



## FOR DIRECTOR, DISTRICT I



**LAURA E. PENCE**

**University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT**

**PENCE, LAURA E. *Connecticut Valley Section.*** University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut.

**Academic Record:** Lebanon Valley College, B.S., 1987; Michigan State University, Ph.D., 1992; NIH Postdoc Fellow, MIT, 1992-95.

**Honors:** ACS Fellow, 2011; ACS/AAAS Congressional Science Policy Fellow, 2012-13; Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching, University of Hartford, 2006; Visiting Scientist Award, Western Connecticut Section, ACS, 2006; Sigma Alpha Pi Excellence in Teaching Award, 2009.

**Professional Positions** (for past 10 years): University of Hartford, Professor of Chemistry, 2009 to date, Associate Professor, 2001-09, Chair, Department of Chemistry, 2002-09; ACS/AAAS Congressional Science Policy Fellow in the office of U.S. Senator Michael Bennet (Colorado) 2012-13.

**Service in ACS National Offices:** Committee on Environmental Improvement, 2014-16, 2009-12, (Nonvoting Councilor) Chair, 2014, 2012, Committee Associate, 2007-09; Advisor, ACS Green Chemistry Institute Governing Board 2014.

**Service in ACS Offices:** Member ACS since 1987. *Connecticut Valley Section:* Councilor, 2015-17, 2006-11. *Chemical Education Division:* Alternate Councilor, 2012-14, 2003-05, Councilor, 2006-11. *Division of Chemical Education:* Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, 2007; Meeting Program Co-Chair, for ACS National Meetings Fall 1999 and

Spring 2003; Long Range Planning Committee, 2009-14; Program Committee Member, 1996-2006; Symposium Organizer, *ACS National Meetings*: Boston, Fall 1998; New Orleans, Spring 2008; Philadelphia, Fall 2008, Washington DC, Fall 2009; Boston, Fall 2010. *Michigan State University Section*: Treasurer, 1990-92.

**Member:** Sigma Xi, Association of Women in Science. *ACS Divisions*: Chemical Education; Environmental Chemistry; and Inorganic Chemistry.

**Related Activities:** RateMyProfessors.com, Highest Rated University Professors (#20) Nationally, 2013-14; ACS Experts Training, Fall 2013; Member, ACS Sustainability Stakeholders Steering Group, 2011; Wrote over 100 entries in “ACS Celebrates IYC 2011”; Thematic Programming Chair, “Chemistry for a Sustainable World” Spring 2010 ACS National Meeting; ACS Representative “Engaging Disciplinary Societies” grant from Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), 2011-12; Board Member, Women’s Education and Leadership Fund, University of Hartford, 2010-12; Sustainability Coordinator, University of Hartford, 2010-12.

## **STATEMENT**

*The following statement was provided by the candidate for the Council Agenda Book for the ACS National Meeting in Denver, CO. Each candidate will provide a statement for publication in C&EN in September 2015, which will also be accessible from here. The statements of the candidates represent their opinions and do not necessarily represent the views of the ACS.*

I am honored to be considered as a nominee for the ACS Board of Directors. Our transition to Tom Connelly, Jr. as the new CEO of ACS presents a unique opportunity to evaluate our current practices and directions, to continue our existing areas of excellence, and to envision and implement new initiatives that will allow ACS to continue to address the ever-evolving needs of our members. From my perspective, the central issue remains jobs for chemists.

**Employment:** Our members are experiencing the challenging job market first hand, whether they are freshly degreed graduates, experienced veterans looking for new opportunities, or entrepreneurs expanding the frontiers of the chemical enterprise. There seems little likelihood of change considering the prediction from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that job growth for chemists and materials scientists will be slower than the average of all occupations from 2012 through 2022. ACS needs to continue with its career-readiness efforts, such as the ACS Career Fair and Career Workshops, but also to prepare members for growth through projects such as the ACS Leadership Development courses. We likewise must continue to be alert to new strategies to influence the job market and our members’ readiness to compete successfully in the marketplace.

**Education:** The first step in preparing a future chemist for a career is focusing on his or her education. With nearly two decades as an educator under my belt, I have personally seen the need for improved communication between all levels of education ranging from K-12 through graduate school and the sectors where our students may look for employment. A solid foundation in chemistry is optimized through vital job skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communications. Through my extensive experience in programming for the Division of

Chemical Education at national ACS meetings, I am well-acquainted with the innovative strategies that have been and are being developed to improve student performance not only on chemical concepts, but also in critical thinking, which is an essential talent for today's job-seekers. The effective preparation of future chemists should not be the sole dominion of chemical educators, however. It should be supported fully by the entire society.

**Advocacy:** Many jobs and careers in chemistry are fueled in large part through the federal government, either through direct employment or through grant-sponsored research. Maintaining federal science budgets plays a vital role both for employment for chemists and for the health of our national economy. During my year as an ACS Congressional Science Policy Fellow, I learned to optimize communication to inform Members of Congress about how research powers the economy both of the present and of the future, and I will apply those skills to advocate on behalf of ACS as a member of the Board.

**Outreach:** As Chair of the ACS Committee on Environmental Improvement, I recognize that successful action on key issues such as sustainability needs to be focused on the local and regional levels. I welcome the chance to interact with policymakers at the state and local levels as well as local sections to inform and empower change on these topics.

**Inclusiveness:** I believe that visions are implemented most successfully through inclusion of diverse stakeholders. As thematic program chair for the 2010 San Francisco national meeting, I prioritized engaging every aspect of the society around the theme of sustainability. Through my efforts to create a broad and inclusive theme, 23 divisions and six committees contributed along with programming by graduate students and for undergraduates, high school students, and the local community. As a Board member, I will likewise work to ensure open communications with the variety and diversity of my fellow ACS members.

**My Role on the Board:** The distinctive challenge of the Board is to balance the needs of our individual members with the overarching role of the chemical profession. Having represented both a local section and a division on Council as well as having been extremely active in governance, I am well qualified to strike this balance and to facilitate positive change for our organization. I would be honored to represent District I on the Board, and I respectfully request your vote.