

Honoring Our Heritage

First, I want to thank you for trusting me to serve as President this year. This honor means a lot to me.

Our financial accounting counterparts teach that the value of the whole organization is more than the sum of the individual parts. That is certainly true for the ATA. We have a wonderful collection of members who willingly give of their time and talents. I could not believe the number of people who signed up to serve on committee and I was extremely pleased that every time I called or emailed someone to ask them to serve in some capacity the answer was always yes. That made making committee assignments much easier. So thank all of you that volunteered. If you did volunteer you should have received your committee assignment via email. If did not or you did not sign up but would like to serve on a committee please let me know. We can always use more volunteers.

For any sports fan they know that any great team needs all the players to willingly give 100% for the team. Because of the hard work of many of our predecessors, the ATA is a great organization. However, to continue as a successful and healthy group we must continue the work they have started.

For the past five years the AAA along with the AICPA and the largest accounting firms have attacked the lack of PhD students coming out of our universities to fill the void we are experiencing because of the aging of accounting faculty. To help in this effort they introduced the Accounting Doctoral Scholars program last year.

We have to address this same issue in our organization. I seem to be reminded daily that none of us are getting any younger. On Thursday at the PwC Tax Colloquium Rick Stamm talked about a lady that took early

retirement after 59 years. I don't think we have any who has taught that long. I could be wrong, though. We do however, have a number of members you have served the organization for more than 25 years. As these members retire, we face an uncertain future. So we must plan for that future now. To do that we need to take several steps.

First, this year I have asked Beth Kern to remain as chair of the Long Range Planning Committee with the charge to examine and recommend ways that we can address the issue of the Aging of our Members.

In addition, as a way of keeping our institutional memory I will be asking the officers and committee chairs to prepare a job description or list of duties they have which can be passed down from one year to the next. Currently, we have such a document for the Vice-President and Vice-President elect which that job manageable. I would like to have a similar job for each of the officers and committees so that we do not have to start from scratch each year.

Last year Lil challenged us to reach outside the organization to grow. I think we need to continue that outreach to raise the presence of the ATA with accounting firms and governmental agencies.

As Lil did last year I have asked many well-connected professors to serve on the External Relations committee. Mark Higgins will serve as the chair. Their charge will be to expand and encourage our relationships with practitioners and government officials. We have a great opportunity to work on this charge this year since our Mid-Year meeting will be in Washington, DC. I know that Sandy Callaghan and her committee are working hard on getting speakers from various organizations to be on the program. I am sure that it will be a great meeting. In addition our speaker today at lunch is Larry Langdon, a former LMSB commissioner for the IRS. Please make him

welcome and I encourage you to meet and talk to the outside guests we may have at the mid-year meeting.

To be taken more seriously as a tax organization I believe we must be engaged in the tax policy debate. Tax policy by necessity is one of the major issues on the legislative agenda in the US and around the world. I think we have a lot of members that can add meaningful insight on these issues. I have asked John Barrick to serve as the chair of the Policy committee with the charge of recommending ways we can increase our part in tax policy issues. I think John's experience in Washington will help with this task. I have also asked John to work with Dave Stewart and the Legal Research Committee to encourage tax policy papers be submitted for the JLTR Conference this year at the mid-year meeting.

To continue and grow we must have new members along with adequate funds to operate. We are moving into the second year of a new financing model. The accounting firms have really stepped up and are providing us with the support we need to be able to operate. I want to thank Deloitte, Ernst & Young, Grant Thornton, KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers for their continue support. We will also now have a Finance Committee to work with the Vice-President of Finance to continue our efforts to be fiscally responsible. This year Shirley Dennis-Escoffier will be the chair of that committee.

To encourage new tax professors we introduced a Doctoral Consortium. The first Doctoral Consortium was held in Washington in 2005. This year will be the 7th annual consortium. KPMG continue to be the sole sponsor of the Doctoral Consortium. I want to thank them for that support. This year the Consortium will be little different as the meeting will be at the KPMG office instead of the hotel. LeAnn Luna and Raquel Alexander are co-chairs this

year of the Doctoral Consortium and I know that it will be a great meeting. I have also asked them to prepare a report showing where former attendees are now. I know that many are now active members of the ATA but for those that are not I hope we can re-connect with them to get them to join the ATA and become involved. I want to thank our members who are encouraging their doctoral students to become involved with the ATA. This we had several PhD students volunteer to serve on a committee. I believe the sooner the student becomes involved with the organization the more committed they will be later in their career. I know that I started coming to the ATA meetings the second year of my doctoral programs. I met people at those first meetings that I attended that are still my friends and mentors today.

So in closing, I think the ATA is a strong organization but I want us to make sure that it continues that way for many years to come. Before I end I need to thank a few people.

First, I would like to thank David Hulse, chair of the Annual Meeting Committee along with all the members of his committee. They have done a wonderful job this year. Notice that the page you got in your material with changes that had to be made, none of them were tax. To Sandy Callaghan for all the work she and her committee have already done to provide us with an exciting mid-year meeting in DC. To everyone that said yes when I called or emailed to ask for help. And lastly, to Lil who has served this past year as ATA president. Lil, first I want to give you the plaque from the AAA that marks your tenure as ATA President. Second, last year one of your goals was to have our organization be more global in its thinking so to commemorate that goal I have a small gift for you. Lastly, I would like everyone to give Lil a hand to show her how much we appreciate the work she has done for our organization.