



Greetings from Texas! I am looking forward to this year as the president of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA). I have been a member for the past 15 years; the ASA is my

professional home. My work is mainly in underwater acoustics and acoustical oceanography. My area of research is primarily in sonar, and I am interested in how sound propagates through the ocean, especially in coastal areas and on the continental shelf. I have also worked in rivers and estuaries. My research is used to both explore the ocean and protect and monitor coastlines. I come to the military aspect of my research quite naturally, having graduated from West Point. However, I still cannot bring myself to root for Navy.

I have worked with a number of committees in the Society and have been especially interested in outreach. When I was chair of the Women in Acoustics (WIA) Committee (see article in this issue by Ronsse and Neilsen on the history of WIA), we started the Girl Scout outreach session. This initiative is now evolving to encourage a broader range of underrepresented people in science. I am very interested in the new Ad Hoc Committee for International Liaisons. This committee will foster new international regional chapters, serve as a bridge for the cosponsorship of international meetings, and work to translate non-English journals.

I have been involved with the Strategic Plan from its inception in my hometown of Austin, TX, in 2015. The plan is now in its third year. It has four goals: Awareness of Acoustics, Member Engagement and Diversity, Dissemination of Information and Knowledge, and Financial Stewardship. Each of these goals has an associated task force. (For further information about the strategic planning initiative, see past issues of *Acoustics Today* such as <http://acousticstoday.org/spring2016>).

For the past year, I have had the privilege to chair Task Force 1 in support of increasing awareness of acoustics. Among our initiatives are increasing our online presence and providing opportunities for our younger members to improve their science communication skills.

In the past two years, our online presence has exploded. Many of you are aware of (and “like”) our Facebook page. We

have an active Twitter account (@[acousticsorg](https://twitter.com/acousticsorg)) and a terrific YouTube channel that hosts videos (see the *Sound Perspectives* article in this issue by Daniel Farrell and L. Keeta Jones that details our social media efforts). These not only teach about acoustics but also highlight many of the students in the Society.

Task Force 1 will soon be conducting a student video competition, with cash prizes, to continue to populate the channel. Stay tuned! However, as fun social media is, the flagship of our online presence is definitely our outreach website, <http://www.exploresound.org>. This incredible site has resources for students from kindergarten through graduate school. On the site, visitors can find information on acoustics of all kinds, discover educational resources, and quiz themselves on different aspects of acoustics. (According to these quizzes, I don’t know much about noise and should stick with underwater acoustics.) Teachers can also use the site to order activity kits, which provide a range of lessons in acoustics. There are many simulators, including an amazing spectrogram tool. For college students, there is an acoustic program directory. (If you would like your institution to be listed, please contact our Education Coordinator Keeta Jones at kjones@acousticalsociety.org.) So, if you are looking for teaching resources, an acoustics program to call home or just the sounds of the singing wolf spider, visit <http://www.exploresound.org>.

Another initiative of Task Force 1 is improving science communication, especially for our students. As part of this initiative, Task Force 1 sponsored one of our members, Dr. Laura Kloeper, to attend a ComSciCon (<http://www.comscicon.com>) workshop. These workshops focus on science communications geared especially for graduate students. Task Force 1 is now working with the ASA Student Council to potentially hold a ComSciCon workshop in conjunction with a future ASA meeting.

Task Force 2, which is concerned with member diversity and engagement and is led by Dr. Lily Wang (ASA president-elect), has been equally busy. Two of their initiatives are live streaming and early-career member development. The live-streaming initiative was started at the fall meeting in 2015 in Jacksonville, FL, with 52 papers broadcast. Only one year

later, at the Honolulu meeting, there were 174 papers broadcast. The “Hot Topics” session was also recorded and added to the ASA’s YouTube channel. The program is so successful that Dr. Wang was invited to give a talk about it at the spring meeting of the American Institute of Physics. As the program grows, the small volunteer cohort will be unable to keep up with demand. Therefore, the ASA is considering how to transition to professional services.

Another exciting initiative of Task Force 2 is the engagement and development of early-career members (see the article in the Fall 2017 issue of *Acoustics Today* by ASA Executive Director Susan Fox at <http://acousticstoday.org/fall2017>). The Task Force sponsored 30 \$500 travel grants for the Boston meeting and will sponsor another 30 grants for New Orleans. To be eligible, members must be within 10 years of obtaining their last degree. Because this program is for early-career members, students are not eligible.

Additionally, there will be a campaign in New Orleans to raise funds to endow Early-Career Leadership Fellows and to celebrate previous Hunt Fellows. I am especially looking forward to the Hunt Fellow poster session, which will be held at the event.

The goal of Task Force 3 is to support the dissemination of information and knowledge. Task Force 3 has the special charge of streamlining and promoting our publications. One of the most exciting initiatives from Task Force 3 has been the creation of coordinating editors (CEs) for our journals. CEs are assigned to each technical committee and oversee the distribution of papers among the associate editors (AEs). They help ensure that the number of papers is distributed evenly among the AEs and provide an additional level of oversight to ensure that papers do not get “stuck” in the review process. Ten of the thirteen technical committees now have CEs, and they have already reduced the mean time to decision for submissions in *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* from 100 to 59 days. (This initiative is more fully discussed in a *Sound Perspectives* essay in the Summer 2017 issue of *Acoustics Today* by ASA Editor in Chief Jim Lynch and CE KC Lee at <http://acousticstoday.org/summer2017>). Another exciting program from Task Force 3 is developing an orientation

guide for AEs. This guide will aid in educating new AEs on their roles and responsibilities. It is expected that this guide will be available to new AEs by the end of 2017.

Financial stewardship is the province of Task Force 4, chaired by past president, Dr. Christy Holland. In this area, the Society is moving to a new business model. Under the new model, a treasurer will be elected from the membership to oversee the long-range strategic financial goals of the Society. The treasurer will be aided by a professional financial manager. Currently, our treasurer is appointed, not elected. The change to an elected treasurer requires a rewrite of the bylaws of the Society, which is ongoing. Most likely, the changes will be ready for a general membership vote at the Minneapolis meeting in the spring of 2018. The Society will hire a consulting firm to fill the financial director position. These changes will ensure the Society’s long-term financial well-being.

In the long term, I am excited about the direction of the Society. We are moving toward an organization that has more impact on acoustic education and outreach while providing our members with increased opportunities for engagement and publication and ensuring financial stability. Personally, I am excited on the effect of these initiatives on outreach and international cooperation. In the future, I am hoping to see a Society that better reflects the diversity of our country while maintaining the high standards expected of a world-renowned scientific institution. This requires introducing a love of science to a wide range of people at all stages of their scientific careers, from their first course in physical science in middle school to their dissertation defense and beyond.

In the short term, I am just looking forward to a great meeting in New Orleans. If you see me listening to the Cajun music performance Tuesday afternoon or anticipating the lecture from the spokesperson of the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) Scientific Collaboration at the Society luncheon, make sure to introduce yourself. I would be happy to talk about where the Society is going and hear your ideas on how we can serve our members better.

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