



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Chairperson's Corner

by Jennifer Gillespie



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Thank you to all of you who participated in our recent Health Section member survey. It's been two years since we last conducted one. The 2006 survey has been very helpful for directing the work of the council regarding education, research and other ways we can meet the needs of section members. We will study the results of the recent survey just as carefully and will be alert to new activities we should undertake.

One outcome of the 2006 survey that has recently taken flight is a new Special Interest Group for those members of the Health Section who work with any of the parts of Medicare and retiree benefits. We hope that this topically focused group will successfully serve actuaries under the umbrella of the Health Section as just the Disability Special Interest Group does.

Another outcome of the previous study was the educational Boot Camp concept. The Pricing and Valuation Boot Camps achieved near sellout attendance in August 2008 and we have undertaken to bring them back bigger and even better for August 2009. The plan is to expand to four topics and run two tracks concurrently for the first two days, then cover professionalism, and follow with two more days of concurrent tracks. Watch for more information on specific topics, dates and location.

We continue to advance the strategies around Untapped Opportunities for Actuaries. At this point we are in the research stage and are doing "deep dives." Thank you to the section members who responded to the request for stories of successful or attempted forays in to new fields for actuaries. Interviews are being conducted with actuaries and employers to research the issues surrounding these opportunities. We need to understand what aspects of actuarial training are thought to be the most applicable to new fields, which aspects it turns out are the most applicable, and where we are deemed to have shortcomings. Similarly in order to create a path for credentialed actuaries to transition to health, we need to know what health employers are seeking from these candidates. Then we can look for ways to help other actuaries be prepared for the health industry. We are also working with the SOA to conduct an assessment of the greater health care employer market so that we can better understand other employer needs and identify new opportunities for future employment and growth.

The Health Section has several active research projects at this time. Two of the most recent have been focused on quality initiatives. If you have an idea for a research project you think would have relevance to many in the industry, please consider submitting it to the SOA Health Section. We fund new research each year and are also willing to partner with other sections if the research is cross disciplinary in nature.

HealthWatch and our hard working editors, are always seeking new authors and new topics for articles. If you have completed interesting research, finished an important project, or have a different perspective to share, please consider submitting an article for publication. Also if there is a topic you would like to read about or somebody you have heard speak who you think should be published, those suggestions are welcome as well. ■

