

Time flies when you're having fun. It's been a year since I took over from our Past President Mike Denson as President of the US Aquaculture Society, and it has been a great experience. The people on the Board who carry this society forward are all committed to making things better and assuring that the members have benefits that give them more from membership than just another check off on their resume.

Over the past year, the Board has implemented a new activity which was to support various conferences and workshops around the country. USAS became a sponsor of the International Conference on Recirculating Aquaculture at Virginia Tech, and the Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Expo which this year partnered again with the NOAA Milford Aquaculture Seminar. That meeting was in Providence RI. Both conferences allowed USAS to have a booth to promote the society, and we enlisted four students, two at each conference, to sit at the booth and talk about USAS. Both groups of students gave some wonderful feedback about how to make the endeavor more successful. Two new pop up banners that describe a bit about your society were used and they made the booths look very professional. USAS also was a sponsor of the Iowa Aquaculture Conference. It is envisioned that this type of sponsorship will continue, so if you are organizing a conference, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Board to seek some sponsorship. The Board has decided that initially, USAS would sponsor, at some level, two conferences or meetings a year.

Another exciting success in the past year was the collaboration of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center under Dr. Joe Morris with USAS and the National Aquaculture Association to develop and put on a group of webinars on various aspects of aquaculture. The group with the excellent technical assistance of the University of Iowa's IT group with the coordination by Linda O'Dierno from NAA and our Board member Allen Pattillo, the aquaculture extension specialist from Iowa State, produced about 15 webinars that were broadcast live and then also saved for future viewing on the University of Iowa website and also linked through the USAS website. The production was done by the Brenton Center for Agricultural Instruction & Technology Transfer. The webinars include a variety of topics such as aquaponics, biosecurity, recreational fish pond management, labelling requirements, HACCP, use of social media, fish health, indoor shrimp farming and more. These videos can be viewed on the USAS website.

A great accomplishment initiated by our previous President Mike Denson was the redesign of the USAS website, usaquaculture.org. The site is being updated often and members should visit there to see what's going on. In addition we have a social media sub-committee that has been trying to increase communication about items the Society has been doing, and updates from other entities associated with aquaculture. There is a Twitter feed (USAquaSoc), an Instagram ([usaquasoc](https://www.instagram.com/usaquasoc)) and a Facebook Page (US Aquaculture Society).

As was hoped, USAS had two new Student Subunits formed in Auburn Alabama and we thank those students for taking up the gauntlet and doing that. One is at the University and one is at the Auburn High School. And so much thanks to Bauer Duke, Eric Peatman and Dave Cline for

helping with those formations. There are a couple other student subunits in the formative stages and hopefully they will be working within the next few months.

Recently Aquaculture America was held in San Antonio Texas and it was a resounding success. The conference committee of Mike Denson, Kathleen Hartman and Dave Straus worked very well with John Cooksey to produce a great meeting. The plenary session featured three speakers Jonathan Van Senten from Virginia Tech talked about millennials in aquaculture, Dr. Sally Rocky, the Executive Director of the Foundation for Food and Agriculture discussed her foundation and how aquaculture could fit into it, and Dr. Aoife Lyons from Alltech who talked about the different generations and how we need to understand each other. They all brought a different perspective about Forging New Frontiers (the dedication for the meeting).

USAS awarded 5 Professional Achievement Awards this year. Ben Beck from Auburn University and Rafael Cuevas Uribe from Humboldt State University were awarded the Distinguished Early Career Award, a former USAS Secretary/Treasurer Reg Blaylock from University of Southern Mississippi received the Distinguished Service Award and Sebastian Belle, the Executive Director of the Maine Aquaculture Association was awarded the Distinguished Life-time Achievement Award. Mike Freeze from Keo Fish Farm in Arkansas was given the Douglas Drennan II Industry Leadership Award. All were so deserving of these accolades and we wish them the heartiest congratulations. Bios about these people can be found with some photos of them on the USAS website.

There were numerous students who won awards at the meeting. Please check the USAS Facebook feed or the website for all of this information.

This organization doesn't function on autopilot. Taking the responsibility for leadership was made so easy with the support and work of all the Board. Past President Mike Denson helped so much guiding me along the way. Dave Cline, the incoming President had served as Vice President and was a great support to Angela Capporelli, the current VP who ran the Awards Committee and the Student Awards. Secretary Treasurer for the past two years, Gulnihal (Rose) Ozbay did a yeoman's (or yeowoman's) job of keeping all of the minutes and the books. Our outgoing board members Dave Straus and Kwamena Quagranie helped so much with the Rules and Regulations and the Promotion and Membership Committees, and Allen Pattillo oversaw the webinars and Evan Durland and Carter Ullman with Eric Peatman worked the great Student Activities at Aquaculture America. And last but not least, a big tip of the hat to Carol Mendoza and Judy Andresko from the WAS Home Office who have been outstanding in their support and help over the past year!

Serving as President of USAS for the past year capped a long career with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and for having had this opportunity, I am most grateful. I am now an "Extinguished Professor" and will go onto other adventures but will still be involved with USAS. I urge anyone in our membership who wants to really be part of our Society and take it into the future, to

contact one of the Board members and express your interest. It will be a most fulfilling opportunity.