

**Minutes for the Scientific and Technological Activities Commission  
(STAC)  
Board/Committee Chair Annual Meeting  
January 5, 2021  
3:00-4:30pm Eastern Time**

Commissioner: Genee Fisher, [genee.fisher@noaa.gov](mailto:genee.fisher@noaa.gov)  
Past Commissioner: Bruce Telfeyan, [rbt48@cox.net](mailto:rbt48@cox.net)  
Incoming Commissioner: Ankur Desai, [desai@aos.wisc.edu](mailto:desai@aos.wisc.edu)  
New Incoming Commissioner: Kristie Franz, [kfranz@iastate.edu](mailto:kfranz@iastate.edu)

**STAC Board/Committee Chair Meeting Agenda**

**Welcoming Remarks**

Genee welcomed everyone to the Annual STAC Chairs meeting. This is typically an in-person meeting where we get to meet each other face to face for 4 hours. This meeting will be divided up into 2 sessions. This first session will be some general information you need as you prepare for any B/C meetings in the next few weeks. Then later, we will hold a part 2 more focused on meetings.

For STAC, we have 3 Commissioners at all times: incoming, current, and past commissioner, serving 2 years in each position. Genee is ending her term as current commissioner and will become past commissioner, Ankur Desai will become current commissioner. Kristie Franz, former chair of Hydrology Committee, is incoming commissioner.

Mary Glackin, AMS President, joined the meeting later to thank STAC Chairs and express her gratitude for all their work throughout the year and at the Annual Meeting.

Bruce Telfeyan, Past STAC Commissioner also joined later and Genee presented him with a picture of a plaque, thanking him for his service with STAC over the last six years.

**Departing and New Board and Committee Chairs**

[slides]

Genee thanked the Chairs for all the time and effort they put into their committee and boards. As Chair you have a lot of responsibilities, sometimes facing challenges, but overall moving your discipline area forward.

She then thanked the 15 departing chairs and acknowledged the new chairs who will start their terms after the annual meeting. Outgoing chairs will receive a token of appreciation from AMS.

**Overview of STAC**

[slides]

Genee provided an overview of STAC and the best practices document, noting that the guidelines exist as a living document. This best practices document is a great foundation for those who are new to committees and boards.

Genevieve encouraged everyone to contact their primary Commissioner point of contact (shown on slides). Feel free to invite your commissioner POC to your next b/c meeting--Commissioners would typically meet with Boards and Committees in January and go over any topics and answer any questions

The demographics for STAC memberships were presented. Out of the 447 volunteers, 52.3% are from academia, 27.1% are from government, 4.9% are from the private sector, and 15.7% were not specified. 63.1% are male and 36.9% are female. The top 3 states where our members come from: Colorado 18%, Maryland 11%, and California 9%. The top 3 countries: US 93%, Canada 1.4%, and Australia 1.2%.

Out of the 61 Chairs & Vice-Chairs, 54.1% are from academia, 37.7% are from government, and 8.2% are from private sector. 65.6% are male and 34.4% are female. The top states where our chairs and vice-chairs are from: Colorado 17%, Maryland 12%, and CA 10%. Top 3 countries US 95% and 3 way tie with Australia, Germany, and Israel with 1.6%

There was discussion about the new [conference report review](#) that was rolled out in 2020. This is supposed to reduce the burden of writing a formal report. This survey includes requests for basic info, and details like conference highlights, what worked well and what needs to be improved.

## **Perspectives on best practices and key challenges**

[slides]

### Committee on Mountain Meteorology, Ethan Gutmann and Justin Minder

Ethan and Justin discussed their Committee's experience with organizing and implementing a virtual AMS meeting. They mentioned some positives such as increased attendance due to lower fees, waived fees for self-identified underrepresented groups, and more global geographic diversity. They noted people were not ready for pre-recorded talks last summer. They recommended 1 minute live summaries before Q&A. They did some virtual networking and electronic posters and acknowledged that there was room for improvement. Overall though, people seemed to be pleased with the meeting.

