



## FOR DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE



**WILLEM R. LEENSTRA**

**University of Vermont, Burlington, VT**

**LEENSTRA, WILLEM R. *Green Mountain Section.*** University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

**Academic Record:** California State University, Hayward, B.S., 1969; University of Washington, Ph.D., 1979.

**Honors:** ACS Fellow, 2015; E. Ann Nalley ACS Northeast Region Award for Volunteer Services, 2009; ACS Green Mountain Section, Emerald Award, 2006; Finalist, Kroepsch-Maurice Teaching Award, University of Vermont, 2012-2015; Graduate Teaching Award, University of Washington, 1974.

**Professional Positions** (for past ten years): University of Vermont, Associate Professor, 1986 to date; Special Assistant to the Provost, 2002-03; Department Chair, 1999-2002, 1991-92; Co-Founder, Endyne Environmental Testing Laboratory, Inc., Vermont and New York, 1987.

**Service in ACS National Offices:** Committee on Budget & Finance, 2014-16, 2013, Program Review Action Group (PRAG), 2008-09; Council Policy Committee (Voting), 2010-12, (Nonvoting), 2007-09, Task Force on Duties and Responsibilities, 2012; Committee on Meetings and Expositions, 2004-09, Chair, 2007-09, ReACT Task Force, 2005-07; Committee on Local Section Activities 1998-2003; Committee Associate, 1997.

**Service in ACS Offices:** Member ACS since 1975. *Green Mountain Section:* Councilor, 1996-2016, 1985-89; Chair, 1993-95, 1984-85; Chair-Elect, 1992-93, 1983-84; Alternate

Councilor, 1990-95; Secretary, 1982-84. *Northeast Region ACS*: Board Vice-Chair, 2014; Board Secretary, 2005-07. *Northeast Regional Meeting*: General Chair, 35<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Meeting, 2008; General Chair; 24<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Meeting, 1994.

**Member:** *ACS Divisions*: Chemical Education; Inorganic Chemistry; and Physical Chemistry.

**Related Activities:** Committee on Budget & Finance, Subcommittee on Program Funding Requests, 2013-14; CPC, Subcommittee on Constitution and Bylaws, 2010-12; CPC Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning, 2011-12; Invited speaker at the Materials Science symposium, 43<sup>rd</sup> IUPAC World Chemistry Congress, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 2011; Invited speaker at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Porphyrins and Phthalocyanines, Rome, Italy, 2006; Invited Symposium organizer, "Layered and Optical Materials" at NERM 2007; Symposium Organizer, "Layered Materials" at NERM 2008; Committee on Meetings & Expositions, Regional Meetings Subcommittee, Chair, 2006; Consultant, Pearson Publishing; Organizer, General Chemistry Assistance for ALANA & Diversity Students, UVM, 2014 to date.

## **STATEMENT**

*The statements of the candidates represent their opinions and do not necessarily represent the views of the ACS.*

**Fellow Councilors:** I am honored to have been invited to stand for election as a candidate for Director-at-Large (DAL). I accepted the candidacy because I feel that my background and experience, both within the ACS as well as outside of it, comprise just the right preparation to take on this call to serve. Since this would be my first term on the Board, I will not be presumptuous and recommend changes in the way the Board conducts itself. Instead, I ask you to please consider my condensed record of experience, in addition to some broad ideas I would like to pursue if elected Director, as outlined below.

**Professional Background.** My academic history covers a diversity of institutional types, and having appreciated what each has to offer, I feel that I can weigh in on matters of chemical education whenever such should present itself. Currently I am a chemistry professor at a small research university with a vibrant graduate program.

**Academic Leadership.** On two separate occasions, my departmental colleagues and the Dean, respectively, asked me to lead the department as Chair when unanticipated vacancies occurred. More recently, the university Provost appointed me as Special Assistant serving on our institution's first contract-negotiating team after the faculty voted to unionize.

**Entrepreneurial Experience.** Since ACS membership consists of only about 50% academic chemists, it is valuable to have some "real-world" experience. I have that: I was the co-founder of an environmental testing laboratory. The experience left me with an appreciation for the challenges that a small chemical business faces.

**Diversity Initiative.** Our university has invested substantial resources in attracting ALANA [African, Latino(a), Asian, and Native American] students to diversify its student body. Many of these students are underprepared coming out of high school, and have difficulties in the sciences, in particular. As one strategy to retain these students, I put into place a science-targeted, organized tutorial effort in which ALANA students are invited to spend a once-a-week, two-hour session in the ALANA Student Center's home.

**ACS Leadership Experience.** I have been involved with ACS governance since the mid-eighties serving as my local section's Secretary, and as its Chair for two terms. More pertinent to this candidate's statement, I have been my local section's Councilor for 25 years. After seven years on the Local Section Activities Committee (LSAC), I joined the Committee on Meetings & Expositions (M&E). When I was M&E Chair for three years, you may remember me standing in front of you during Council giving updates on improving the National (and Regional) Meetings, as well as reporting on hard decisions I had to make to continue the financial viability of the National Meeting. After a term on the Council Policy Committee (CPC) I currently serve on the Committee on Budget and Finance (B&F). Being a joint Board-Council committee, B&F has a large overlap of interests, and joint meetings, with the Board. It has been an extremely valuable training ground in preparation to a potential position as Director.

**The Future.** The ACS is a magnificent example of a professional organization "done right". In reaction to constantly changing economic and social landscapes we are regularly re-constituting membership benefits, and we are perpetually reviewing financial models by which to ensure fiscal health. This drive to always advance our Society is only possible due to the exquisite partnership between an excellent staff and a dedicated group of Councilors plus other volunteers. In that spirit of continual improvement, a couple of broad-stroke ideas come to mind that I would like to work on if elected Director-at-Large.

(1) My many years of being in active governance leadership positions leaves me no doubt about the fact that the rank-and-file ACS members do not know, let alone appreciate, what the ACS Board does, nor how important their decisions are as they impact the lives of chemists. I would like to explore the idea of "Councilors as a Bridge" in which we devise a mechanism for Councilors to take a pro-active role as representatives that will make our Society's governance more transparent.

(2) In my role as Vice-Chair of the Northeast Region Board, I am very close to a recent idea that sprang from our Executive Committee: to develop an AtlantiChem meeting similar to PacifiChem that convenes in Hawaii every 5 years. Thus, I will push the Board to support this idea as fully as was done for PacifiChem.

In conclusion, I believe that my extensive professional, leadership, and governance experience positions me well for effective contributions to the ACS Board of Directors. And I respectfully ask you for one of your votes for that position.