

# 2013 Board Election



## About the 2013 election process

The first step in the election process is the identification of the Nominating Committee (NC) of at least three SIMB members. The committee members are approved by the Board and serve only for the current year. Committee members cannot be reappointed within a three-year period. The NC proposes a slate of candidates (at least two candidates for each position) with input from the membership at large. The candidates must be Society members with a demonstrated interest and involvement in SIMB. Upon the acceptance of the nomination, the NC informs the candidates of the duties and responsibilities required by each position. In addition to the NC, candidates can be identified via Article 5, Section 4 in the SIMB Constitution using a petition

process. The final slate of candidates is due to the president by August 1. Candidates must submit a biography and photograph by October 1 for publication in *SIMB News* and for posting on the website for the online voting process.

After voting ends, the Election Committee (consisting of a minimum of two SIMB members) receives the tallies from online voting, as well as any paper ballots, and delivers the results to the president and secretary.

The election process and ballots are available for inspection for at least 30 days following the annual meeting. Ballots and records are destroyed six months after the election (unless otherwise directed by the Board) and final tabulations of the votes are preserved.

# 2013 Board Election

## Candidate for President - Tim Davies



Throughout my career in science I have been fortunate to experience many aspects of industrial microbiology and biotechnology. My early training came through an undergraduate degree in microbiology from the University of London with a dissertation on whisky fermentations with brewing industry veteran Dr. Derek Springham. A love for industrial fermentation processes was born. My PhD in Chemical Engineering allowed me to explore the other side of fermentation science - from the engineering as well as microbiological angle. The next 15 years were spent at the University of Georgia, but working very much on industrial processes - first with Prof. Lars Ljungdahl on acetogenic bacteria, extremophiles and hydrolytic enzymes, and then running a contract biomanufacturing facility where I worked with some 150 different

academic establishments, research centres, and companies. During this time I worked on projects ranging from pharmaceuticals to biofuels to reagents to environmental products and gained insight and understanding of the entire sector and into the issues and drivers that affect industrial microbiologists.

Membership in SIM (and then SIMB) was natural for someone with my background and interests. My first event was the 1999 RAFT meeting. I immediately felt that I had found my niche. My first annual meeting was in 2000, and in 2001 in St. Louis I chaired my first session. More session chairing responsibilities followed and I joined the Annual Meeting Program Committee in 2007. In 2009 I was program chair for the annual meeting in Toronto. This position allowed me to attend board meetings, learning more about society operations and the challenges of running SIM. In 2011 I chaired the RAFT meeting for the first time. I will chair RAFT again in 2013. My conference responsibilities and board experience encouraged me to stand as a director of the Society. In 2013 my three-year term as director will end. Given my experience, this will be the perfect time for me to extend my service to the Society as president.

The Society has been through some challenging years, but it has been reinvigorated with a name change; is on more sound financial footing; has a flourishing journal; and membership numbers have increased. My challenge as president

will be to hold this course, strengthening the Society while increasing its visibility to potential members and other stakeholders in academia, industry, and government. The society should have a stronger voice and more influence in issues surrounding industrial microbiology and biotechnology. To do so it needs a vibrant and engaged membership. As a European, industry based scientist with a US, academic background I will seek to develop the international footprint of the Society. Many of our conference delegates come from Europe, South America, and Asia. Many of the submissions to our journal are also international. We need to strengthen ties with individuals and organisations in those areas, and work on representing them and assisting them in their careers. SIMB has always been a welcoming society and we should work on welcoming all industrial microbiologists to the society, providing them with sound reasons to become involved.

It has been a joy to be a part of SIMB for the past decade and a half, and an honour to represent the membership in conferences and on the board. I look forward to having the opportunity to continuing this service to the Society as president.

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## Candidate for President - Elisabeth Elder

Members of the Society are generally very active as indicated by their willingness to publish in *JIMB* and *SIMB News*, develop annual and special topic meetings, attend meetings, make presentations, serve on the Board of Directors and on committees, and support local branches. This level of activity indicates the importance of the Society to the members. Along with a number of other SIMB members, I am part of the Quarter Century Club. My participation in the Society has included: chairing the Publicity and Internet Committee and the Education Committee; serving on the Publications Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Planning Committee; serving two terms (six years) as Secretary; and currently serving as Editor-in-Chief of *SIMB News*. My activities have been, and continue to be, part of my career as an educator and an applied microbiologist. Following the completion of a doctorate in microbiology at Texas A&M University, I taught at Georgia Southwestern State University for twenty-three years, then moved to Louisiana State University at Alexandria, where I have taught for the last ten years. Participation in SIMB, which has helped me remain current in many aspects of mi-

crobiology and has fostered my interest in research, has been important in both of my positions.

Based on recent and ongoing initiatives of many presidents and board members, there are several goals that I would suggest pursuing if elected President. One would be to continue the expansion of the media campaign. The more people connected through Facebook, LinkedIn, and the website, the more current members will be kept involved and the more new members will be attracted to the group. In a time when society memberships are generally declining, maintaining and increasing membership is very important. Another goal would be to continue the support of the existing publications and to pursue the development of an online access journal. Both of these are essential to current and new members and to the scientific community in general. In addition, ways to attract students and recent graduates to the Society would be pursued. This could be through increasing focused opportunities for poster and oral presentations and through encouraging participation on committees. A reason for my continuing membership was the welcome I re-



ceived as a new member. We, as current members, need to be sure to acknowledge new members – a not cost way to encourage membership and to retain the collegiality of the Society.

