



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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# FROM THE CHAIR

## 10 YEARS STRONG

By Brenna Gardino

**T**he past year has gone very quickly and it is hard to believe that this “From the Chair” column is my last. The Taxation Section celebrates its tenth anniversary this year and I believe this milestone merits a moment of reflection.

### DECADE IN REVIEW

The Taxation Section began in 2004 as a forum for those with tax expertise to discuss common interests and challenges. The founding members were:

|                    |                                                                                      |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair:             | Ed Robbins                                                                           |
| Vice Chair:        | Barbara Gold                                                                         |
| Treasurer:         | Don Walker                                                                           |
| Council Members:   | Bud Friedstat, Doug Hertz, Brian King, Pete Marion, Art Panighetti, and Jim Reiskytl |
| Newsletter Editor: | Brian King                                                                           |
| Assistant Editor:  | Christine Del Vaglio                                                                 |
| Editorial Board:   | Peter Winslow, Bruce Schobel, and Ernie Achtien                                      |

Interestingly, since the founding of the section, two of the original people involved (Bruce Schobel and Ed Robbins) went on to be Presidents of the SOA. Over the years, several council members have subsequently served on the SOA Board (Bud Friedstat and Kory Olsen) and the council has also been fortunate to have prior SOA Board members subsequently serve on the council (Chris DesRochers and Jim Reiskytl). I mention this because I am proud (and a bit in awe) of the high-caliber expertise and leadership that the Taxation Section has both contributed and benefited from.

Over the years, the section has built a reputation of top-notch technical skill combined with industry and tax-specific knowledge. These skills and knowledge have undoubtedly had an impact on the industry and will continue to long into the

future. The section’s strong reputation and access to valuable resources (such as *TAXING TIMES*) has steadily attracted new members. Over the last decade, the section has grown to over 800 members and members of this section report one of the highest levels of satisfaction overall with the SOA. Meeting sessions that are sponsored by the Taxation Section are always highly rated (sessions at this year’s Life and Annuity symposium received some 5s!). The past decade has been an accomplishment.

### YEAR IN REVIEW

My top priority for the past year has been the recruitment and development of the next generation of tax actuaries. After a decade of success, it is a natural progression for the section to begin reaching out to entry-level members to expand the knowledge base that exists. This expansion prepares the section for future demand and enables current members to create a legacy.

As part of this effort, the section has recently sponsored basic education sessions at SOA meetings. The Life and Annuity Symposium in May had very strong content for beginner tax actuaries and these sessions were well-attended and well-rated. The Product Tax Seminar and Boot Camp in September provided another opportunity and educational forum for members looking to increase their knowledge.

The Taxation Section also presented at the Chicago Actuarial Club in the spring and the Kansas City Actuarial Club in July. The message to increase volunteerism is spreading through grass root efforts and the Taxation Section is a key part of that. The past year has provided valuable groundwork for the section to expand its membership and further develop its newer members.

## THANK YOU!

I believe the Taxation Section is made up of very special people and has particularly active and high-performing council members and friends of the council. I would like to thank each of these council members and friends of the council for their help and support this past year.

There are also a few people in particular that I owe special thanks. Kristin Norberg—thank you for your outstanding volunteer work this past year! Kristin has played a key role in the sub-committee that has focused on the attraction and development of the next generation of tax actuaries and has also stepped into a new role with *TAXING TIMES*. I appreciate Kristin's leadership and willingness to help. Jim Van Etten—thank you for your extra efforts these past two years as Secretary/Treasurer. You have done a great job at keeping the section organized, documented and financially sound. Meg Weber and Christy Cook—thank you for all the little (and big!) items that you have helped with the past few years. Your responsiveness and words of wisdom have been helpful. You both have been a pleasure to work with!

As always, tax topics continue to be critical issues and the future will bring both opportunities and challenges. I strongly believe the Taxation Section will continue to build on its prior 10 years of success by providing relevant expertise and leadership...for many decades into the future. ◀

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