

## Onward!

Bassam Z. Shakhshiri



Peter Cutts Photography

As I complete my ACS presidency term, I wish to express gratitude for the support and collaboration of members, councilors, staff, and many others outside ACS in addressing several grand global challenges facing science and society. This joint process has helped enhance ACS's leadership role as a scientific, educational, professional, and learned society in keeping with our mission to "advance the chemical enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people."

During the three years my responsibilities as an elected national officer included the great honor of representing ACS and speaking for ACS in a variety of settings. The ceremonial activities were pleasant and I was happy with all interactions. My greatest satisfaction comes from the deep and outstanding programmatic interactions everywhere on scientific, educational, professional, and learned matters.

I single out Executive Director and CEO Madeleine Jacobs for her skills in navigating difficult situations including Leadscope, personnel, and programmatic challenges. She has worked well with the Board of Directors, the Governing Board of Publications, Chemical Abstracts Service, Membership, and all other parts of ACS. Much is expected of her and much is accomplished. I am confident that she will continue with the thrust of advancing chemistry and communicating chemistry.

Briefly I call your attention to:

- [The report of the ACS Presidential Commission on Graduate Education in the Chemical Sciences](#). The chair Dr. Larry Faulkner and the entire blue ribbon commission have earned our thanks for producing a remarkable report that will guide the direction of graduate research and education in the chemical sciences.

*"Let us work toward strengthening the leadership roles of ACS in advancing the chemical enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people."*

Implementation work will continue to be sharply focused on the five main audiences for the Report: faculty and academic leaders, public and private funders, industry leaders, graduate students and postdocs, and the ACS including the PhD Completion and Placement Profile project.

- The ACS Climate Science Initiative is now the responsibility of the Committee on Environmental Improvement and the Committee on Science. The ACS Climate Science Toolkit is available on the web at [www.acs.org/climatescience](http://www.acs.org/climatescience). Dr. Jerry Bell and the entire ACS Presidential Working Group on Climate Science deserve our thanks for developing the high caliber scientific content of the Toolkit. Our next challenge is to expand the use of the Toolkit by ACS members.
- The [ACS Global Water Initiative](#) is in the development stage under the leadership of Dr. David Sedlak. ACS should expand its efforts to educate the public and decision makers on topics related to water, especially those that are pertinent to chemistry. The ACS mission empowers ACS leaders and members to meet the Grand Challenge of Water. We have a responsibility to join with other organizations and agencies to prepare for a better water future. For without water, there is no future.
- It is unfortunate that during my term in office we could not explore an ACS High School Chemistry Teacher Fellowship Program, the goal of which would be to substantially increase the number of highly qualified high school chemistry teachers graduating from major research universities. It is my hope that future ACS leaders will decide to pursue such an exploration of carefully planned pre-service teacher preparation programs.
- The newly proposed national association of chemistry teachers has great promise. This effort aims to strengthen the effectiveness of in-service teachers in and out of the classroom and is a testimony to the commitment that ACS has to quality education.

Once again, I express my hope that the ACS Council will use its biannual meetings to take up the responsibility of exerting the greatest influence possible on policy matters

affecting ACS and its appropriate role in the chemical enterprise. Council meetings spent mostly listening to oral reports from officers and committees and voting on the automatic dues escalator is not what should mostly concern scientists, educators, professionals, and learned individuals who represent members of the world's largest scientific society. When the Council Policy Committee (CPC) sets the Council agenda it should bring mostly policy matters to our meetings instead of mostly procedural action.

As leaders of ACS a great deal is expected of us. Let us live up to those expectations and let us do our part as leaders and stewards of that with which we have been entrusted. Science and society have what is essentially a social contract that enables great intellectual achievements but comes with mutual expectations of benefiting the human condition and protecting our planet. Let us work toward strengthening the leadership roles of ACS in advancing the chemical enterprise and its practitioners for the benefit of Earth and its people.

ACS is our home. Let us continue to work together in doing our best for ACS, for science, and for society.

*Bassam Z. Shakhshiri*

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