

DECISION LINE

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER *Moving into the Millenium*

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It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to serve as president of the Decision Sciences Institute. In looking back through my vita, my first DSI meeting was a Midwest Regional meeting held in Cincinnati in May 1979. I attended the Institute's annual meeting in New Orleans that same year and that marks the start of a long string of yearly participation in national and regional meetings.

Why do I go to the meetings? I have to admit that I enjoy showing colleagues web tricks like the Beer Game and the E-OPS Game, but the real reason I go is to renew friendships with all the people that I have met through the Institute. I think this is what the Decision Sciences Institute should be to everyone. The meetings should provide a great opportunity for colleagues to get together and share their latest research, teaching, and even service ideas. I especially enjoy attending sessions and taking some shots at Wemmerlöv or defending some poor Ph.D. student that just got skewered by a discussant.

Let me encourage you all to attend the annual meeting in San Francisco this November. Whether you are presenting a paper or not, there will be plenty to make the conference worthwhile. I sense a great interest in teaching pedagogy with the membership, and Vicki Smith-Daniels, the 2001 Annual Meeting program chair, is putting together a great set of sessions and workshops where you can learn state-of-the-art ideas that relate to teaching your class. The research sessions cover the gamut from traditional topics to the latest e-business concepts.

In the past, our conference has been so filled with sessions that there has been little time to spend talking to colleagues. This

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We've moved!

Please change your bookmark for the
Decision Sciences Institute Home Page to

<http://www.decisionsciences.org>

(See links to on-line conference and hotel registration forms.)

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year, we have revised the conference format to change that. On Saturday evening, we'll begin with an opening reception with some light snacks and, for those interested, a cash bar. Remember to get your flight scheduled so that you can be at the hotel by 5:30 p.m. when the reception starts.

Another change will be in the Monday schedule. No more sit-down opening breakfast! Instead, we have scheduled a "stand-up grazing" buffet lunch, where there will be light lunch items at stations around the room. Get a plate of food and introduce yourself to the first person you see. The whole idea is for you to be able to meet someone new. That person may just end up being the co-author of your next paper.

Monday night will be our traditional President's reception. This is another great opportunity to interact with your colleagues and meet some new ones.

Many members like to go out with friends from their alma mater on Monday. Ohio State University, where I am from, has traditionally held a dinner every year. Each year a different person is responsible for this. We simply rotate the job based on order of graduation. We even have a baton that is officially passed each year. You might try to set something like this up with your school. It is great fun.

As in the past, we will close the conference with the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday. Here we formally acknowledge all those that make our great conference possible and recognize the achievements for the best papers at the conference. The doctoral student with the top dissertation will pick up their cash prize and we will recognize our new Institute Fellows. This is an important event where we show our sincere thanks for work performed to make the Institute a success, and where we recognize the outstanding achievements of our members.

Last year, under the direction of Michael Showalter, the Institute made great strides. Possibly, the most visible item will be the new *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*. Barbara Flynn, from Wake Forest University, has been selected as the editor of the new journal. We are excited about the new publication outlet that this journal will offer.

During the past few months, I have been working with a great Board of Directors to develop the goals and objectives for the next year. The following are our goals for the next year:

Goal 1: "Promote interdisciplinary activities and the development and dissemination of innovative education, pedagogy, and curriculum." This goal relates directly to the development of our new journal.

Goal 2: "Enhance member services and increase membership." The idea is to create more value for membership in the Decision Sciences Institute. The total DSI membership has held steady for a few years. We have appointed Terry Williams as marketing director and he is developing a plan focused on attracting non-members to the Institute, with a major target group being U.S. and international faculty who attend regional and international Institute meetings. Related to this effort, Scott Sampson has agreed to conduct a benchmarking study that compares DSI to other professional organizations. Through this study we hope to identify key factors that differentiate DSI from other professional organizations.

Goal 3: "Improve Institute use of information technology for enabling delivery of services and value to members." A major item will be the development of a new job placement system maintained by a professional Internet service provider. This will allow the Institute to provide a year-round job placement service to the membership. There are many other improvements that involve information technology including a new on-line member directory, e-mail membership renewals and a new conference information system for managing the annual conference.

Goal 4: "Promote the development and dissemination of research having educational significance and managerial relevance." With all the work on the new journal, we certainly do not intend to reduce the major research focus of the Institute. The changes to the annual meeting format are intended to significantly increase research collaboration. Ram Narasimhan, the editor of *Decision Sciences*, has announced two special issues, one focused on

"e-Business and Supply Chain Management" and a second on "Knowledge Management."

Goal 5: "Increase globalization of the Institute." The Institute has had great success with our international meetings. The last meeting in Athens, Greece, had nearly 800 participants. Our plans are to develop new international regions whenever possible. It appears that the Institute may charter a Mexican Region within the next year.

Decision Sciences Institute exists to serve its members. It's amazing the job that Carol Latta, our executive director, does to keep the new officers focused on doing what the membership wants. Much of the input from the membership is through the 16 committees that report to the Board of Directors. Approximately 200 different people serve on these committees. The Institute is indebted to these individuals for the countless hours donated. If you want to get involved in forming the future path of the Institute, I encourage you to volunteer for one of these committees.

I sincerely look forward to my next year as president of the Institute. If you have issues, comments, or questions, do not hesitate to contact me. Best wishes for the coming year. ■

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