2008 AMS Annual Meeting (New Orleans)

Co-Chair Lessons Learned – Top Ten List (courtesy of Chris Velden and Ken Carey)

1) Engage AMS president early. Find out how involved he/she wants to be in the planning, what his/her thoughts are towards meeting the theme, special events, etc.

2) Rely on your co-chair. There will be times when each of you goes through very busy periods, and the other will need to pick up the majority of duties during these times to keep the momentum going and stay on schedule, etc.

3) Try creativeness in shaping your program. Think 'out of the box' on some things and run them by the AMS folks. They are open to new ideas, and will consider them (but don't expect they will all be approved! ☺).

4) Encourage joint sessions to support the overall meeting theme, and also to build synergy and collaboration among STAC committees, conference and symposia. Get STAC chairs together via either telecom or email at an early stage. If you plan a special theme-related session, ask the individual STACs to try and not schedule parallel sessions then. If they must, ask them not to schedule keynotes or VIP talks during that time. Double check with them that they KNOW when not to do this!

5) Meeting room sizes. AMS does a pretty good job at guestimating this, but if you see/know of a session/topic/speaker that will draw a significant crowd and the room looks to be too small, let them know in advance.

6) Ask AMS for more time for you to review the first draft of the STAC-submitted program. We had only 2 weeks to check/review the program, and it wasn't enough time. Especially if you find major issues, it takes a bulldozer to move things around at that point. So insist on a month, do the review early in that month, then allow time for the STACs to respond and hopefully comply to/with your suggestions. If you feel strongly about changes, be firm with the STACs, as this is your primary job as the over-all co-chair.

7) Suggest you continue our initiative to hold monthly planning meetings that included the AMS President, the co-organizing committee co-chairs and the AMS meeting planners. This will facilitate discussion and quicker resolution of any programmatic, personnel or logistical issues.

8) Really try and stress the overall meeting theme in any way you can think of. We tried morning joint STAC sessions. You may keep this, or try something else.

9) When in doubt, ask Claudia!!! She is the MVP of the annual meeting organization and an invaluable resource. If she doesn't know an answer, she quickly knows where to find it.

10) While the planning over the two years can be time-consuming at times, have fun in shaping "your" meeting. Adding your touches to the program can be rewarding. Enjoy it!