

I am very excited by the opportunity to serve as the president of the United States chapter of the World Aquaculture Society. It is a honor to serve a chapter with so many great members representing academia, industry, government, extension and more. Diversity of membership is part of what makes an organization strong. As of February 17 2017, the US chapter was 1032 members strong making it the largest of the WAS chapters. If you are interested in the breakdown of the membership, please see Table 1. The chapter could not function without the selfless dedication and expertise of the executive committee (see Table 2), the home office and the 30+ members who volunteer to serve on committees. If you are interested in how the chapter operates, I encourage you to get involved with a committee or communicate with the executive board. I would like to extend a special thanks to Gef Flimlin and Mike Denson who have been wonderful mentors and president elect Dave Straus who's expert organizational skills are helping to keep things running smoothly.

The 2017 meeting in San Antonio was an unqualified great success with almost 1,900 attendees representing 57 countries. It was also one of the largest trade shows with 187 vendor booths. The success of the meeting keeps the chapter in good financial health. Both members and trade show sponsors were happy with the venue and plans are underway to return there in 2021. Angela Caporelli did a wonderful job of wrangling judges for the student abstracts and presentations and coordinating with sponsors for the various awards. With the help of our generous sponsors, USAS was able to provide more than \$12,500 for student awards. Please go out of your way to thank the sponsors and vendors as you encounter them, as they are an important part of the meeting sustainability. I would also like to encourage any students reading this to apply for these awards detailed on the USAS web site (<http://usaquaculture.org/student-awards>). It is important for students to be members of USAS at the time they send in their abstracts in order to be eligible for the awards and make sure to get them in by the deadline, which is several months before the meeting.

Last year USAS collaborated with the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center and the National Aquaculture Association to develop and deliver 15 excellent webinars on various aquaculture topics. Links to these webinars can be found in the continuing education section of the USAS web site. With the help of Allen Pattillo and Gef Flimlin we plan to produce several more webinars in the coming months. If you have ideas for important topics and know a willing presenter, please share that information with us. USAS feels strongly that continuing education opportunities are such a considerable benefit to our members that the continuing education committee is developing two pre-meeting workshops for the Aquaculture America conference in Las Vegas. Last year's pre-meeting workshops drew more than 100 attendees that were able to deepen their knowledge of water quality thanks to Dr. Claude Boyd and others. In addition, a new (to USAS) LEAN Aquaculture workshop demonstrated LEAN concepts that will help ANY company or organization develop standard practices, reduce waste and improve quality. The Las Vegas meeting will feature a statistics workshop organized by Steve Rawles and Dave Strauss and an innovative aquaponics workshop developed by Allen Pattillo and Janelle Hager. For those that may not know, these workshops are offered to USAS members at a substantial discount and are a splendid way to network while learning.

In an effort to increase our communication within the membership, Bill Walton and the social networking committee have been recruiting a social media intern to provide a student or early-career aquaculture professional the opportunity to connect with other aquaculture professionals and help enhance and diversify the USAS's social media presence. If you have news or would like to spotlight U.S.

regional perspectives or species, student research, aquaculture organization activities or other pertinent U.S. aquaculture tidbits please contact Bill.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to lead USAS. I welcome input on how the chapter can better serve the society, the members and the aquaculture community.

Sincerely,

David Cline – President

Table 1. Current USAS Membership*

Industry 5%	Academic 15%
Extension 15%	Research 40%
Producers 5%	Government 20%

*Based on member self-identification

Table 2. 2017-18 USAS Executive Committee

Past President	Gef Flimlin
President	David Cline
President Elect	David Straus
Vice President	Angela Caporelli
Secretary Treasurer	Matt Parker
Board Members	Allen Pattillo
	Eric Peatman
	Susan Laramore
	Bill Walton
Student Liaison	Carter Ullman