



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

# The Actuary Magazine

April/May 2014 – Volume 11, Issue 2

# CONNECTING CANDIDATES WITH THE SOA COMMUNITY

BY XIAOYAN ANDERSON

The Enhanced Relationship with Candidates initiative is going strong. Since 2011, when the Society of Actuaries' (SOA's) Board of Directors approved this initiative to build and strengthen relationships with those weighing their education and career options, there have been a number of significant accomplishments.

A few of the most notable achievements to date include:

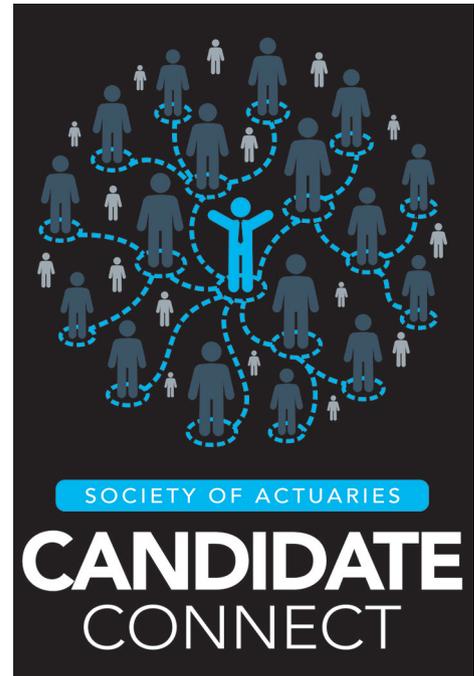
- The SOA Candidate Connect event made its debut in Philadelphia in November. More than 120 students, career changers and entry-level actuaries gained an insight into the profession from the presidential address and educational presentations. They were able to connect with SOA leaders, members and fellow candidates during the networking reception. "The dialogue will continue when we cross paths in the future," a candidate attendee said.
- Twenty students from local universities were invited to the Valuation Actuary Symposium, one of the largest SOA meetings. Attending the selected sessions and networking with working actuaries granted most of them the first professional development meeting experience in their lives. The symposium was held in Indianapolis in September.
- The SOA continued to support other organizations and candidate events by

soliciting sponsorship opportunities. As a top-level sponsor, the SOA connected with more than 200 college students at the first Midwest Actuarial Student Conference held in Indiana in October. We also sponsored the Actuarial Student National Association convention with dedicated contribution to its annual case competition, an intellectually stimulating experience for some of the best actuarial students in Canada.

These activities support the SOA's goal to connect with candidates prior to their attaining a designation—a strong way to attract and retain the brightest young minds in the actuarial profession, and promote a lifelong relationship that may lead to increased volunteering and support.

The activities also are an outgrowth of a strategy developed around the needs and interest of candidates: "The SOA will provide a sustainable foundation of services to ensure our candidates have a complete understanding of the profession, access to the tools needed to accompany their educational experience and an opportunity to participate in the broader SOA community."

Moving forward in 2014, Candidate Connect will take place in identified actuarial hot spots and in conjunction with select SOA meetings, bringing an enhanced event experience to candidates and participating members. Those who can't attend will be able to get involved in the conversation through



Candidate Connect webinars, an outreach to candidates worldwide. Informative and timely communication with candidates will also evolve with the build-up of effective channels and tailored content, such as publication for candidates and the SOA Facebook Candidate Community followed by nearly 6,000 candidates today.

These efforts reflect the SOA's vision for the future of the profession. By strengthening bonds with candidates, we believe the SOA will be the information resource and support for aspiring actuaries on the rigorous pathway to membership as well as a source of actuarial community spirit. **A**

**Xiaoyan Anderson** is the candidate relations specialist for the Society of Actuaries. She can be reached at [xanderson@soa.org](mailto:xanderson@soa.org).