



**FROM THE EDITOR ...**

*The DPR reception at the ACS national meeting in Anaheim was a wonderful affair, including not only presentations of the Henry Hill Award (see page 4), but also a moving tribute in memory of Alan Nixon, former ACS president and first recipient of the Henry Hill Award. Remarks were made by Attila Pavlath, Ann Nalley, Jim Schoffner, and me. My remarks follow:*

Alan Nixon (or Nick, as his friends new him), was the first recipient of the DPR's Henry Hill Award, twenty years ago. That occasion simultaneously honored two giants of the professionalism movement in the American Chemical Society.

As Dr. Nixon noted in his award acceptance speech, he knew Henry Hill very well. What he said then of Henry Hill's philosophy applies just as much to Alan Nixon:

"He passionately believed that chemists were people worth working for, that chemists were contributing more to this nation and to this world than they were getting credit for."

Our younger colleagues may not appreciate how wide the division of opinion was on the nature of the ACS. There were years of debate, sometimes quite acrimonious, on whether the ACS should remain a primarily scientific and educational society, or if it should acknowledge that chemical professionals also had other needs and interests related to their professional lives – things like salaries, working conditions, relationships with employers, discrimination on the job, and so on.

Alan Nixon understood these issues, and fervently believed that the ACS could, and should, play a role in this arena. He was the single most influential figure in the modern professionalism movement. The slogan, "the first responsibility of the ACS is to its members," and Nixon's tireless efforts to promote and carry that message to all parts of the country, in spite of sometimes nasty, personal, and wholly undeserved attacks, inspired a whole generation of ACS activists, myself included.

Nick's two back-to-back petition candidacies for president-elect in the 1970s, the second one successful, coincided with an economic low point, and also with my entry into ACS activity, and with the effort to found the Division of Professional Relations. For the next several years, Alan Nixon was the spiritual leader of the professionalism movement, assisted by me and others in a group of Young Turks like Attila Pavlath, Gordon Nelson, Norm Pinkowski, the late John Connolly, and several more who, like me, are not so young anymore.

Dr. Nixon's constant activity, gentle demeanor, razor-sharp mind, even his predilection for puns, kept everyone focused on important issues as the debates raged on and on. Eventually, we prevailed. Not only have some of us gone on to follow Nick onto the Board of Directors, and a few even into the presidency, but in general, the debate is over. The ACS has created several on-going career-related programs and services for members; C&EN often carries articles related to chemist salaries, job demand, trends in outsourcing, and so on; the Division of Professional Relations long ago proved its legitimacy. And the atmosphere on the Board of Directors and in the Council is much more conducive to discussion of issues of concern to a broad professional society of the kind that Alan Nixon dreamed, and that he lived long enough to see come into being.

I am extremely pleased to join you today in honoring not only the latest two deserving winners of the Henry Hill Award, but also to remember and honor one of the most inspirational leaders in the history of the ACS, Alan C. Nixon.

## PROGRAM IN PHILADELPHIA

I'm hardly unbiased, but I think the Division of Professional Relations will have an excellent program of sponsored and cosponsored symposia at the Philadelphia ACS National Meeting in August. I urge you to try to find room in your meeting schedules to attend one or more of the following symposia:

### Division Symposia:

Sunday Afternoon. **Alternative Careers: The Road Less Traveled** will examine various alternative careers and strategies chemists used to prepare for these careers and succeed in them. The organizer is John Borchardt.

Monday Morning. **Secondary Science as a Secondary Career: Why and How.** This symposium will explore how chemists can capitalize on the shortage of science teachers by becoming a high school science teacher in mid- or late-career. The symposium organizer is Sadiq Shah.

Monday Afternoon. **Visa and Outsourcing Needs and Impacts on the Chemical Process Industries.** This symposium will examine the hot-button issues of outsourcing chemistry jobs, particularly R&D, to other countries and the increasing use of H1B visas. Symposium Organizers are Chris Bannochie and Lynne Greenblatt.

Monday Evening 8-10 PM. **Sci-Mix.** The Division is sponsoring X posters at Sci-Mix. We will be located next to the Division of Chemical Technicians, which often has job- and career-related posters that will interest DPR members.

