



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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# The Stepping Stone

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# Take a Chance—What Do You Have to Lose?

by Jennifer L. Gillespie

At the same time we were trying to recruit people to submit articles for *The Stepping Stone*, I encountered a series of articles published in the *Washington Post* about the lack of op-ed pieces written by women for major newspapers. These articles caused me to explore how the Society of Actuaries is doing in comparison with some major newspapers.

In my research I found that for three major newspapers, the following statistics were cited for the percent of women op-ed writers: *Washington Post* (10 percent), *New York Times* (17 percent) and *Los Angeles Times* (20 percent). In comparison, keeping in mind that the Society of Actuaries' membership is about 25 percent female, in a quick survey of 18 actuarial publications in my inbox, 20 percent of the author submissions were from females. I could end the story here but, instead, I'd like to raise the bar and propose an "about-face." As Michael Kinsley of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, "Diversity of voices, experiences and sensibilities is not about fairness to writers. It is about serving up a good meal for readers." *The Stepping Stone* would like to serve up such a meal. In short, I offer up a challenge to our readers. We want to hear from you—all of you!

Distinction aside, our readers are the key ingredient of the when, where, how and why of management, personal development, career enhancement, etc. They are the eyes and ears of this industry, gathering the information, collaborating ideas with colleagues, adding a bit of this and a pinch of that, preparing a feast for our eyes to savor. An article you write could be published at just the right time, with an interesting approach, to catch some readers' attention and be just the helpful, motivational input they needed. That is a recipe for success!

*The Stepping Stone* is waiting for you to present your thoughts, experiences and ideas, where they can be added to the exceptional mix of articles and harmonized together like a fine meal. Truth be told, it can be intimidating to submit an article to an industry publication. Questions arise as to whether the information is new, interesting, significant, etc.

No new research is required here, just the wisdom of your experience. Look past the stereotypes and embrace the challenge for what it is. Take a chance—what do you have to lose? □



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