### Board on Data Stewardship, Doug Schuster

Doug discussed his Board's experience with the AMS Policy Statement process. He mentioned some best practices such as making sure you understand why the proposed statement is needed, recruit collaborators to develop a proposal, and then a diverse drafting committee that will be actively engaged. Some challenges include the timeline can be long (8 months), and need to better publicize the availability of the 30 day member comment period. They received no public feedback.

A recommendation that was made during this session was to ask AMS Council if the public comment period could be expanded beyond 30 days. The STAC Commissioner will raise this to the Council.

## **Awards**

[slides]

Genevieve reminded everyone about the AMS awards deadline of May 1 and that they consider submitting nominations (unless of course they are overseeing the award selection committee). Nominations for AMS Fellows are also due May 1.

For 2021, there were 11 STAC level awards. This is an annual award with nominations due to the STAC Commissioner by October 1. There are three types of awards: outstanding early career, distinguished S/T accomplishment, and outstanding service.

## **Glossary of Meteorology**

[slides]

Ward Seguin, Editor in Chief of the AMS Glossary of Meteorology, thanked STAC Chairs for their assistance in reviewing words for the glossary. 25 committees/boards assisted in 2020. He asked Chairs to select someone on their committees to serve as the glossary POC.

## **STAC Discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Ankur Desai led a breakout discussion session on DEI. Chairs were placed into breakout groups for 10 min to discuss what we can do to improve and advance DEI.

Possible topics of discussion included but were not limited to:

- How is your B/C addressing DEI challenges in our community?
- Have you found effective ways to recruit a diverse membership to your B/C and to your specialty meetings?
- What other anti-racist and anti-sexist actions have you found effective here or in other professional settings.
- What ways might STAC or AMS as a whole better address diversity across all B/C

There was a lively discussion and Chairs had a lot to contribute. Summary of the discussion is attached as Appendix A. It was suggested that we continue this discussion at a follow on meeting and the STAC Commissioners plan to do so.

## **Closing Remarks**

Thank you to all Committee and Board Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Thank you to Erica Callahan, Claudia Gorski and all AMS Staff.

We look forward to working with you in 2021!

## **Adjourn**

## **Appendix A: AMS STAC Chairs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Discussion Summary**

Ankur Desai

### **SUMMARY**

On Tuesday January 5, the STAC commission held its annual meeting for all STAC board and committee (B/C) chairs, including incoming chairs. Towards the end of the meeting, we split the nearly 50 attendees into 10 breakout rooms to discuss for 10 minutes how their groups have been addressing issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion, and what recommendations they have for AMS. This was meant primarily to generate some initial thoughts, which we hope to move forward into a more focused meeting later in January or February. Summaries based on crowd-sourcing an online document are provided below, based on the four discussion questions we provided as prompts.

Generally, there was deep engagement in the topics in a very short time! Many B/C are addressing awareness and bias concerns in recruitment and award selection, hosting creative conference sessions, and finding new ways to support students. However, they also sought more help in best practices for recruitment and retention, finding optimal locations to reach out to underrepresented populations, and addressing challenges in having limited funding or time to implement some actions.

### **How is your B/C addressing diversity, inclusion, and equity challenges in our community?**

Many B/C mentioned the importance of considering diversity in recruitment of new members to their B/C, including discussions among the members, explicit language in their selection criteria, and collecting data on past membership demographics. Groups mentioned diversity dimensions of gender, race, but also career stage, age, employer diversity, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, and national origin. Most B/C mentioned challenges in finding diverse candidates, especially on race and ethnicity, especially in smaller communities. However, one area where diversity can be addressed more quickly is often with recruiting student members. Groups also had similar expectations in nomination and selection of awardees for STAC awards and for AMS awards in which B/C are involved, and having discussions on the role unconscious bias plays in selection, letters of recommendations, etc. Environment and Health requires DEI statements in nomination letters. Some B/C are considering updating their mission statements to consider issues of equity and social dimensions in the research topics in their areas, and also including these in strategic plans, as is the case for SATMOC.

