

DECISION LINE

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Congratulations to Newly Elected 2005-06 DSI Officers



Davis

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Mark M. Davis, *Bentley College*

SECRETARY
Karen A. Brown, *University of Washington at Bothell*

AT-LARGE VICE PRESIDENTS
Maling Ebrahimpour, *Roger Williams University*

Ina S. Markham, *James Madison University*
Vicki Smith-Daniels, *Arizona State University*

SOUTHEAST REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT
Stephanie S. Robbins, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

SOUTHWEST REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT
Robert J. Pavur, *University of North Texas*

WESTERN REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT
Krishna Dhir, *Berry College*

The tabulation of the ballots was conducted and audited by DATAMATX, Atlanta, Georgia. See page 38 for more information on the new officers. ■



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Looking Back on an Exciting Year

Gary L. Ragatz, *Michigan State University*

THIS IS MY LAST LETTER TO YOU as president of the Institute, and the year seems to have flown by. It's been a busy year, and a productive one. The Institute is financially healthy, and we held one of our largest and most successful annual meetings in several years.

Last spring, I outlined the goals the Board of Directors had established for the Institute for the 2004-2005 year. As I

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close out my term as president, I'd like to take a little time to review those goals and highlight some of what we have done this year to move forward on them.

Goal 1: "Enhance the value of membership in the Decision Sciences Institute."

This goal focuses around improving the value of the products and services we offer to our members. This means, for the most part, our annual conference, our publications, our placement system, and our Web site.

Annual Meeting

As I mentioned above, the 2004 annual meeting was our best-attended conference in quite a few years. At least a part of that success is due to some innovations in programming at the conference. The program committee developed three "keynote" sessions, devoting full sessions to individual high-profile speakers. These sessions were well received, and among the highlights of the conference. This type of session will become a regular feature of the annual meeting. The 2004 meeting also included a new track, "Emerging Information Technologies," which reflects our efforts to encourage cutting-edge content at the conference. We will continue to look for ways to keep program content fresh.

One of the comments we sometimes hear from the membership is that they would like to try out new locations for the annual meeting. We've added another brand new venue for the 2008 conference. In November 2008, we'll be meeting at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel. Along with our scheduled visits to San Antonio (2006) and Phoenix (2007), this will give us quite a bit of variety over the next few years. I haven't spent any time in Baltimore, but from what I've heard and read, it will make for a great meeting site—I'm looking forward to it already!

Andrea Williams has been very busy over the past year, working on the DSI Conference Information System. That system is now up and running—if you have submitted a paper for the 2005 annual meeting, you've already seen the new system. The software went through extensive beta testing during

the fall, and like any software product, there are likely to be a few glitches that will need to be straightened out. But we finally have our own system, designed with the Institute's needs and processes in mind. Thanks to Andrea for all her hard work over the past year.

The CIS will be further enhanced over time, but will provide a consistent infrastructure for future program chairs to work with, and a consistent interface for the membership. The CIS will also be made available to any of the DSI regions that wish to use it to manage their annual conferences.

Journals

At the beginning of this calendar year, we completed the transition of editorship of *Decision Sciences* from Ram Narasimhan to Vicki Smith-Daniels. Vicki and her team at Arizona State University have created a new Web site for the journal, and have transitioned us to an all-electronic submission and review process. Along with these changes, the submission fees for both *Decision Sciences* and *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* have been eliminated.

We have also "refreshed" the physical appearance of *Decision Sciences* and *DSJIE*. By now you should have received at least one issue of each of the journals with their new cover designs and color schemes.

Job Placement System

Enhancements are underway that will improve the search capabilities of the placement system for both employers and job seekers. Changes will also include support for periodic e-mail updates on new listings.

Web Site

We have launched a major overhaul of the Institute's Web site. Several of this year's committees came forward with recommendations for improving the ease of use, as well as the content and functionality of the Web site. By the time you read this, an ad hoc committee will be at work to identify and implement needed changes.

Goal 2: "Increase membership."

The best way to increase membership is to make sure that we offer products and services that encourage existing members to renew their membership and encourage non-members to sign on. (This goal is closely linked to Goal 1.)

A major emphasis this year has been on getting better information about our members' needs and preferences. To that end, the Member Services Committee has prepared a new member survey to collect feedback on member satisfaction with the Institute's products and services and to solicit member input on what we can be doing better. The survey is being finalized and will be administered in late spring or early summer. I encourage all of you to participate when you receive your invitation to complete the survey. The committee has also prepared a short survey to collect information from individuals who have allowed their membership to lapse, in hopes of learning how we might have served their needs more effectively.

On other fronts, we continue to improve our processes at the Home Office to manage membership renewals, so we don't let members slip away. Terry Williams has continued to get the word out to new potential members through his e-mail marketing campaign.

