RECAP OF THE 2017 LEADERSHIP RETREAT
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Mission of IABA
The International Association of Black Actuaries is a professional and student member organization whose mission is to contribute to an increase in the number of black actuaries and to influence the successful career development, civic growth and achievement of black actuaries.

Vision of IABA
To be the world’s leading actuarial organization dedicated to influencing diversity by developing and recognizing the achievement of black actuaries.

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DAV, CERA (Chair), Alicia Young, Efua Mantey, ACAS,
Stacia Brown, FSA, Grace Kabwe, Louis-Landry Mwizero,
Jailyn Clark
The piece, entitled “Life Insurance for the Digital Consumer – An End to End View” was published in the November 2017 issue of SOA’s Product Matters. Please see below for an excerpt, and the link to the full article.

Closing today’s $20T mortality protection gap in the US, mostly within the middle market and millennial population, has been a top priority for life insurers and implementing accelerated underwriting is key to this initiative. IABA’s director Stephen Abrokwah and his colleague (Nitin Nayak of Swiss Re) share their vision for an end-to-end view of the life insurance underwriting process that leverages various innovative tools and technologies, ranging from behavioral economics to predictive analytics. Read more about it in November 2017’s SOA Product Matters Newsletter (https://www.soa.org/Library/Newsletters/Product-Development-News/2017/november/pro-2017-iss108-nayak-abrokwah.aspx)!

RECAP OF THE 2017 LEADERSHIP RETREAT

By Guillaume Moussa

The weekend started with a Kick-off meeting and networking event on Thursday, November 9th in the evening. On Friday, November 10th the meeting started with the Corporate Advisory Council (CAC) meeting. On Saturday, November 11th the strategic planning discussions continued with the participation of affiliate and committee leaders only. The focus closer to the mission. The 2018 strategic focus that follows is the final was to review the 2017 goals and set additional goals for 2018. On the whole, the retreat was well organized and educational. Leaders left the retreat more aware of IABA’s 2018 and onward strategic focus and look forward to another exciting year serving IABA in getting result from the participants’ work that weekend.
2018 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The Familiarize, Attract, Convert, Support and Retain construct of the 2017 Joint Diversity & Inclusion Research Initiative aligns with IABA’s ongoing strategic purpose of Awareness, Pursuit, Commitment and Evolution. To that end, IABA has outlined 2018 Strategic Initiatives that address the barriers to underrepresented minorities pursuing the actuarial profession identified in the research. IABA will be engaging our strategic partners (The Casualty Actuarial Society, The Society of Actuaries, The Actuarial Foundation and the IABA Corporate Advisory Council) in many of the initiatives noted in this plan. Additionally, IABA will be leading discussions and planning with these partners in order to further address the specific issues facing diverse populations, as they relate to pursuit of a career in actuarial science.

Awareness & Consideration

Lack of awareness (familiarity) is a significant barrier for minorities to enter the actuarial profession. Without awareness, minority students cannot enter the profession pipeline. IABA plans to work toward increasing awareness of the profession in high schools with large minority populations.

2018 goals include:

- Establishing criteria to identify best-fit high schools for visits/partnerships
- Developing a case study or competition program to engage high school students beyond a single classroom visit
- Creating a plan to touch at least 1,000 high school students at 50 different schools in 2019
- Creating a plan that engages at least 50 students in a case study or “game” that provides in depth exposure to the profession in 2019
- Creating at least 10 videos to promote IABA and the Actuarial Profession (at least one of these videos will be about the profession in general; remaining videos will be tailored to specifically what actuaries do, as well as their journey to the profession)
- Standardized presentation materials for outreach sessions

IABA Leadership & Board of Directors

President/Director - Tenesia McGruder, FSA, MAAA
Vice President/Director - Jamala Arland, FSA, MAAA
Treasurer/Director - Kristin Johnson
Secretary - Kwame Davis, FCAS, MAAA
Student Liaison - Paulus Ackah
Directors - Stephen Abrokwah, Ph.D., ASA, CERA, MAAA
Eric Atwater, FSA, MAAA
Nicassia Belton
Monique Hacker-Patterson, FSA, MAAA
Jeffrey Johnson, FSA, MAAA
Stafford L. Thompson, Jr. FSA, MAAA
Executive Director - Kate Weaver

Committee Chairs

Annual Meeting Chair - Nicole Harrington
Data Management Chair - James Laate
Education Chair - Nicassia Belton
Membership Chair - Stephen Cameron, FSA, MAAA
Mentoring Chair - Jonas Brobbey
Newsletter Chair - Guillaume Moussa, Actuary DAV, CERA
Scholarship Chair - Adrian Cox
Social Media Chair - Tiffany Daley
Technology Chair - Alida Rwabalinda
Volunteer Chair - Gloria Gilliam, ACAS, MAAA

