



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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# IABA – Coming of Age

by John Robinson



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*“The world’s premiere actuarial organization dedicated to shaping diversity by influencing industry and elevating the status of black actuaries.”*

This is the new Vision Statement of the International Association of Black Actuaries (IABA).

IABA was born in 1992 as the National Association of Black Actuaries, and renamed in 1994. The founding members included 35 credentialed black actuaries from the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

IABA meets annually, in early August. The meeting has grown in all respects: quality, attendance and duration. In the early years, it was a one-day affair, held on a Sunday. It featured a keynote speaker, elections and a really nice brunch. In 1999, presentations—similar to those at SOA meetings—were introduced. In 2005, there were eight presentations, the meeting ran from Friday evening to Sunday noon, and attendance was 100. I am pleased to note that we have retained the really nice brunch.

The leadership structure of IABA has grown in sophistication. In the early years, there was a small executive and four committees: Mentoring, Membership, Communications and Finance. Nowadays, in addition to that, it has a Board of Directors, an Advisory Board and a Foundation.

At the grassroots level, a number of Regional Affiliates have recently been formed. Their role is to provide opportunities for member support and involvement, as well as to reach out to collegians and high schoolers who can benefit from our presence as black actuaries, professionals, “math people” and role models. As with any new venture, some of these are off to a quicker start than others.

IABA offers scholarships to black college students in the United States and Canada who are pursuing undergraduate studies in Actuarial Science. A student who has passed one of the SOA/CAS exams can receive a substantial award.

Next year’s meeting in Atlanta, Ga. promises to be bigger and better than ever. There will be one additional day, and we will likely surpass this year’s eight presentations. One of our goals, which is of particular interest to this author, is to include presentations on topics of interest to black actuaries outside the United States. The meeting will be eligible for Continuing Education credit.

I invite you to visit our Web site, [www.blackactuaries.org](http://www.blackactuaries.org). □

