

## President's Corner: Student and Young Member Initiatives of the IGS



**Jorge Zornberg**

Dear Members of the IGS,

During any of the three upcoming IGS Regional Conferences, chances are that you will come across some of the IGS student awardees who, after a careful selection process, have been identified as future leaders of our Society. Please take the time to meet them and congratulate them. They deserve it!

The 2012 cycle of IGS Regional Conferences is the sixth time that the IGS will be sponsoring a Student Awards program that involves sponsoring the participation of one student per IGS Chapter in one of the conferences. Because of the significance of involving our young engineers in the activities of our Society, we are carefully planning the participation of the student

awardees in GeoAmericas 2012 (Lima, Peru, May 01-04), EuroGeo 5 (Valencia, Spain, September 16-19), and Geosynthetics Asia 2012 (Bangkok, Thailand, December 13-16).

At the heart of the 2012 Student Initiative is the effort of Council Member Nathalie Touze-Foltz. Dr. Touze-Foltz is masterfully leading a Task Force aimed at supporting chapters in their effort of selecting student award winners, coordinating communications with the student winners, and planning the student activities during the IGS Regional Conferences. Under her careful direction, the IGS will count with a record number of students selected for the 2012 cycle. Details of the contributions by IGS student winners are provided in a companion article prepared by Dr. Touze-Foltz (see the article in page 3 of this issue of IGSNews).

Student awardees will not only be recognized during the Awards Ceremony at each of the IGS Regional Conferences, but they will also be able to present their contribution in a special session of each event. In addition, student awardees are being invited to participate in a number of social functions, including the IGS Corporate Reception and a breakfast with IGS leadership. We want to take every opportunity to recognize our student awardees and groom them to become the future leaders of our Society.

While the 2012 student program is a key activity, it is only one of the several initiatives that the IGS is taking to engage our young members. A reduced student registration fee is in place at our IGS conferences in order to encourage students' participation in our events. Also, a super-reduced membership fee (a zero membership fee!) is what the IGS charges students to become members of our Society. I should point out that student members have access to all benefits (e.g. journals, members-only section of our website) as our regular members.

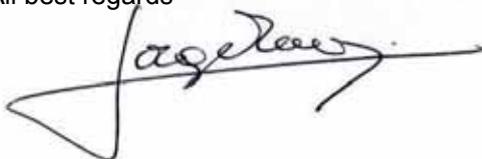
*Leaders of the chapters of the IGS:* We encourage you to pay particular attention to the current roster of student members in your Chapter. Please encourage them to join the IGS, participate in your activities, feed them (this works very well many times), and show them the value of the geosynthetics industry.

*Corporate members of the IGS:* We understand that you are particularly interested in Student initiatives. We would very much appreciate your feedback on how to best work with our younger generation of geosynthetic professionals. Not only students, but also young members are of particular importance for the IGS, so please stay tuned for upcoming efforts in which we will seek your input and support.

*Current (or potential) Students or Young Members of the IGS:* Get involved! We have recently created three Technical Committees (on Barriers, Reinforcement and Filtration). An extremely important objective of these TCs is to offer you (the young IGS member) the opportunity to learn about geosynthetics, express your ideas about geosynthetics, and interact with the giants of our industry. You are most welcome to participate in our conferences and chapter activities. We believe that your energy and thirst for knowledge is the perfect complement to our (i.e. the senior's) experience and eagerness to convey what we have learned.

We look forward to the working with the upcoming generation of geosynthetics professionals.

All best regards



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