

*The SIMB 2017 election for board of directors will commence March 1 and conclude March 31, 2017.*

**Ballots must be cast no later than 12:00 midnight on March 31, 2017 for ballots to be included in the count. Members must be current in order to participate. Members will receive an email with instructions on how to access the voting module.**

## SIMB 2017 Board Election

### Candidate for President-Elect – Nigel Mouncey, PhD

#### DOE Joint Genome Institute, Walnut Creek, CA



I have had a long-lasting scientific curiosity and passion for microbiology that has been with me since growing up in rural England. The diversity of microbes and their

incredibly broad metabolic capabilities fascinates me and throughout my career I've had some terrific opportunities to work on ways where we can harness such biological power in order to improve our lives. My now 18-year professional career in Industrial Microbiology has taken me around the world and has allowed me to work with some incredible scientists and some very challenging microorganisms. Prior to my current role, I worked for Roche Vitamins and DSM Nutritional Products in both the US and Switzerland. Today, I am the R&D Director for Bioengineering and Bioprocessing R&D at Dow AgroSciences, I lead a talented team of about 60 people passionately developing and improving microbial strains and fermentation processes for insecticides, fungicides, propionic acid and other chemicals of commercial interest.

Throughout my career, I've always considered SIMB as the Society that you must belong to as an Industrial Microbiologist, in order to interact with the leading scientists in this space, to hear about the latest technological breakthroughs but also how to approach science and conduct yourself as a scientist. Over the years of my membership, I've been fortunate to be invited to give a number of presentations, including the Industry Award presentation in 2014. Our membership spans the full spectrum of diversity, and it was an honor to serve on the SIMB Diversity Committee over the last two years to further promote diversity in our Society and of our Society. This year, I took on the role of Chair of the SIMB Publications Committee to increase the quality and reputation of the Society's publications through working on a new contract with Springer, working with the editors and discussing a

possible Open Access journal for SIMB. Through these activities, I not only hope to be able to increase the revenue to the Society but also enhance the scientific profile of the Society.

#### **Vision for SIMB**

Industrial Microbiology is going through a resurgence, expanding the palate of microbial products from low-value platform chemicals and fuels to high-value specialties, advanced antimicrobials, biotherapeutics and even the application of microbes themselves to improve crop yields. SIMB will be the leading professional society in bringing together these diverse applications, to promote the developing and leveraging of the best technologies and scientific excellence across applications, to break down barriers between Industry and Academia to foster new partnerships and career development opportunities, and to proactively encourage and expand diversity in SIMB and our field. SIMB will play a key role across our field in promoting industrial microbiology and biotechnology and to build this community by expanding the Society's communication platforms and engagement, both domestically and internationally. I would like to see SIMB strengthen the links between academics and industrial microbiologists to accelerate advances in product and technology development. The development of the full repertoire of skills needed to becoming a successful scientist, whether in academia or industry, for early-career scientists (graduate students, postdocs, junior faculty and early stage industry career) needs to be a key part of SIMB's future and the Society should develop mentorship and training programs to effect this. I have gained a tremendous amount of valuable knowledge, colleagues and friends through my membership of SIMB and I thoroughly look forward to upholding the Society's Core Values though serving as President-Elect.

## Candidate for President-Elect – Stephen J. Van Dien, PhD Genomatica



I would be honored to serve on the SIMB board as President Elect, and am eager to increase the level of my contribution to the Society and the scientific field. I believe strongly in our mission to use microbiology and

biotechnology to address challenges facing the world today, and will strive to make SIMB a leader in this endeavor.

I feel I can make distinctive contributions in the following areas:

- ▶ Delivering on our strategic plan: I will promote our core values of scientific excellence, leadership, diversity, responsibility, passion for science, and communication. These values should permeate through all our meetings, publications, awards, and programs.
- ▶ Finding specific ways to boost mid-career scientists: This is something I feel personally and keenly connected to. How can we best help solid performers expand their horizons and capabilities, and also take an active role in the SIMB community?
- ▶ Attracting new, young members: I'd like to help us ratchet up our educational programs on timely and relevant skills, as well as provide career training and networking opportunities.
- ▶ Corporate membership: Industry has always played a vital role in the Society, from both a scientific and financial perspective. I will continue to encourage leading companies in bioprocessing, biocatalysis, metabolic engineering, and synthetic biology to become SIMB corporate members. Corporate visibility will lead the way to fulfilling our vision as the leading professional society in the field.

