event once every 4 years.
- **Scholarship policy and procedures.** The ad hoc Scholarship Committee was created by **Chair Marcie Merritt** on recommendation by **Marilyn Mackiewicz, Chair of the Diversity Committee**. Mackiewicz pointed out to the EC in March that many students from her lab as well as other underrepresented students in STEM, are great students with high potential to do well in graduate school and have stellar careers, but do not have the high GPA to make them competitive for Section legacy awards. The reasons include both lack of preparation, leading to a slow start in college courses compared to other students with more privileged backgrounds, and, frequently, lack of time, due to the necessity of having a job to support both tuition and family. This ad hoc committee on scholarships is charged with reviewing the Section's award activities and finding opportunities to support such students.

The ad hoc Scholarship Committee reported that they are recommending updated policy and guidance for scholarship awards, with emphasis on a candidate from an underrepresented group. The focus is less on GPA and more on the student essay describing their obstacles to help

identify an underrepresented minority—but GPA still is important. The hope is at least one of the three named scholarships is given to an underrepresented minority.

A Zoom meeting was held on June 15, followed by many emails. The Committee suggested a **three-pronged strategy** to expand the applicant pool, and hopefully the winner pool, to include students previously omitted.

For the purposes of this committee, underrepresented minority (**URM**) groups are defined as ethnic and racial minorities; first-generation college students; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students; and students with physical disabilities.

Three Prong strategy. First, encourage URM students to apply for the legacy scholarships. Second, there will be a **new scholarship** to support a rising junior; they apply as a sophomore and the application is open only to underrepresented minorities. The new award, the **Dunne-Currie Scholarship**, is named after Jim Currie and Tom Dunne. The Dunne-Currie Scholarship will provide a \$3500 scholarship for the student to use as they wish—possibly helping with tuition, funding summer research, or just paying the family bills. We hope that some of the students we encourage with the Dunne-Currie Scholarship will go on to become winners of the AVZ scholarships or perhaps even ACS Scholars. The Section currently has a significant and growing cash surplus that easily could pay for the Dunne-Currie scholarship for the next 10 years or so, and by the time our surplus is used up, the investments should be producing enough income to cover it. Third, the travel awards given to the three Local Section ACS student chapters (\$1,000 each) within our geographic area be used, as much as possible, to support the travel of URM students to ACS meetings.

Philosophy. The Committee feels that more study of this issue is warranted. While the named (legacy) scholarships were designed to reward excellent academic performance among rising seniors, this was before the current recognition of the inherent racist and other biases of the system. If they knew then what we know now, would they have designed their scholarships in the same way? Is it worth taking a holistic look at what we can do to help right an historic wrong? We suggest expanding the membership of this committee to include more URMs, more institutions, perhaps some previous winners, and expanding its charge to try to find more ways, consistent with the known and perceived wishes of the donors, to encourage URM students with academic potential to pursue careers in chemistry. It now is 2020, not 1967. What do we as an

ACS Section with a hefty scholarship fund want to do with those funds to further the profession of chemistry and to meet societal needs?

- **The Nominating Committee**, chaired by Angela Hoffman, recommends Jim Tung and Theresa McCormick for Councilor II and Alternate Councilor II, respectively. The Committee still seeks a nominee for Chair-Elect.
- The **Sexual Harassment Policy Committee** chaired by Marcie Merritt requested help to find members for the committee. Marcie will prepare the introduction of the committee for an email blast.
- **Project SEED was cancelled** by ACS this year. **SEED Chair Angela Hoffman** stated that ACS trained undergraduate and graduate students to lead a virtual summer camp with 300 high school students participating. The 4-week virtual camp addressed topics such as college readiness, safety, and how to write research proposals. Students were provided laptops and a \$1000 stipend. Faculty were responsible for up to 8 students each. The Portland Section had one student in the program and all the expenses were covered by ACS. These students can still apply for research scholarships even though no in-person research project was completed.
- **OMSI still is willing to partner** with Portland Section for **National Chemistry Week**, which may be a virtual event. The theme is Polymers and Glue and is called “Sticking with Chemistry”. An in-person event still is a possibility. An option for a hybrid event was suggested by the EC.
- The 2020 **Chem Olympiad**, chaired by **Armando Herbelin**, Lower Columbia College, Longview WA, was cut short by COVID shutdowns, which happened during the week when most of the teachers were scheduled to proctor their classroom exams; only 58 students actually wrote the Local Section paper exam. ACS, however, offered a second round of local exams virtually, which Herbelin proctored for 9 students who sat for the virtual online local exam. The online local exam was available one time only on Sunday, April 19. 12:00 noon – 2:05 pm Pacific. Parents were required to be present to help administer and proctor the exam. ACS modified the National Exams to exclude the lab practical and Herbelin proctored both National Exam Round 1 (taken by 6 finalists) & National Exam Round 2 (taken by 1 student). All students and educators were sent pdf copies of certificates.
- **Awards. Louis Kuo, Award Chair**, already has contacted Department Chairs with updated information about next year’s scholarships.
- **Marilyn Mackiewicz** will receive the 2020 Stanley Israel Award for her work with students. An email to Members will be sent. The Award will

