

DECISION LINE

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Supporting the Regions

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As was mentioned in the last letter, one of this year's objectives for the Decision Sciences Institute is to continue to strengthen the relationships between the various regions and DSI, and among the regions themselves. A part of this includes the redesign of the Web page to improve the visibility of the regions as well as to foster better communication. The second part would be to call on the members of DSI to support their region(s) of choice through attendance at meetings and participation in other activities of the regions. This is the subject of my second letter.

I attended my first regional meeting of DSI in 1976 as a PhD student at Purdue University. My first meeting was a Midwest DSI meeting, and it was well attended by professors and graduate students from all over the Midwest. I quickly realized how important to my career participation in regional meetings would be. The attendees at this meeting included faculty and graduate students from almost all of the Big Ten Schools (Wisconsin, Purdue, Indiana, Michigan State, Minnesota, and Ohio State, at least), as well as representatives from many smaller schools. It was clear that there was a dynamic and healthy network that had been formed. During my years at Purdue and as an assistant professor at Bowling Green, I continued to develop my network of colleagues and friends. Some of my most cherished and long-lasting personal and professional friendships were developed in these early years.

I then moved on to Texas Tech, where I began attending both the Southwest and Western meetings. Again, there were professors and graduate students from all sorts of schools in attendance at the meetings. I began to encourage the PhD students from Tech to attend and network at the regional meetings. Some of those students have gone on to be officers and board members both of the regions and of DSI. Many have had successful research careers, as well, and I attribute that partly to the experiences of presenting their formative

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research projects at the regional meetings, in a setting that can be less intimidating than DSI.

Finally, the Western Region has been my home for the past 25 years. Without the experience that I gained going through the board and officer rotation in Western, I would not have been elected to the DSI board of directors several years ago, and I certainly would not have even thought of running for president! Since the Western region meets in places such as Hawaii, San Francisco, and Vancouver, many of the attendees are from the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia and New Zealand. This has made these meetings much more interesting and productive, and has also helped me to form my beliefs about the internationalization of DSI (more on this in a later letter).

In the past few years, it appears to me that the make-up and attendance at the regional meetings have changed. Certainly, what I am about to write is not universally true, but it seems to me to be generally true. As I have attended meetings of several different regions, I do not see as much support from the "major" universities that we used to enjoy. Many doctoral students still attend, but there seems to be fewer of the faculty, especially the senior faculty in

attendance. This is both good and bad. The good part is that the majority of attendance is from faculty and students from local universities. Many of the attendees at regional meetings do not attend DSI meetings, either because of cost, the overwhelming size of the DSI meetings, or because their primary professional organization is something other than DSI. It is bad because the region no longer serves the networking function that it used to. I assume that this reduction in attendance from the majors is primarily because many of the universities will no longer fund attendance at these meetings, and I hope it is not because the senior faculty no longer view the regional meetings as important.

I suppose my message is primarily one of encouragement for senior faculty in DSI to remember how we got started and to call upon them to support the regional organizations. DSI has, in my mind, been unique among professional organizations with the strength and quality of its regions. We need to do what we can to continue to build on that strength and quality. ■

DEVELOPMENT, from page 23

submit the following to Carol Latta, Executive Director, Decision Sciences Institute, 35 Broad Street, Atlanta, GA 30303 by no later than January 15, 2006:

1. Curriculum vita
2. Statement of activities and service provided to the Institute
3. Statement of interest and availability to serve a three-year term
4. Statement of qualifications and experience related to the position
5. Description of institutional commitment for the support of the director's job functions for a three year period. ■

MARKETING DIRECTOR, from page 23

tee regarding all aspects of member attraction and retention. This will include member statistics, benefits, pricing, and communications.

7. Work with the Information Technology Committee on Website development and other technology issues related to member services, benefits, attraction and retention.

8. Develop messages for and oversee ongoing contact with various member and non-member constituencies of the Institute.

9. Constitute and oversee a marketing committee as appropriate.

The Marketing Director is a member of the Development Committee for Excellence in the Decision Sciences (Ex Officio), the Information Technology Committee (Ex Officio), the Member Services Committee (Ex Officio), and the Strategic Planning Committee (Ex Officio).

Questions about the position may be directed to the current Marketing Director, Terry Williams, Western Washington University, at (360) 650-4896 or terrell.williams@wwu.edu. All interested parties should submit the following to Carol Latta, Executive Director, Decision Sciences Institute, 35 Broad Street, Atlanta, GA 30303:

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