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## Chairperson's Corner

By Darryl Wagner

**H**ow quickly the year passes! By the time you read this, your new Section Council will be in place. I have thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity to serve as your chair this year. I want to take this opportunity to thank the 2009-2010 Section Council for their hard work and numerous contributions during the year. In particular, I'd like to thank my fellow "retiring" council members Rich De Haan and Joe Chou for three years of dedicated service. In addition, I'd like to acknowledge our incoming council members Ben Marshall, Theo Iaponas and Lina Xu. The section is clearly in good hands going forward! I'd also like to recognize the members of our newsletter team, led by Carl Hansen, for their ongoing efforts to produce a high-quality newsletter. Thanks also go to our SOA staff partners, Martha Sikaras and Jill Leprich, for their continuing support. The section also greatly benefits from the efforts of former council members and friends of council, Bill Horbatt and Cathy Lyn, who have led important initiatives for us this year. Last but not least, I want to thank you, our members, for your support, participation and feedback.

In this, my last article as chair, I'd like to update you on three topics that I believe are relevant and important to our section members.

First, I'd like to briefly report on the seminars we recently held in Asia. We had another successful financial reporting seminar in Hong Kong in late August/early September. This was my third opportunity to present at this seminar, and I continue to be impressed by both the quality and preparation of the speakers, as well as the interest and participation of the audience. We received some good feedback from the attendees on topics and formats for future seminars and are already working on incorporating that feedback into next year's plans. Thanks to all involved for making this a success! Preceding and following the seminar, we held 1 day seminars in Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan. I had the privilege to present in Taiwan and was thrilled to see the room filled with more than 200 participants! Thanks to Alice Chen and her organizing team, supported by Pat Kum, for putting together a great session, and for reminding me that connecting with our members where they live on topics of interest and importance to them is what it's all about!

Second, the International Membership Strategy Task Force that I mentioned in my last Chairperson's Corner has been working hard and will be delivering a presentation to the SOA Board at the Annual Meeting in New York. We have been focusing on drafting an articulation of the SOA's international strategic priorities. Thus far, we have grouped these priorities into three broad categories: service, growth and knowledge sharing. Work on this important initiative will continue into 2011, as we seek to build consensus around our strategic priorities and develop tactics to support and carry out those priorities. We will be launching a member survey to help us gather your feedback regarding the SOA's international strategy, and I look forward to hearing your input. I believe the International Section will play a key role in implementing the SOA's international strategic vision, building on the significant international initiatives already underway, both inside and outside the section.

Third, as I write this article, I am attending the Fall 2010 International Actuarial Association (IAA) meeting in Vienna. As an SOA delegate to the IAA, I participated in meetings of the Supranational Relations Subcommittee and the Advice & Assistance Committee. The Supranational Relations Subcommittee works to develop and strengthen the IAA's relationships with other supranational organizations, such as development banks. The Advice & Assistance Committee coordinates the provision of outreach and assistance to developing actuarial associations in countries and regions around the world, working in conjunction with other IAA groups, such as the Actuaries Without Borders section. It is truly impressive to witness the passion and dedication of our global actuarial colleagues in their efforts to improve the actuarial profession. Topics of meetings and conversations encompass a wide range of issues, including accounting for insurance and pension contracts, professionalism, regulatory and solvency frameworks, risk management, and education, in addition to the topics described above. Again, I see working with and through the IAA as being a vital component of the SOA's international strategy, particularly in the areas of growth and knowledge sharing.

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Returning to my theme of connections, I believe our strategy project offers us the opportunity to “connect the dots” around the great international work the SOA is already doing, and will provide the framework and support for even greater international endeavors. I also feel strongly that this is important not only to SOA members who reside outside North America, but to all SOA members who benefit from the growth and enhanced value of the

SOA credentials that will surely result from the SOA's stronger positioning internationally. While my time on the International Section Council draws to a close, I am honored to be taking a seat on the SOA Board of Directors and am committed to staying closely involved with the SOA's international strategy and broader international agenda. And that includes the International Section! Let's stay connected! □

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