As an active member of SIMB, I have extracted immense career and scientific value through both technical presentations and personal interactions. I have learned

about new technologies, found inspiration and collaborators, and made new friends. I have been an exhibitor, poster presenter, oral presenter, session chair, and member of the program committee. In 2011, I was invited to be session chair for the 2012 Annual Meeting. Working with the Board and SIMB staff, I realized just how much goes on 'behind the scenes' to keep the Society, and particularly the meetings, running smoothly. I was elected to the Board of Directors in 2014, and am currently serving the last year of my term. As a member of the ad-hoc Committee on Corporate Engagement, I championed a new corporate member benefits structure and worked with the rest of the Board to agree on a proposal that made membership more attractive to companies without additional cost to the Society.

I look forward to even greater contributions to the Society as President.

Dr. Van Dien is an expert in the areas of metabolic engineering, industrial microbiology, systems biology, and microbial fermentation, and has been an active researcher in these areas since receiving his Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley in 1998 under the direction of Professor Jay Keasling. He has spent the last 13 years at Genomatica, leading the development of microbial strains for the production of chemicals from renewable feedstocks, including that for Genomatica's first commercial product, 1,4-butanediol (BDO). This process received the ACS/EPA Presidential Green Chemistry Award in 2011 and the Kirkpatrick Chemical Engineering Achievement Award in 2013. Dr. Van Dien has been an active member of SIMB since 2004, and a frequent speaker at the Annual Meeting, RAFT, and SBFC. He has chaired sessions at the Annual Meeting and RAFT the past several years, served on program committees, and in 2012 was Program Chair for the Annual Meeting. He continued his service as an SIMB Director for the past three years, and was also a member of the Corporate Engagement and Education committees.

## Candidate for Treasurer - Laura Jarboe, PhD Iowa State University, Iowa



Laura Jarboe is Associate Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering and Chair of the Interdepartmental Microbiology Graduate program at Iowa State University. Her undergraduate degree is from the University of Kentucky and her PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research focuses on metabolic engineering of microbes for the production of biorenewable fuels and chemicals, with a focus on engineering inhibitor tolerance for improved utilization of biomass-derived sugars and increased product titers.

She has been active in SIMB since 2008, including: chairing technical sessions, the student oral presentation session and the poster session; a founding member of the SIMB Diversity Committee; and co-leading a presentation in implicit bias at the 2016 Annual Meeting. She is also a member of the Young Professionals committee of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Her vision for SIMB includes continuation of the ongoing diversity efforts and efforts to increase recruiting of young professionals and exploration of strategies for increasing interactions with K14 students and teachers.

## Candidate for Treasurer – Jennifer L. Ton, MS Audentes Therapeutics, San Francisco, CA



Jeni has over 30 years of industrial process development experience, leading development of biologics, gene therapies, enzyme fermentations and biotransformation reactions. She led technology transfer of multiple processes from R&D to different manufacturing organizations around the world. She has supported two commercial products exceeding a billion dollar per year in revenue. Jeni has extensive experience managing multi-million dollar budgets in industry. She implemented a planning system in process development that enabled her department to manage to

budget with less than 2% variance from forecast. She is also the President of BioRox Inc., a bioprocess consulting company she founded in 2013.

Jeni has a B.S. in Bacteriology from UW-Madison and an M.S. in Biology (Biotechnology Core) from Illinois Institute of Technology. She has been a contributing member of SIMB for over 30 years. For over three years, she has chaired the SIMB Education and Outreach Committee. Under her leadership, workshop topics have broadened and been added to the RAFT program, additionally outreach programs have expanded. As Treasurer, Jeni will bring extensive experience in financial management to SIMB providing financial leadership and responsibility, ensuring programs are supported appropriately within budget and work collaboratively with the board to identify ways to maximize the value of membership.

## Candidate for Director – Yoram Barak, PhD BASF



I'm a group leader in the Fine Chemicals & Biocatalysis Research division at BASF for the last 4 years. In my current role I am leading a team in development of biobased chemicals and biocontrol topics. Prior to that I have been a technical leader at Codexis in the biobased chemicals arm of the company, working on various biobased chemicals and fuels from lignocellulosic sugars research topics, improving enzymes and strains using directed evolution. My background is in Animal Sciences and I have a PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where I researched combined Phosphate & Nitrate removal in Intensive fish culture systems. I then moved to carry postdoctoral training at Stanford University working at AC Matin's lab on directed evolution of enzymes for reductive cancer chemotherapy and heavy metals bioremediation.

