

From the Editor

Volunteer



The Microscopy Society of America (MSA) is a remarkable organization for a number of reasons. It is one of the few organizations where life scientists and physical scientists meet together and share interests in many of the same topics. It is also an organization that has traditionally operated through volunteer efforts rather than with a paid staff. Granted, in recent years MSA has engaged contractors to handle the business office, meetings, and the M&M exhibition. Many important functions, however, continue to be handled by committees staffed by volunteers.

Of course, for academics, presentation of their research work at the M&M meeting and participation in Program Committee activities are expected and necessary. But there are other committees that are operated by volunteers who seek the opportunity for service, and perhaps to do some useful networking. Some committee positions require seniority and appointment by the MSA Council, but certain committees provide volunteer opportunities for any MSA member. Four committees of the latter type are the Education Committee, International Committee, Technologists' Forum, and the Focused Interest Groups.

The Education Committee, through its several subcommittees, provides educational programs for anyone seeking knowledge about microscopy and its associated techniques. From short courses and tutorials, to outreach, to undergraduate research scholarships, this committee offers many opportunities to learn and serve. The charge of the International Committee includes the encouragement of collaboration with microscopists in other countries, as well as assistance to microscopists in developing and dollar-poor countries. To learn more about MSA's international activities see the Opinion piece by Alwyn Eades in this issue. The Technologists' Forum is a lively interest group that promotes all aspects of microscopy of interest to technologists. The MSA Focused Interest Groups (FIGs) range in topics from diagnostic microscopy to facility management. The FIGs act as technical sub-communities within the society that can run programs through their own organizations. To see the full list of FIGs go to: www.microscopy.org/communities/fig.cfm.

The above committees are volunteer activities that benefit both the society and microscopy in general. Any MSA member can join. To volunteer, contact the committee chair listed on the following website: www.microscopy.org/about/committees.cfm.

Charles Lyman
Editor-in-Chief

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