Goal 3: "Enhance globalization of the Institute."

We must continue to expand the Institute's global presence and its global orientation in order to meet the changing needs and interests of the profession. This has been a long-time goal of the Institute.

One mechanism for globalization is our regional organizations. This year, we completed the formation of the Mexico Region, and that group held its first annual meeting last October. We welcome our Mexican colleagues to the Institute, and look forward to their growing involvement in the Institute's activities. We are also investigating the feasibility of an India Region. A subcommittee of the Strategic Planning for International Affairs Committee is exploring the possibilities this summer.

Another mechanism for globalization is our international conferences. The 2005 International DSI meeting will be held this summer in Barcelona, Spain. The Strategic Planning for International Affairs Committee is currently evaluating several attractive proposals to host the 2007 International Meeting. A recommendation from the SPIA Committee to finalize the site for the 2007 meeting will be taken up at the April Board of Directors meeting.

We are also reaching out to our non-U.S. constituencies and trying to raise the visibility of our annual meeting among academics outside the U.S. Ken Kendall's program committee included track chairs from numerous countries. Both Manoj Malhotra and Mo Adam Mahmood, 2005 and 2006 annual meeting program chairs, have made concerted efforts to include non-U.S. track chairs on their program committees as well. Manoj has also put together a team to promote the 2005 conference through

professional organizations outside the U.S.

Goal 4: "Improve communication with the membership."

This goal is a major focus of our effort to enhance the Institute's Web site. The Web site is a major tool for communicating with the membership, and improvements to the content and usability will enhance its effectiveness. One area of particular interest is to use the Web site to facilitate information sharing about and among the Institute's regional organizations.

We have, I think, made some important progress in the past year, but there is still much work to be done. The years ahead will be challenging and exciting ones for the Institute.

A final round of "thank-you's"

As I complete my term as president, I would like to thank the members of the 2004-2005 Board of Directors for the time and effort they have put into the

Institute's business. This group has been a real pleasure to work with. I'd like to recognize several members of the Board, in particular, who are completing their terms in office. Barb Flynn will be leaving the Board after five consecutive years of service – first as treasurer, then as president-elect, president, and past president (it's just not going to feel like a real Board meeting in April, without Barb). Soumen Ghosh, David Olson, and Nancy Weida are completing their terms as at-large vice presidents. Nada Sanders is completing her term as secretary, and three regionally-elected vice presidents will complete their terms—Bill Carper (Southeast), Mike Hanna (Southwest), and Paul Mallette (Western). Fortunately, the end of their terms in office won't mean an end to their service to the Institute—I know that these dedicated people will continue to serve the Institute and its members in a variety of roles. ■

Thanks to 2004-2005 Committee Chairs and Coordinators . . .

- **Case Studies Committee**
E. Powell Robinson, *Texas A&M University*
- **Development Committee**
Terry R. Rakes, *Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University*
- **Doctoral Student Affairs Committee**
Scott O'Leary-Kelly, *University of Arkansas-Fayetteville*
- **Executive Committee**
Gary L. Ragatz, *Michigan State University*
- **Fellows Committee**
Urban Wemmerlöv, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*
- **Information Technology Committee**
Subhashish (Sub) Samaddar, *Georgia State University*
- **Innovative Education Committee**
Karen E. Papke-Shields, *Salisbury University*
- **Investment Advisory Committee**
Julie E. Kendall, *Rutgers University – Camden*
- **Member Services Committee**
Gary Hackbarth, *Iowa State University*
- **Nominating Committee**
Barbara B. Flynn, *Wake Forest University*
- **Programs and Meetings Committee**
Robert J. Vokurka, *Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi*
- **Publications Committee**
Ceyhun Ozcgur, *Valparaiso University*
- **Regional Activities Committee**
Thomas E. Callarman, *Arizona State University*
- **Strategic Planning Committee**
Gary L. Ragatz, *Michigan State University*
- **Strategic Planning for International Affairs Committee**
Benito E. Flores, *Texas A&M University*
- **Ad hoc Committee on a Research Clearinghouse**
Barbara B. Flynn, *Wake Forest University*

. . . and Thanks to 2004-05 Outgoing Board Members

- **Past President**
Barbara B. Flynn, *Wake Forest University*
- **Secretary**
Nada R. Sanders, *Wright State University*
- **Vice President**
William B. Carper, *University of West Florida*
- **Vice President**
Soumen Ghosh, *Georgia Institute of Technology*
- **Vice President**
Michael E. Hanna, *University of Houston-Clear Lake*
- **Vice President**
Paul M. Mallette, *Colorado State University*
- **Vice President**
David L. Olson, *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*
- **Vice President**
Nancy C. Weida, *Bucknell University* ■