Affiliate Leaders

Atlanta - Jessica Morse, ASA, MAAA
Bay Area, CA - Marquita Richardson
Boston - Efua Mantey, ACAS &amp; Michelle Muzulu
Chicago - Candace Howell
DC - Kezia Charles, FSA, MAAA & Ayanna Charles
Hartford - Brandon Rosemond
Houston - Brandon Wright
Morgan State - Paulin Yannick Mbiakeu
New York/New Jersey - Rachel Amalo & Maambo Mujala, FSA, ASA
Ohio Region - Kwabena Acheampong-Boamah, ASA, MAAA
Seattle - Veronica Fontana, FSA, MAAA

The Voice | Newsletter of the IABA
Convert
The best way to draw minority students into the profession is to build a connection through programs. These programs not only deepen the students’ understanding of the profession, but help to develop the students’ professional network. IABA plans to leverage existing programs that strengthen the students’ connection to and understanding of the profession.

2018 goals include:
• Investing in existing summer actuarial programs through volunteerism; financial support; marketing and company engagement.
• Providing networking and engagement opportunities for black students pursuing the profession through commitment to IABA’s mentoring program:
  o Adding additional volunteers to mentor resource program so that all students requesting information can engage in a 30 minute Q&A call with an actuary
  o Fully staffing IABA’s traditional mentoring program by assigning every scholarship winner and Boot Camp attendee to a mentor with a one-year commitment
  o Identifying 10 additional IABA future leaders and mentors to expand on the Future Leaders mentoring program
  o Creating an ongoing catalog of materials (articles, discussion topics, videos) to facilitate mentor/mentee discussions

Retention & Evolution
An increasingly global economy has allowed companies to benefit from the advantages of a multicultural workforce and truly value diversity with regards to all operations including the actuarial function. However, the research demonstrates that there is still much work to be done to reduce bias and discrimination. The diversity scorecards will allow better evaluation of the current recruitment, acquisition, representation, retention, development and engagement of gender and racially diverse actuaries in the profession in the US and Canada and set goals to move that forward. The scorecards will also affect and support organizational and industry change in moving diversity efforts beyond compliance level to diversity level to ultimately an inclusion level.

2018 goals include:
• Implementing phase 1 pilot of Employer Diversity Scorecard
• Implementing phase 1 pilot of University Diversity Scorecard
• Positioning IABA as the primary data source on black actuaries by tracking membership changes in the black actuarial population and analyzing pipeline data/conversions
• Creating a comprehensive demographic report of the actuarial pipeline, based on information gathered from employers, colleges and universities
TRAVELERS INSIDE LOOK SERIES
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2017
TOPIC: INCLUSION = DIVERSITY + DIALOGUE

The IABA Hartford Affiliate had the opportunity to join forces with Black Data Processing Associates, National Black MBA Association, Association of Hispanic Professionals, and the Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Chamber for a round table discussion on Diversity & Inclusion. Not only was Travelers gracious enough to host, but they also provided several senior and mid-level managers to participate in the dialogue leading to a more productive and mutually beneficial interaction.

As people walked in, they were asked to visit a series of controversial exhibits highlighting real-life situations where some underlying prejudice was present. What made this event so impactful was the Dialogue portion, which was organized by randomly forming smaller dialogue circles between the various affinity organizations and Travelers employees. Many in attendance thought the smaller dialogue circles provided a safe environment for individuals to share their personal connections to the exhibits and in the process learn from other people experiences. With approximately 120 people in attendance, it was a win for both Travelers and the IABA. As Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer of Travelers, Fred Colon applauded the event for providing safe climate which emphasized inclusion and resulted in progressive dialogue. By participating in these types of events, the Hartford Affiliate is better positioned to engage our corporate partners about hiring and retaining some of our best talent. As for the hosting company, the IABA members employed by them often feel more empowered to brag about their company around peers. Travelers is a strong partner of the IABA and continues to demonstrate their commitment to Diversity & Inclusion.
A look into the world of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee – Conversation with Annual Meeting Chair Nicole Harrington

Interview by: Stacia Brown, FSA

Stacia is an AVP & Actuary at MassMutual in Springfield Massachusetts and serves as a member of the IABA newsletter committee. She can be contacted at staciabrown@massmutual.com.

The IABA Annual Meeting is the premier event where students and experienced actuaries come together in an environment designed to foster professional development and networking opportunities. The Annual Meeting is the intersection of education and celebration. Attendees come to our unique actuarial meeting to make powerful connections while experiencing all that IABA has to offer.

For me personally it’s an event I look forward to every year. The sessions are informative, the networking opportunities are great and the meeting is just all around a good time! But have you ever wondered what goes into planning this massive event each year? Well I went straight to the source, the woman in charge - annual meeting planning chair, Nicole Harrington.

