

NERACS Board Meeting

Morton Z. Hoffman,
NESACS Representative to the NERACS Board [hoffman@bu.edu]

The Board of Directors of the Northeast Region of the ACS, Inc. (NERACS) met on Saturday, June 13, 2015, at Ithaca College on the occasion of the Northeast Regional Meeting (NERM 2015). Serving on the NERACS Board are representatives of the constituent local sections in the Northeast Region (Binghamton, Central Massachusetts, Central New York, Connecticut Valley, Cornell, Corning, Eastern New York, Green Mountain, Maine, Mid-Hudson, New Haven, Northeastern, Northern New York, Penn-York, Rhode Island, Rochester, Western Connecticut, Western New York) and its officers (Chair: Richard Cobb, Rochester; Vice Chair: Willem Leenstra, Green Mountain; Secretary: Anthony Noce, Eastern New York; Treasurer: Wayne Jones, Binghamton).

Also in attendance at the meeting were Tom Gilbert (ACS District I Director), Dorothy Phillips (ACS Director-at-Large), and Brittany Vesce-Rubenic (ACS staff liaison to NERM).

The Board elected Anthony Noce as Chair and reelected Willem Leenstra as Vice Chair for two-year terms (2016-17). Alyssa Thomas-Kuelling (Central New York) was appointed by the Chair to serve out Tony Noce's term as Secretary in 2016; the two-year term for the current Treasurer runs through next year. The Board also stated with applause its appreciation for the service Richard Cobb provided to NERACS as its Chair and Vice Chair over many years.

Inasmuch as the assets in the NERACS Treasury are now around \$59,000, it is appropriate to start discussions about the long-term use of those funds. At the present time, any income above expenses for a NERM is shared in a 60/40 ratio between the hosting local section and NERACS; consideration will be given to a 70/30 split or some other ratio. A motion was made and voted to increase the seed loans to upcoming regional meetings from \$4,000 to \$5,000.

It was reported by Akiko Fillinger, General Chair of NERM 2015, that the number of registrants for the meeting was 665 (the budget was for 500), including 125 undergraduates and 250 graduate students. There were 416 presentations, including 172 posters. Sixteen vendors and 13 graduate schools were part of the exposition. Income for the meeting is projected to be more than \$62,000 and expenses will be about \$55,000; a surplus of as much as \$10,000 is expected.

Richard Cobb expressed concern about the paucity of nominations for the regional awards that are presented at NERM; in fact, some awards cannot be given because the number of nominations does not reach the stipulated minima. He asked the representatives of the local sections to urge their officers and members to be active in the nomination process. The following Northeast Region awards will be presented at NERM 2016: Outstanding Achievements in the Chemical Sciences; Division of Chemical Education Award for Excellence in High School Teaching; E. Ann Nalley Award for Volunteer Service to the ACS; Stanley Israel Award for Advancing Diversity in the Chemical Sciences.

NERM 2016 will be held at the Binghamton University Downtown Center in Binghamton, NY, on Wednesday-Saturday, October 5-8; the meeting website is <<http://nerm2016.sites.acs.org/>>. Wayne Jones will be the General Chair for the hosting Binghamton Local Section.

The Eastern New York Local Section has proposed to host NERM 2017 in Saratoga Springs, NY, in the Spring of that year. At the present time, no NERM is scheduled for 2018. The Rochester Local Section has expressed interest to host the meeting in Fall 2019. The Green Mountain Local Section is considering holding a meeting in Burlington, VT, in Spring-Summer 2020. Inasmuch as the ACS Fall 2021 national meeting has been moved from Boston to Atlanta, the question was raised as to whether NESACS would be interested in hosting NERM that year, possibly in New Hampshire or on Cape Cod.

The ACS International Activities Committee (IAC) funded a proposal written by Richard Cobb to develop an analogue in the Atlantic area ("AtlantiChem") of the pentennial PacifiChem that would involve the Northeast, Middle Atlantic, and Southeast ACS regions. As the concept evolved, national ACS, the Canadian Society for Chemistry (CSC), and the Chemical Society of Mexico saw opportunities for an extension of AtlantiChem to a larger geographic area with possible involvement by the Brazilian Chemical Society and the Federation of African Societies of Chemistry with the meeting to be held in late 2017 or early 2018 and continuing on a five-year cycle.

It was noted that a discussion of the organization of AtlantiChem would be held in Ottawa the following day at the CSC 2015 conference. Representing NERACS will be Julie Smist (Connecticut Valley), former NERACS Chair; Morton Hoffman (Northeastern) will also attend as a member of IAC. The results of that meeting will be reported separately.

Tony Noce reported on the results of a NERACS strategic planning meeting that was held in Albany in November, 2014. Four strategic goals of NERACS were identified: Create a process whereby at least four future regional meetings are in the pipeline at all times, and establish administrative and financial incentives for local sections to consider hosting a NERM.

Maintain active representation of all the local sections within NERACS on the Board of Directors with possible financial assistance to defray the cost of attending the meeting.

Provide regional resources to support local section activities, for example, a regional speakers' bureau.

Improve communications with sections and their members with an immediate focus on an updated, professional-looking website.

The next annual meeting of the NERACS Board will take place at NERM 2016.

The author thanks Tom Gilbert for providing much of the material for this article; this reporter had to leave the meeting early to catch his flight to Ottawa (via Philadelphia!).