Several creative approaches have been tried at conferences. Hydrology included a “Her Career / Her Stories” Town Hall aimed at women in Hydrology. Mountain Meteorology mentioned approaches to recruit diverse speakers and hosting a special session on education and diversity. AI is hosting an ethics and inclusion in AI and geosciences sessions this year. Committees also seek to ensure diversity in session chairs and make sure multiple perspectives, community voices, and vulnerable populations are included in meetings and discussions, including those outside the U.S.

### **Have you found effective ways to recruit a diverse membership to your B/C and to your specialty meetings?**

While many B/C are aware of the importance of diversity and AMS efforts in this area, many admit that recruiting and the equally important issue of retention are difficult. Several groups mentioned the importance of maintaining a welcoming environment and making sure that members do not feel excluded. The chair has an important role to play here, in assigning tasks

and facilitating meetings. Consideration of work-life balance, family obligations, religious observances for scheduling of meetings and tasks were also noted as important aspects of maintaining a welcoming environment. WAF noted success in reaching out to existing DEI-focused programs (e.g., UCAR SOARS) as helpful for soliciting new members. Mountain Met had success in increasing participation of underrepresented groups through judicious use of fee waivers, which were easier to do in the lower cost virtual format.

### **What other anti-racist and anti-sexist actions have you found effective here or in other professional settings?**

Most B/C members have been involved in a range of training and organizations that are implementing stronger anti-racism statements and awareness programs. A specific program mentioned was the UCAR Uneion Training (<https://eod.ucar.edu/course/uneion-ucarncar-equity-and-inclusion-training-series-1097>). B/C also noted the role that students can play here, in providing organizational energy, ideas, and soliciting under-represented students who may be interested in participating but unaware of the opportunity. Contacting minority-serving institutions and providing a set of clear benefits or value for serving on a committee were also noted as useful actions.

### **What ways might STAC or AMS as a whole better address diversity across all B/C and the community?**

B/C had a variety of suggestions or recommendations, many of which dovetail with actions AMS is already taking, but may want to accelerate. B/C mentioned formalizing diversity in metrics for awards and considering more broadly what is the definition of a successful, impactful scientist, beyond standard metrics. One group recommended STAC develop a strategic plan that connects to the new Culture and Inclusion Cabinet strategic plan. One group suggested developing a mentor/mentee relationship program, including with pre-college, undergraduate, and graduate student populations, recruiting mentors beyond the usual routes and disciplines. Coordination with AGU is one direction that might help here, too. As previously mentioned, minority serving institution outreach was mentioned. Mountain Meteorology brought up the specific challenges of inclusion in field work, due to cost, access, and harassment concerns, and a specific formal best practices for inclusive field work may be worthwhile. Demographic data collection on an opt-in basis is seen as a need across AMS participants. One group mentioned consideration of including more members from the socio-behavioral-economic sciences on boards and award committees, to bring more awareness to these issues. An AMS-wide resource of relevant programs for advertising for members, etc. would be found valuable by B/C. Finally, lack of direct, dedicated funding for implementing some opportunities, supporting participants, and so on is a noted barrier in many DEI activities and something that AMS may consider supporting.

## **ORIGINAL NOTES**

How is your B/C addressing diversity, inclusion, and equity challenges in our community?

- Hydrology Conference is running a “Her Career / Her Stories” Town Hall specifically aimed at women in Hydrology/Meteorology - at addressing the leaky pipeline for particularly young women in the science/practice.
- Recruiting diverse speakers for Mountain met webinar series
- Just being aware of the need to be inclusive
- Be intentionally about seeking out diverse board membership. Be intentional about including a diverse mix of speakers in town halls and sessions

