

**REGULAR SESSION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY
Indianapolis, IN
September 8, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the American Chemical Society met in Indianapolis, Indiana, on September 8, 2013, beginning at 12:00 p.m. William F. Carroll, Jr., Chair, presided. Other Directors present for all or part of the meeting were: John E. Adams, Tom J. Barton, George M. Bodner, Bonnie A. Charpentier, Pat N. Confalone, Thomas R. Gilbert, Madeleine Jacobs, Larry K. Krannich, Valerie J. Kuck, Ingrid Montes, Barbara A. Sawrey, Kathleen M. Schulz, Bassam Z. Shkhashiri, Kent J. Voorhees, and Marinda Li Wu. Present by invitation was guest speaker Alan Alda. More than six hundred observers were present at various times during the meeting.

Dr. Carroll called the meeting to order and announced there were two main items on the agenda: the chair's report of the executive session actions, followed by a presentation, "Helping the Public Get Beyond a Blind Date with Science," from guest speaker Alan Alda. He stated that in deference to the special presentation by Mr. Alda the members of the presidential succession had graciously agreed not to present oral reports at the meeting.

Report from Executive Session

Dr. Carroll presented a brief summary of the key Board actions and discussion points from its executive session, September 6-7. He reported that:

- On the recommendation of the Committee on Grants and Awards, the Board VOTED to approve Society nominations for the National Science Board's Public Service Award and the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Alan T. Waterman Award. This award recognizes an outstanding young researcher in any field of science or engineering supported by the NSF.
- On the recommendation of the Committee on Budget and Finance (B&F), the Board VOTED to approve an advance member registration fee of \$380 for ACS national meetings held in 2014.
- The Board also considered program funding requests, and VOTED to reauthorize funding in next year's proposed budget for the ACS International Center, and the ACS Entrepreneurial Initiative, and to authorize funding for a new initiative, the National Association of Chemistry Teachers. This association will be an ACS program to provide teachers a professional home. Through NACT they will have access to specialized resources and the broader ACS community.
- The Board VOTED to hold the December 2015 Board of Directors meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, in conjunction with the 2015 International Chemical Congress of Pacific Basin Societies (Pacifichem). The ACS is the host society for the 2015 Pacifichem meeting.
- The Board received reports from the Presidential Succession on their current and planned activities for the remainder of 2013 and 2014.

Presentation

Dr. Carroll then called upon Immediate Past President Bassam Z. Shkhashiri to introduce the guest speaker and the topic "Helping the Public Get Beyond a Blind Date with Science."

Dr. Shkhashiri introduced Alan Alda as follows: He is not only an award-winning actor, director and writer, but has had a lifelong interest in science and explaining its value to improving the human condition and the important need for society to make critical investments that will ensure future innovations and discoveries. Mr. Alda is a visiting professor at the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at Stony

Brook University and has dedicated a tremendous portion of his talent and energy to training a more articulate public so that they can be effective science advocates with policy makers and the media.

In his presentation, Mr. Alda described some of his encounters from among the nearly 700 scientists he interviewed around the world as host of *Scientific American Frontier* on PBS for more than a decade. Looking to close the gap between the scientific community and the public, Mr. Alda inspired Stony Brook University to establish the Center for Communicating Science in 2009 (renamed for him in 2013). The Center is dedicated to helping scientists communicate about their research more effectively with the public. Drawing upon interviews, video vignettes, and volunteers from the audience, he illustrated the importance of using clear, concise, and conversational language when talking about scientific research, so that science can be better understood by public officials, employers, students, the media, and potential collaborators in other disciplines.

At the conclusion of Mr. Alda's presentation, he answered several questions posed by members of the audience, and responded on the need to communicate in a manner that reflects your true self – i.e. using humor only if you are naturally humorous, effectively communicating data on climate change to policymakers, actively addressing points of resistance rather than ignoring them, and on the need to communicate *why* we are doing science rather than just describing *what* science we are doing.

When the question and answer period concluded, Dr. Carroll thanked him for sharing his passionate quest to help scientists communicate more effectively with the public. He then announced that the ACS Board of Directors had recently voted to present Alda with the ACS Award for Public Service, and called upon ACS President Marinda Li Wu to present the award.

Dr. Wu reminded the audience that the ACS Award for Public Service recognizes outstanding accomplishments in public service benefiting the chemical sciences. She specifically cited Mr. Alda's involvement with the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science and most recently, the Flame Challenge, a contest that invites scientists to answer a fundamental scientific question – such as “what is a flame?” or “what is time?” – in a way that an 11-year-old can understand. The ACS co-sponsored the 2013 Flame Challenge, which was judged by nearly 20,000 fifth-graders worldwide. The winners included Steven Maguire, an ACS member and doctoral student at the University of Ottawa in Canada. She invited Mr. Maguire to stand and be recognized.

She concluded by thanking Mr. Alda for helping to create future citizen-scientists who, in turn, can influence policymakers to support science for the good of our country and its people.

Following the presentation, Dr. Carroll thanked the meeting participants for attending and for the success of another standing-room-only meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

Flint H. Lewis
Secretary