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Chairperson’s Corner

By Greg Fann

How do I start? 2020 has been a good year for the Social Insurance and Public Finance (SIPF) Section Council. Like everything else this year, it has not turned out exactly as we planned, but it was a year of accomplishments and a year of transition. During our face-to-face meeting in January, we reviewed Section Member statistics and learned that 46 percent of us list “health” as our primary area of practice and 25 percent list “retirement.” Throughout the year, we expanded section activities and added more health-related content and plan to continue strengthening that effort in 2021.

To no one’s surprise, the staff at the Society of Actuaries (SOA) have been a valuable partner throughout the year. Our section specialist, Dee Berger, has been with us the entire time and helped us navigate through the newfound circumstances. Retirement staff fellow Mary Stone retired (no pun intended) during the summer and her warmth and friendliness have been missed. SOA leaders Mike Boot and Joe Wurzbarger have participated in monthly calls and have kept us abreast of the changing dynamics this year and what to expect as we move into next year.

A sampling of 2020 highlights include:

- Multiple webcasts were recorded including sessions on “Social Security Coverage for State and Local Government Employees” and “Pension Risk Appetite.”
- The council hosted a town hall session. Flick Forna moderated the event and council members Paul Angelo and Tom Vicente were two of the seven expert participants.
- We published four issues of *In The Public Interest*. Our editors Bruce Schobel and Tom Vicente recruited authors to cover a wide range of topics, including Social Security, pension plan assumptions, Long-Term Care, COVID-19 and ACA market dynamics.

- SOA Board member Flick Forna and I have hosted frequent podcasts, with recent discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on Social Security and in ACA markets.
- We are providing two sessions this year at the SOA annual meeting. Steve Goss, chief actuary at the Social Security Administration, and Bruce Schobel will be presenting on the Social Security update on Monday. Brian Blasé, a former health care advisor to President Trump, and I will discuss the health care initiatives of the presidential candidates on Wednesday.

To keep up with everything going on with the section, a good place to start is on the section’s webpage. It is managed by Stephanie Entzminger and updated quarterly. The resources page on the website includes various research articles and a link to each of our podcasts. We will continue recording podcasts with roughly the same frequency. Flick Forna will continue to manage the pension-related podcasts and Chris Merkel will take the lead on the health podcast. Let them know if you have any content suggestions or would like to volunteer for a discussion. On that note, everything we do is dependent on volunteers. If you are interested in learning about volunteer opportunities, you can sign up using the SOA Volunteer Database. Michael Stephens is our volunteer liaison and would love to connect with you.



As the year comes to a close, we are indebted to three council members who will complete their three-year terms this month. I want to extend appreciation to Janet Cranna, Douglas Fiddler, and Jim Rizzo. We appreciate their valuable service and trust they will remain connected.

I am excited to welcome newly elected council members Piotr Krekora, Bruce Schobel and Marilyn McGaffin. Piotr and Bruce are both former council chairs with an abundance of section-related knowledge and have been active council friends. Marilyn and I served together on the Health Section Council and I

am delighted that she is bringing more health expertise to the SI&PF Council.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the council, please reach out to me or other council members. I am looking forward to a fantastic year. ■



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