

Have You Ever Wanted to Be a Board Member?

In the January 2010 issue of *MRS Bulletin*, I ended my LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT on the note that the Materials Research Society is always, as a volunteer-driven organization, looking for new volunteers for a wide variety of positions. While this is still true, in this letter I am asking for you to consider nominating someone (or even nominating yourself) for a few special positions—member of the Board of Directors, Secretary, and Vice President/President-elect of the Society.

Traditionally, the MRS Nominating Committee has developed a list of potential candidates to be vetted by the current Board of Directors. This year the Board would also like to solicit candidates from the membership. These candidates will be considered equally with those suggested by the Nominating Committee as the committee prepares a slate of candidates to place on the ballot. Five Board Members, a Secretary, and a Vice President will be elected in 2010 for terms beginning on January 1, 2011.

Responsibilities of the positions are considerable:

- The Board is the legal entity authorized to act in all respects and in all capacities on behalf of the Society. It has three basic functions: (1) to determine outcomes to be accomplished; (2) to ensure that the resources necessary to achieve desired outcomes are available and used efficiently, and (3) to assure that the desired outcomes are being achieved. The Board focuses on strategic thinking, setting directions for MRS, establishing policy, and operational oversight at a high level.
- The President chairs the Board, acts as the representative of the Society, and performs other duties as established by the Board.
- The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that accurate and sufficient documentation exists to meet legal requirements, and to enable authorized persons to determine when, how, and by whom the Board's business was conducted.

As MRS has matured, as our membership has become more diverse, and as technology has united the materials com-



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munity around the world, the need for strong and insightful governance of the Society is critical. As we move forward, the makeup of the Board must provide a multitude of talents and experiences, including people from different regions, different sectors (industry, academia, and government), different backgrounds, and different fields of expertise. Experience in leadership and management positions, either within MRS, in other organizations, or in the private sector, is of particular value.

Note that for positions on the Board, MRS leadership or prior service on another board is highly desired; for the position of the Vice President/President-Elect a history of service to and experience with the Society is critical.

Desirable attributes for candidates for the Board or position of Secretary include:

- A sincere desire to take MRS to the "next level"

- A perspective on the broad future of international materials research
- Business, financial, administrative, or board experience
- Fundraising and/or experience with foundations
- Professional and leadership skills and knowledge that could add value to the Society
- Experience in setting strategic directions and policies
- Experience with educational and public outreach
- Experience with developing and editing technical publications
- An ability to develop and advocate positions on issues and drive them to consensus
- An ability to articulate the value of materials to the public
- Work experience with foundations, industry, and venture capitalists
- Recognition and respect in the field of materials research or a related field.

Therefore, in an effort to provide you, the membership, with the highest quality slate of candidates, and also to obtain expertise in areas outside the materials research field, I invite you to send informal nominations to the MRS Nominating Committee for their consideration. An e-mail is sufficient, so long as it contains the rationale for suggesting a candidate, and, if possible, a brief biography. All nominations will be reviewed by the committee before they select a final slate of candidates for Board approval. Send your e-mail messages to Executive Assistant Kathy D'Biagio, dbiagio@mrs.org, as soon as possible.

I hope that you'll take my invitation very seriously. Our Nominating Committee, with its seven members, cannot possibly know all of the potential excellent candidates out there. But you, who are willing, or have collaborated with them, or worked for them, or were taught by them, are in a position to bring them to the committee's attention. The end goal is to offer the membership the best slate of candidates possible. Thank you.

DAVID S. GINLEY
2010 MRS President



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