- Create sessions on this topic as part of your conference and invite experts in this field to participate
- Consider gender diversity, stage of career diversity, employer diversity when inviting participants to meetings, etc... Race can be a bit more challenging.
  - Do we need to collect more information from possible AMS activity participants?
  - Opt-in to provide race, gender, other information in participant profiles.
- One topic that has come up is that field work / programs can be more challenging for economic reasons, particularly in Mountain Met where outdoor experience tends to be biased towards a less racially diverse group
  - perhaps AMS could have a best-practices document for inclusivity in field programs (if it doesn't exist already)
- MTN had special session/keynote/panel on education and diversity:
  - <https://ams.confex.com/ams/19Mountain/meetingapp.cgi/Day/2020-07-17>
- Try when considering awards and new committee members to keep in mind candidates that represent a broad spectrum of people; try to minimize biases. (potentially integrate unconscious / implicit bias training for committees)
- Could do a better job: our Board talks about issues of vulnerability in research and in the mission statement/ vision we include something about equity. Related to the terms of references.
- Try to include DEIB as session topics in the symposium our board runs
- Acknowledge more gender equity but in terms of race, ethnicity, ability, etc, there's still work to be done.
- Measurement Committee is looking to increase the diversity in its membership...
- Air-sea: hard when a smaller group - have to work harder as a committee to nominate with diversity in mind
- SATMOC recruited broader sector diversity to members, but also codifying it in their strategic plan, reaching out to broader communities and colleges to increase outreach across the committee and conference participation
- AI committee has actively worked on nominating a more diverse committee membership, but wants to formalize the process more. Hosting ethics and inclusion in AI and geosciences session this year
- Social behavioral sciences - multiple perspectives to be brought forth, and community voices from all across the US (goal to expand internationally), thinking about vulnerable populations and language/cultural differences and how this impacts weather. [It would be great to have more SBES people on award committees, different boards, and recruit students to AMS from these disciplines.]
- Severe storms conference made progress getting committee membership to be gender diverse. Conference/program chair planning - make sure chairs are more representative. Student membership/internships available to encourage age diversity

Have you found effective ways to recruit a diverse membership to your B/C and to your specialty meetings?

- Mesoscale - diversity is a key metric for recruitment. Broadly including career stage, research, sector
- Retention (AI) - being welcoming, otherwise members may feel excluded and leave, consider religious obligations, family needs, consider broad view of culture
- For a committee that was male dominated (100% male only 2 years ago), we're nominating female members to diversify the committee as a start

- Reach out to DEI-focused programs (i.e. SOARS) to solicit new members. Encourage early career members as well and student members from groups like SOARS.
  - The WAF committee had success with engaging the SOARS cohort this year - two of our three new student members were reached through this cohort.
  - Can we get a list of relevant programs to advertise to?
- Mountain Met fee waivers to their virtual conference for underrepresented identities, and it helped diversify the conference attendance.

What other anti-racist and anti-sexist actions have you found effective here or in other professional settings?

- UCAR Uneion Training <https://eod.ucar.edu/course/uneion-ucarncar-equity-and-inclusion-training-series-1097>
- Building upon successful models from other organizations
- Including more students from underrepresented groups to come is important; need new ways of reaching out; awareness during selection of committee members is one way to include more international presence.
- Perhaps contact departments directly from underrepresented communities and programs. Develop clear benefits for being on a committee to appeal to groups

What ways might STAC or AMS as a whole better address diversity across all B/C and the community?

- Change metrics for awards
  - What's the definition of a successful, impactful scientist? Current metrics may be a bit outdated and biased.
  - Include classic metrics, plush new impact metrics
    - Not only based on "number of publications and citations"
- Intentionally bring in speakers on this topic to a variety of AMS session audiences
- Perhaps a strategic plan for STAC that connects to the new Culture and Inclusion Cabinet's strategic plan, which they'll be working on this next year
- Mentor/Mentee relationships to embrace and support diversity
  - From early grades on up. Encourage children from diverse backgrounds to go into science.
  - Additionally undergrads and higher level students
  - Need mentors that students can relate to. Rely on existing allies.
  - Consider a broader pool of mentors -outside of our discipline.
    - Scientists
    - Engineers
    - Other disciplines
    - Need mentors that can relate to students.
- AMS/AGU can connect larger pool of mentors
  - Open up opportunities and resources
- Engage minority serving institutions
  - Remove economic barriers.