### Cosponsored Symposia:

**Defining Moments That Lead to Successful Careers in Chemistry.** The primary sponsor of this symposium is YCC and it will focus on making critical career choices early in one's career.

**Strategies for Achieving a Diverse Professorate in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering.** YCC is the primary sponsor of this symposium.

**Taking Chemistry to the Streets** is about bringing chemistry to the public. The primary sponsor is YCC.

In addition, our Division and the Younger Chemists Committee will be celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversaries Monday afternoon in a gala joint reception after the technical sessions. Be there!

Thanks,  
John Borchardt  
Councilor, DPR

## JOB SEARCHING SUCCESSFULLY IN A SLOW ECONOMY

Corinne A. Marasco

Associate Editor, *Chemical and Engineering News*

Job seekers expected a less stressful job search during the recent recession because of e-mail and the Internet, both of which were expected to speed up--and change--the job search process. Instead of using paper and a stamp to respond to job ads, job seekers could now e-mail their resume directly to a recruiter or scan job ads online and apply through an online job board.

It was great in theory but not so great in practice. The frustrations of searching for a job in a slow economy simply happened at warp speed:

- The ease with which candidates could create and send out resumes online meant that employers trying to fill a post were deluged with responses.
- In addition to the giant job boards, niche sites catering to specific professions proliferated. But the competition for applicants' resumes as well as the competition among applicants using these boards increased also.
- Job seekers became disenchanted with the big online job sites: out of date job listings, unacknowledged inquiries, and the discovery that job hunts conducted solely online rarely produced jobs.

A job search in a slow economy happens the same way as in a good economy. Before you take any job, invest some time in conducting a personal assessment. (Consult "Job Search Strategies for Chemical Professionals" from the ACS Department of Career Services to learn more about conducting a self-assessment.) The better you know yourself, the better prepared you will be to sell yourself to your ideal employer and to determine whether you really want the job. These exercises will also help you write your resume.

Your resume is competing for attention along with hundreds of other resumes. At best it will get 30 seconds of a recruiter's time--if a human handles it. Alternatively, your resume might end up in a database waiting to be searched by a keyword that may match your resume. Think about how a human or a computer will scan your resume. What search terms are they going to use to find you? Since search terms are used to narrow the field of applicants, create a keyword summary at the beginning of your resume, including the common buzzwords in your field, along with your degree, specialization, and other unique details. Examining the job ads in C&EN will give you some idea of the technical buzzwords that are used.

You don't have a lot of room on a two-page resume to sell yourself so do this as effectively as possible. Don't tell an employer what you did; tell them how well you did it--better, faster, or cheaper. Your resume needs to catch the recruiter's interest to convince him or her to read on. With hundreds of resumes to review, a recruiter will likely skim your resume and move on if it's uninteresting.

The skills you developed to search the scientific literature can also be applied to locating companies. Large companies are easier to research because much is written about them. Small companies are actually producing more jobs but don't tend to be household names. They advertise jobs locally, their businesses are quite specialized, and they may even outsource their HR function. The exhibits at ACS regional meetings are a good way to connect with small companies, and it's a bonus if they're able to do some informal recruiting at the same time.

Gerry Crispin and Mark Mehler of CareerXroads found in a recent study of employers that the Internet and employee referrals accounted for 60% of external hires in 2003. By 2005, these sources are expected to account for 3 out of 4 hires. Employers also reported 68% of their Internet hires came from the company Web site. Furthermore, niche job sites were a larger source of hires from the Internet in 2003 than the leading job boards combined. All the

Internet does, regardless if you use a niche site or go directly to a company Web site, is bring you to the company's front door. You still have to rely on your interview skills to secure the job offer.

The top strategy to be focusing your valuable (and limited) time and energy on, regardless of your professional field, is networking. Networking means using your connections to find the person who will offer you a job. Everyone has a network and the foundation is everyone you know, plus everyone those people know. Becoming active in your local section or technical division is one way to network. Submit a presentation or a poster at a regional or national meeting. Volunteer to serve on a committee. Doing what you can to make yourself and your abilities visible is effective in building your network. If you don't market yourself, no one else will.