be presented at the next Northwest Regional Meeting (NORM). The **Stanley C. Israel Regional Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Sciences** recognizes individuals and/or institutions who have **advanced diversity** in the chemical sciences and significantly stimulated or fostered activities that promote inclusiveness within the region.

- The **Pauling Medal Award** will be postponed until Spring or Fall 2021. The Portland Section hosts the next Award; at the 2020 summer meeting the EC voted to move the Award to 2022.

Planning Meeting

Programs. Chair-Elect Ken Schriver discussed the options for the Section's upcoming meetings.

- **Plan A:** 100% virtual including solo seminars, panels, awards, and recognition. The Chair-Elect goals are to increase community outreach by a bigger digital presence (e.g. social media).

We are assuming virtual activities will be happening through the next academic year. Activities such as scholarships and service awards can be incorporated into the virtual activities. There was a suggestion for an integrated calendar of planned and routine activities including the virtual happy hours and other events. There is a possibility of a virtual poster session for students to present but **Poster Chair Dave Reingold** in meeting with different departments, stated that "we may not do a poster symposium since in-person research is not happening".

- **Another option** for the October Poster symposium was to have a virtual event with fewer students (~5). **Angela Hoffman** commented that she had students working in the lab this summer and students are savvy at making short video presentations; perhaps call it an undergraduate symposium rather than a poster symposium. The three scholarship winners should be included in the event; by August 15, department chairs should be queried about who should present virtually. Consensus was that most will likely will be moving forward with Ken's plan A. The first six months will be virtual and may consider a hybrid after that.
- **Tom Dunne Symposium:** Plan for a 2-hour event. Part of it will include former students that can share stories about Tom.
- **ACS Community Outreach.** Current needs of our membership were discussed. An email can be sent to Members asking what ACS can do to support them. Ken offered to create a Doodle poll for the EC to evaluate options, which we can offer our Members before sending it to them. David Terrell asked what kind of lectures would be of interest since the speaker could be located anywhere if held virtually. Other events to in-

investigate are Science on Tap and ScienceFest.

- Another area is the challenges of **virtual instruction**. The Virtual Instruction talk was well attended. The topic of unemployment also would be of interest but Ken doesn't need to focus on this since Jim is working on something. Jim will update the EC by email about Dave Stuart's Kick-starter employment event.
- How to **increase diversity**? Where to focus efforts? (K-12? College? Work-force?)

Ken asked if we should be including any of this in our programming. We can work on increasing the diversity of speakers and our committees. Warren added that the ACS Senior Chemist Committee had a webinar on combating systemic racism. It was a 4-panel discussion moderated by the current ACS president. We could rebroadcast that to our members in a virtual viewing party.

- **Website**. Ken asked the EC about making improvements to our website so that it is a **resource for the calendar of events, webinars, and include timely updated information**. The current website lacks these things. To implement these changes, we may need additional resources or a new webmaster. Ken would like to see fewer emails sent that people would need to open and more information on the website. Email and updating the information on the website needs to be a coordinated effort. This would include social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Marcie commented that several outside STEM groups may be willing to partner with us. Puget Sound and California sections follow our LinkedIn account and may be interested in joint activities or partnerships. Our current budget doesn't have anything for the website but it can be added for next year's budget.
- Ken is willing to move into managing our digital presence after finishing the chair position. Ken will work with Martha and investigate our email options using GoDaddy. A wish list will be brought to the EC at a future meeting. Jim is offering support to Ken for website/email administrator responsibilities if deciding to move into that role. David Terrell is willing to volunteer for an online outreach committee.
- **Legislative Outreach: 2020 and 2021** legislative sessions will be completely dominated by COVID response and effect on budget. David Terrell commented that the only thing right now has been the support for the science related to COVID-19. The other topic is the attendance of students here on a visa studying at the colleges.

Adjourn: 3:37pm