I'm a SIMB member since 2009 and contributed to talks, session convening and recruiting events at SIMB.

The future of SIMB In my opinion predominantly relies on our ability to connect industry and academia with high quality presence and representation of front end microbiology science. SIMB vision and mission is well aligned with this perspective which I'm looking forward to support.

## Candidate for Director – Eli Groban, PhD Autodesk



Eli is a recognized Industry Leader with 8 years experience in metabolic engineering at Intrexon and LS9 and has consistently demonstrated success in many aspects of biological engineering for Fuel and Specialty Chemical production including pathway optimization, enzyme evolution, genetic modification, protein/pathway/whole strain mutagenesis, fermentation, and scale up. Eli is currently Head of Research in Autodesk's BioNano group, a team committed to moving biological design software from a barrier to an enabler of scientific progress. Prior to Autodesk, Eli led a team at Intrexon to upgrade Natural Gas to higher value fuels and chemicals, managing all aspects of development from molecular biology through fermentation and scale up accomplishing first of a kind production of liquid fuels from methane via microbial fermentation. Eli started his industry career at LS9, Inc, where his team engineered a microbial strain to produce fatty alcohol from sugar, meeting external specifications for composition, yield, titer, productivity, and scale.

Eli earned a Ph.D. in Biophysics from the University of California, San Francisco and has 6 patent applications/patents on the development of new technologies for engineering proteins, metabolic pathways, and microbial systems. Eli is passionate about the application and championing of metabolic engineering for bioindustrial applications and is a highly active member of the Society of Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology community, exemplified by presentations and chairing sessions at various SIMB meetings including the Annual Meetings and the Symposium on Fuels and Chemicals.

Most recently, Eli chaired the Committee on Corporate Engagement, leading the development of a plan to increase corporate participation in the Society. Eli's vision of SIMB is to be the leading society for industrial microbiology, paving the way to a future where microbial produced products are ubiquitous across all sectors.

## Candidate for Director – Michael Resch, PhD NREL



Michael Resch earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology from Colorado State University working on protein-DNA interactions in chromatin. Dr. Resch began his career at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in 2008 working on projects funded by industrial partnerships and the Department of Energy through the BioEnergy Science Center and the Bioenergy Technologies Office. In early 2011, he was hired by NREL as a Research Scientist and his own projects focused on improving the hydrolysis efficiency of cellulase and hemicellulase enzymes to lower the industrial cost of lignocellulosic enzyme conversion of biomass to sugars for biofuel and chemical production.

Dr. Resch is also involved in investigating biological lignin depolymerization with the ultimate goal of converting lignin into value-added fuels or chemicals. His current research at NREL focuses on characterizing metabolic enzymes involved with the upgrading of lignin and sugar derived intermediates into fuels and chemicals. Dr. Resch is currently the supervisor of the Bioprocess Research Group in NREL's National Bioenergy Center. The researchers in this diverse group are involved with microbial development of photobiological and fermentation applications.

Dr. Resch is a member of AAAS, ACS and on the *Journal of Biological Chemistry Editorial Board*. He has been a member of SIMB since 2008 and has contributed to the Symposium on Biotechnology for Fuels and Chemicals and SIMB Annual Meetings as a session convener/chair, and invited speaker, a poster presentater and most recently a member of the SIMB Annual Meeting Program Committee, since 2014 focusing on coordinating and planning of the Biocatalysis topic area. Michael's vision for SIMB would be to improve the conference experience for organizers and attendees by updating the online abstract submission system and initiating a more user-friendly smart phone program viewer. He is also dedicated to keeping SIMB meetings and publications subscribed by high impact academic and industrial science. Michael would like to see meetings programs flexible to integrate novel scientific topics and encourage young investigators to organize sessions along side scientific pioneers. All of this is in the hope to enable an atmosphere where international academic, industrial and government stakeholders can develop well-rounded meetings with diverse viewpoints.

Webpage: <http://www.nrel.gov/bioenergy/bios/michael-resch.html>