An effective cover letter is crucial to generating interviews. Your letter should convince a hiring manager that you're a good fit for the job even though you may not necessarily meet all the qualifications. Discuss your skills and write enthusiastically about why you want the job and how excited you are about it.

The interview is another point where you can emphasize your strengths. Behavioral based interviews are the preferred interviewing method these days. Interviewers ask open-ended questions designed to focus on the behaviors you have demonstrated in the past and to determine if those behaviors are appropriate for the position you are interviewing for. Your response tells the interviewer more about your ability to handle certain situations and how you might handle them if they come up again. A good way to build your answer is to "build a CAR": Context, Action, Result. Describe the context of the situation, describe the action you took, and discuss the results, quantifying them with examples whenever possible.

In a slow economy, your job search can take much longer than you first anticipated. There will be lots of reasons why you might not get a job offer. It may be as simple as fit; it may be something more complex that you're not even aware of. Don't take it personally; rejection is part of the process. Regroup, keep on trying, and be tenacious because after all those "no's", you are bound to hear a "yes."

*This article is abstracted from a presentation delivered at a DPR symposium at the ACS National Meeting in Anaheim, California, April, 2004.*

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## Henry Hill Award Recipients

The 2004 Henry Hill Award from the Division of Professional Relations was presented in Anaheim to Gordon McCarty (right in photo) and Ray O'Donnell. Dr. McCarty, currently a member of the ACS Board of Directors, has continuously supported professional and member issues, with particular attention to underserved minorities and the needs of technicians. Dr. O'Donnell, for many years a member of the Council, continues to serve as an ACS career consultant. He has been an outstanding mentor, not only to the students he has taught, but also through Project SEED and the Minority Scholars Program.



## NOTICE

### NOMINEES FOR DPR OFFICES

The following have been nominated for the offices indicated for the election to be held later this year. Additional candidates may be nominated by petition bearing the signatures of 10 members of DPR. Petitions should be sent by July 15 to:

Allison Aldridge  
DPR Secretary  
704 W Euclid Ave, #2C  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Chair-elect: James A. Walsh  
Carol Jean Bruner

Treasurer: Christopher J. Bannochie

Member at Large (three to be elected):

Grace B. Borowitz  
Michael J. Brownfield  
David Katz  
Linette M. Watkins  
Ingrid Montes  
Diane M. Kneeland

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**BOOK REVIEW:** *The Chemical Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, written by T.G. Waddell and T. R. Rybolt, E.K. Jacobsen, ed. 60 pages, 8 ½ by 11, spiral bound, 2004. Available for \$19.95 from the Journal of Chemical Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Chemistry, 209 North Brooks Street, Madison, WI 53715-1116.

This delightful publication reprints a series of 15 original short stories that capture very well the spirit and style of the famous Conan Doyle works. Each story presents a crime, the solution to which requires some detailed (but not complex) chemical knowledge and reasoning. They are written with a break to allow the reader an opportunity to figure out "whodunit." As the stories are reprinted from the Journal of Chemical Education, students are the primary audience. Indeed, the preface states that, "the formatting has been standardized... making it easier for educators to make photocopies for students that include only the stories and not the solutions. The volume uses a spiral binding for convenient photocopying." Nevertheless, the stories are so well done that they should have wide appeal to chemists, fans of Sherlock Holmes, and devourers of murder mysteries. It would also make a nice gift for a chemist friend.

POSTMASTER: IF UNDELIVERABLE AS ADDRESSED,  
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AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY  
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## DPR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Join the ACS Division of Professional Relations – the *member* oriented division. In addition to enjoying a newsletter, special symposia and other programming, sponsorship of the prestigious Henry A. Hill Award, and other activities with your colleagues throughout the chemical profession, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting the premier division within ACS that is concerned with the *chemist* rather than chemistry. Professional chemists belong in the Division of Professional Relations!

Send this form (or a photocopy) with \$8.00 annual dues, to the address below.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ACS number (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Allison Aldridge, Secretary  
Division of Professional Relations, ACS  
4704 W Euclid Ave, #2C  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008