

in the final analysis

*“Who are you? Who, who? Who, who? Who are you? Who, who? Who, who?
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—The Who, “Who Are You?”

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One of my favorite functions at the TMS Annual Meeting & Exhibition is the TMS Past Presidents Luncheon. Here, 15 or so former presidents of the society gather to catch up, reminisce, receive an update on the TMS Foundation, learn what’s happening with our antecedent organization AIME, induct the newest past president into the Order of the New Fossil, and hear an informal presentation from the executive director about the state of the society. I think of the latter as my “Who Are We Today?” talk. The past presidents seem to enjoy this summary, and I enjoy preparing and presenting it. Happily, I repurpose it throughout the year when giving TMS talks to other audiences.

And speaking of repurposing . . . one important audience that I miss with my presentation is the readership of this very journal—the members of TMS. You are TMS, and you are who this presentation is about. You, you. You, you. As I am big on transparency, let me pull back the curtain and give you some highlights from my most recent talk.

Board of Directors focus: The big news concerned the just-adopted 2018 TMS Strategic Plan with its five goals: (1) Advance diversity and inclusion in the minerals, metals, and materials professions; (2) accelerate industrial engagement in TMS; (3) globally expand the portfolio of international activities; (4) advance materials solutions for energy and environmental challenges; and (5) be the natural home and advocate for materials and manufacturing innovation. Within this context, I spent a fair amount of time discussing last summer’s TMS Diversity in Minerals, Metals, and Materials Professions summit (chaired by 2013 President Elizabeth Holm) and the creation of two diversity awards (one for overcoming diversity challenges and one for helping others overcome). The next summit is planned for summer 2016. A related action was the adoption of a formal anti-harassment policy—the board is unreservedly committed to making TMS a welcoming society for all members. The board is also enthusiastically pursuing international collaborations, especially in the Americas, the Middle East, and Asia. And, of course, the board is passionate about supporting the efforts of the TMS Foundation Board of Trustees.

State of the business: Our 2014 revenue was a record \$7.2 million. After deducting expenses, the society was able to allocate about half a million dollars to its operating reserves (i.e., money available for a rainy day and the development of special initiatives). Our primary revenue leaders are publications and events. For 2015, we have budgeted \$7.2 M in revenue against \$7.1M in expense. (As a nonprofit, the society annually budgets to perform just a little bit better than breakeven so that we focus first and foremost on using all resources to advance the society’s mission.) Meanwhile, our revitalized TMS Foundation is shepherding about \$2 million in assets, and in 2014 gave out about \$150,000 in gifts and scholarships, primarily to students and young professionals.

Leading Indicators: I’m a data wonk, so I pay a lot of attention to numbers and trendlines (example: *JOM*’s Impact Factor has gone up 240 percent since 1999). Beyond the financials, some numbers that I shared with the past presidents include a 14 percent uptick in membership over the last five years. At the end of 2014, TMS membership was 12,883: 7,514 professionals and 5,369 students. Our international membership continues to grow, with 42 percent of members living and working outside of the United States. (Next largest membership hub: Canada at 6 percent.) Meanwhile, 42 percent of membership is employed by academia, 40 percent by industry, and 12 percent by government.

If you would like to hear the full presentation in the future, it is never too late to start yourself on the path toward becoming a future past president. The lunch is pretty good, too!



James J. Robinson
Executive Director

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