If you’ve never actually met Nicole at an annual meeting it wouldn’t be surprising. She’s always running around behind the scenes making sure things are on track. Not one for the limelight, she wouldn’t even offer up a picture for this feature. I told her I’d be sure to find one of her from a previous annual meeting on the IABA’s website. She wished me good luck and bet me I wouldn’t. She was right.

As I spoke with Nicole, I realized why the annual meetings have been so successful and so much fun. Her energy and passion about planning a great event came through very clearly as we spoke. She had a clear handle on what was involved and takes her role seriously, never underestimating the responsibility of planning such a huge event.

So Nicole, who’s involved with planning the annual meeting?

There are a lot of people working behind the scenes on planning the annual meeting. Various committees such as the social media and technology committees are involved. The treasurer definitely gets involved from a budget planning perspective. There’s a presentation team that works on planning the sessions and getting presenters, including a student liaison who works on the student sessions. Former IABA President Monique Hacker-Patterson, who also previously served as Annual Meeting chair, and who happens to be my mentor and friend, still gets involved and will often lend a hand on a particular project. If the meeting is being held in a city with a local affiliate group, that affiliate chair will also be a part of the planning. And then there’s Kate, our Executive Director. We actually hire her as an event planner for the annual meeting – she does so much to help make this event a success.

And you of course? You’re the one who pulls it all together.

Yes and then there’s me. I’m the chair for the Annual meeting planning committee. I get to create the vision for the annual meeting. I come up with the ideas of what we can do to make each year different and I work with the team to make sure the vision is
executed. It’s like a full time job. [Laughs]. One of three actually –
Studying for exams, Planning the annual meeting and my job as
pricing manager at Progressive Insurance.

Wow, with all that going on, thankfully you have support from
all those people. Is there room for others to get involved?
Well recently we’ve introduced the concept of meeting
ambassadors. These are more seasoned meeting attendees who
can help first time participants find their way around and not feel
so lost. I imagine it can be so overwhelming for someone who’s
coming to the meeting the first time so I want everyone to feel
welcomed and a part of what we have going on. So if they have
questions or need help with anything, the meeting ambassadors
will be there to help. I’m looking to expand that team so I could
always use volunteers there.

The annual meeting is a huge event. I imagine there are a lot of
moving parts. What’s involved with planning an event of that
size and scope?
There’s a lot that goes on but I’ll tell you the main steps. First of
all determining the location is key – both the city and the hotel.
Usually the cities are picked well in advance. So although I’m
currently planning the 2018 event, we are already looking at cities
for 2019.

How do you decide on location? What factors do you consider?
What’s the selection process like?
Usually we survey the IABA membership and others that receive
our e-blasts to see what cities people are interested in going to. We
also consider what cities already have a large actuarial presence.
Other factors we consider are availability of hotels and proximity
of colleges where we can host the boot-camp which precedes the
annual meeting. Hotel size has become an even larger issue in
recent times, as attendance at the annual meeting continues to
grow. Kate actually pays a visit to the hotels we’ve narrowed down
on our short list and we decide from there which hotel would be
the best venue for the meeting. I can usually tell pretty quickly if a
venue will work for us.

So what has been your favorite location to date and why?
I’d have to say Las Vegas for sure. We’d never had the meeting
there before so it was very different than anything we’d ever done.
It was definitely outside the box and it was so much fun.

Putting the agenda together is the next big part of the planning
process. We have to consider the length of the sessions, the order
of the speakers, how long should we have breaks, etc. Seems
simple but we want to make sure the sessions are effective and
that people stay engaged. I collect a lot of feedback from past
meetings to plan what works best. For example, we heard from
people that they’d like the opportunity to explore the cities a little
more so we start and end sessions a little earlier to facilitate this.
People also enjoy the opportunity to network more so we build
sufficient breaks between sessions so they can catch up with the
presenters or with each other. Choosing the right speaker for the
awards ceremony is a huge component of setting the agenda. I
usually think through who would be an engaging and inspirational
leader that could address the gathering. Sometimes I’ll get ideas
from others about who to bring in.

The networking reception is another big component – In the past,
we’ve done these offsite. Some of my favorites have been the trip
to the Georgia Aquarium and the Boston boat ride and clam bake.
As we’ve grown in size, logistically this has been harder to do so
we’ve had more of our receptions at the hotel.

My personal favorite was the cruise we had in New York. It’s
the first time I ever saw the statue of liberty up close. It was
amazing. I’ve always enjoyed the offsite networking receptions.
Well you never know what could happen in the future – I can’t give away all my secrets for the 2018 meeting, so you’ll have to wait and see. [Laughs].

