



Report of the 2005-2006 President

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In 2005, AIME continued its evolution to a Society that is fiscally sound and sustainable. Following a path that was planned by President George H. Sawyer (now, sadly deceased) and successfully implemented by President Rob Wagner and President Robert Freas, I can say with great pride that AIME will continue much beyond this current board's time and its legacy will continue. The last five years have been very difficult, but the days of uncertainty are over, and this and past boards have completed their most important task and ensured the future of AIME as a vital, viable organization with the ability to serve its members.

The board of the AIME has successfully moved to two conference calls and one annual meeting to conduct its business. This mode of operation appears quite efficient and has led to a number of advances:

- During the past year the board has established updated Operating Practices, including a regular financial review process with enhanced reporting and new investment options to encourage robust growth in its endowments.
- AIME continued its streamlining and cost reduction with initiatives like the termination of the AIME pension plan in July and a split out of the AIME savings plan to reduce administrative burden and allow strategic flexibility at the Member Society level.
- AIME also supported projects led by other Engineering Founder Societies like the Engineering Management Certification Initiative, the Engineering R&D Symposium held in Washington, D.C., and Global Principles of Professional Conduct. In addition, guidelines for the future role of AIME are under discussion.
- Staff continued its work to improve the AIME website and utilize it as a storehouse for archiving important AIME documents. The offices and offsite storage continue to be purged and the inventorying of the library is progressing. Staff will be looking to digitize AIME endowment files and Transactions in the near future, as well as develop a formal document retention and destruction policy.
- New awards and scholarship enhancements were instituted to continue the great tradition of recognizing the top contributors in the industries and supporting promising young students. This work will move forward in 2006.
- The AIME Board will also be holding strategy sessions to crystallize AIME's future mission and goals.

As you can see by the above activities, the year ahead will be a delicate balancing act. While the Board is excited about establishing new ventures for the AIME, it is also stressing the importance of recognizing the rich history that has brought AIME where it is today.

In Memoriam

It is with a great sense of loss to AIME that I note the deaths of AIME Past President (2002) and Honorary Member (2004), Mr. George H. Sawyer, and AIME Honorary Member (1975), Mr. Nathaniel E. Promisel, in December 2005. We were also saddened to hear of the passing of the first ISS President, Melvin E. Nickel (Honorary Member 1979) on September 7, 2005. Other AIME Honorary Members that were laid to rest include Morris Cohen (1981), Basil Kantzer (1991), Melvin Nickel (1979) and Robert L. Whiting (1988). Additionally, AIME lost longtime staff member, Ernest O. Kirkendall, who documented the Kirkendall Effect on interdiffusion. Their personalities and contributions to the industries will be missed.

Personal Notes

As a young engineer, in my first job after graduation, my first boss was Norman T. Mills who became President of the AIME in 1985. He was a society believer and to work for Mr. Mills meant that you would join a professional society. At that time I joined ISS only to find it was part of AIME. AIME was well known to me because, as a graduate student I had attended the annual AIME/TMS meetings, which, at that time, were held jointly with SME. As part of the presidency of AIME I had the opportunity to visit all of the major annual meetings of our member societies and I found each meeting to be exciting, very professionally run and very welcoming to the President of the AIME.

Our societies history is long - from its humble beginnings in 1871 by 22 mining engineers in Pennsylvania to today's over 100,000 members - and the AIME has endured by serving its members and allowing groups of professionals with a common purpose to gather, share knowledge and become friends. With time we have developed awards to honor our leaders and it was with this purpose that I visited the various meetings - it was my task to hand out the AIME awards. If anyone wishes to know if AIME is alive and vital - then all one has to do is go to these award ceremonies where the best and the brightest are recognized. I found each society embraces the legacy of AIME and honors its past by awarding the AIME awards as the highlight of their awards banquet. I would like to thank SPE, AIST, TMS and SME for their gracious hospitality and for keeping alive the legacy of AIME. My only regret was that I missed the scotch breakfast (now a supper) at the SME meeting - it sounded like a lot of fun.

As was written by Isaac Newton in a letter to Robert Hooke in 1675, "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Being a member of AIME is "to stand on the shoulders of giants". I hope as we move forward that we do not forget the legacy of the past and that AIME was founded by people who wished to meet and talk and share knowledge and friendship. Many think that leaders are born and I do not wish to join that debate, but leaders are also forged by challenge and a willingness to complete important tasks. AIME is home where leaders can develop their skills and learn the meaning of another of Isaac Newton's great quotes: "Tact is the act of making a point without making an enemy." In these days of team building and cooperative ventures, AIME should become more important in the future than in the past. Our individual societies can become greater by cooperation than isolation and AIME can serve this function.

In closing, I have enjoyed working with the board, the executive directors of our societies, and the excellent staff of AIME: Michele Gottwald and Rick Rolater. I would like to thank everyone for their hard work and support and wish the next AIME president, Mr. James Jordan, continued success as he takes over the leadership of this great organization.