**So let’s talk numbers if we can. This all sounds expensive. How do you pull it all together?**

Well, a big part of the success of the annual meeting is our sponsors. Almost all of our expenses for the meeting, which can be as much as $200k, is covered because we have amazing sponsors. Our Executive Director and Event Planner, Kate, does most of the work around this. Our sponsors are usually actuarial firms such as insurance and consulting companies. Sponsorship is an amazing opportunity for both us and our sponsors. They get to come out to the annual meeting and access some amazing talent through the career networking event of the annual meeting and attending various sessions and networking events. A lot of good opportunities can come out of this meeting. We couldn’t survive without our sponsors. Registration fees alone simply wouldn’t be enough. When you also consider that a third of our attendees are college students, who get discounted registrations, you realize there’s a lot we have to make up otherwise.

**The job I have now actually came out of meeting a Massmutual recruiter at IABA. I really love my job so I guess I have IABA to thank for that.**

You’ve shared quite a bit, but Is there anything else you’d like to share about what goes into the planning?

There are so many more little things we have to do – booking the photographer, videographer and Master of Ceremonies. There’s also working with the hotel to select the menu; food is important at these meetings. [Laughs]. There’s also a whole host of other administrative duties and things that go on behind the scenes.

**With all those moving parts you must have some “interesting” stories. Was there ever a time things didn’t go as planned and you had to improvise?**

Thankfully we haven’t had too many of those due to a lot of planning and experience, but we’ve had a few hiccups. One year we ran out of food at one of the buffet style lunches, but the hotel came to our rescue. Issues with room sizes for presentations is a recurring theme. People will register for one session, then decide at the meeting to go to a different one so we may end up with not enough seating – not much we can do about that. It happens every year, but we get by. Also there was this one meeting when name badges weren’t printing properly and every third name or so was skipped, so registration was a mess. Thanks to Kate and her portable printer, we were able to make that work.

**Well this all sounds like a lot of work but you seem to enjoy it. What’s the best part of being the annual meeting chair?**

It’s the IABA’s biggest event for the year and everyone looks forward to getting together, so it’s like planning a big family reunion. It’s like an adventure – every year I try to one-up myself and try something different that I know the members will enjoy.

Well thanks for taking the time to chat with me Nicole. I know you’re busy with your three full-time jobs, so I appreciate the time [Laughs] It was my pleasure. Anytime

So there you have it, the scoop on what goes on behind the scenes of planning the IABA’s biggest event each year. Considering how great the events have been in the past, I absolutely cannot wait to see what the lady who always tries to one up herself has in store for us this year!

Nicole Harrington, ACAS is a Pricing Manager at Progressive Insurance in Cleveland Ohio. She can be contacted at nicoledharrington@gmail.com
The Technology Committee currently has 13 volunteers - Ernest Aboagye, Mawulolo Ameko, Bright Amudzi, Bright Kwadwo Boasiako, Francis Doughan, Koffi Goudalo, Kofi Gyamerah, Joel Manu, Matthew Ohemeng, Priscilla Omari-Baah, Alida Rwabalinda, Justin Tiendrebeogo and Jevaughn Williams.

The mission and purpose of the committee is to provide excellent customer service to all the website users. We pride ourselves in providing a quick turnaround on requests that come through as well as keeping the website running smoothly while we continue to find ways to improve the user experience.

An upcoming project will be to support the annual meeting preparations. That’s typically the committee’s main focus during the Spring all the way up until the annual meeting in the Summer. During this time, we also maintain the website by making regular updates to links, documents and general content. We also focus on cross-training to make sure that everyone on the team is equipped with the technical skills needed to maintain the IABA website.

The team is very excited to continue supporting IABA through the many opportunities that are presented to the committee and we welcome your feedback and suggestions on how to better serve The IABA community.

To learn more about the committee or to find out how you can get involved contact Committee Chair Alida Rwabalinda at airpondi@gmail.com
The Social media committee, chaired by Tiffany Daley, performs a number of tasks including the following:

- Relaying important scholarship information and actuarial organization announcements to IABA followers on social media
- Advertising for any and all IABA sponsored events
- Making IABA’s social media followers aware of what’s going on within the association in regards to annual meeting, virtual events, boot camp opportunities, mentoring and volunteer opportunities.
- Sharing information on actuarial internship/full-time opportunities
- Providing a platform for IABA followers to connect with other actuaries/actuarial-students across the globe whom they may never have had the opportunity to connect with otherwise
- Driving traffic to the IABA website

The team just finished the Black History Month series, which placed the spotlight on the contributions of black figures who made a contribution to actuarial, mathematics, or insurance fields. Rosie Ezekwesili and Lord Asante-Buakwaw did a great job of gathering facts and putting the graphics together to post! Here are some highlights from the series:
Next up for the team, is to work with a few affiliates and the IABA videographer on a set of promotional videos for the upcoming annual meeting.
SAVE THE DATE
2018 IABA ANNUAL MEETING

July 26 - 28, 2018
Westin Peachtree Plaza
Atlanta, GA