Thank you for your attention. I appreciate being considered as a candidate for President.

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# 2013 Board Election

## Candidate for Director - Adam Burja



Adam Burja is currently the Synthetic Biology Manager at BP Biofuels, based at the Global Technology Centre in San Diego, CA. He has a BSc in Biology from the University of Melbourne, Australia and a PhD in Biochemical Engineering from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland. Trained as a classical microbiologist and working at Australia's High Biocontainment Facility and the Australian Institute of Marine Science, Adam's early work focussed on the isolation and culture of a diverse collection of microorganisms

each having unique natural product chemistries for a variety of health and nutrition uses. This developed into an interest in the development of microbes as cell factories for the commercial-scale production of high value bioproducts, and became the topic of his PhD. He next moved into industry, being involved in the development of several nutraceuticals and biofuels, each developed by coupling advanced fermentation science with systems biology and metabolic engineering. For the past ten years, he has worked with some of the largest bio-based and biofuels companies in the world. Adam has extensive experience in project management, contract negotiations, grant writing, intellectual property portfolio management, and commercial and R&D strategy. He has been awarded over \$6M in funding globally; has published over three dozen peer reviewed papers; has multiple granted patents and applications, and presented at numerous government sponsored and academic, industrial biotechnology meetings around the globe.

Adam has been a member of SIMB for 15 years now, having first joined while a PhD student and maintaining his

membership while living and working in Canada and the United States. His contributions to the Society include: serving as an editorial contributor for *SIMB News*; publishing in both *JIMB* and *Net News*; serving as Session Chair and poster judge at multiple SIMB Annual Meetings (AM); hosted and participated in several Student Mentoring Luncheons at AMs; presented oral and poster presentations numerous times over the years and in 2010 was Program Chair at the AM in San Francisco.

Adam is honoured to have been selected as a candidate for a Director position on the SIMB Board of Directors. The Society is unique in its ability to be relevant for its mix of world renowned, established, and new academic and industrial members from around the world. If elected, Adam plans to continue to stimulate this success while enhancing the Society's relevance by promoting the dissemination of biotechnology approaches which combine advances in fermentation sciences with strain development approaches such as synthetic and systems biology.

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# 2013 Board Election

## Candidate for Director - Ramon Gonzalez

Ramon Gonzalez is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering and Bioengineering at Rice University, where he leads the Metabolic Engineering and Synthetic & Systems Biology Laboratory with the long-term goal of understanding and harnessing microbial and cellular metabolism. The lab's discovery that *Escherichia coli* can anaerobically ferment glycerol laid the foundation for the development of technologies to convert glycerol to higher-value products. Dr. Gonzalez received the prestigious National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career (CAREER) award to conduct research in this area and the 2010 SDA/NBB Glycerine Innovation Research Award from the American Oil Chemists' Society. In 2007, Dr. Gonzalez co-founded Glycos Biotechnologies, Inc., with the goal of commercializing sustainable chemicals produced from diverse renewable feedstocks. Dr. Gonzalez has published over 50 articles in leading scientific journals and is the lead inventor in four patents or patent applications. He is also Senior Editor of the *Journal of Industrial Microbiology & Biotechnology* and member of the editorial board of *Applied & Environmental Microbiology*, *Applied*

*Biochemistry & Biotechnology*, and *Food Biotechnology*. He served as Program Chair of the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology.

Dr. Ramon Gonzalez currently serves as a Program Director at the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) of the US Department of Energy. His areas of technical focus include biological conversion of natural gas and other sources of methane to liquid fuels as well as direct synthesis of liquid fuels from carbon dioxide and energy sources (such as electricity and hydrogen).

Dr. Gonzalez received a PhD in Chemical Engineering from the University of Chile, an MS in Biochemical Engineering from the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso (Chile), and a BS in Chemical Engineering from the Central University of Las Villas (Cuba).

### Past SIMB experience and future contributions

- Program Chair of 61<sup>st</sup> SIMB Annual Meeting (2011, New Orleans, LA)
- Senior Editor, *JIMB* (2010-Present)
- Organized and chaired several ses-



sions at SIMB annual meetings (2009-Present)

- Chaired sessions at SBFC
- Plans to strengthen relationship between SIMB and other professional societies, increase corporate and individual membership, and increase SIMB visibility in the broader scientific and industrial communities.

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## Candidate for Director - Ann Keeley



SIMB has been a central and inspiring part of Anne's professional career, which

was initiated by presenting her first scientific poster at the SIMB Annual Meeting in 1989. Anne has authored and served as reviewer for JIMB. During the past five years, she has strengthened her commitment to SIMB by serving as session convener and as chair or co-chair for the Environmental Microbiology track for the Annual Meeting Program Committee. After receiving her PhD from Mississippi State University in Applied and Environmental Microbiology, Anne acquired several years of experience in academia and with an environmental consulting company prior to joining the US EPA. Her research career has emphasized the development of ground water remedial technologies through biogeochemical and molecular

biological tools. As Director, she wants to work to ensure that SIMB remains fiscally sound. She believes if we can expand SIMB membership and increase the involvement of the members, we can support the Society's strength fiscally and scientifically.

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# 2013 Board Election

## Candidate for Director - Debbie Yaver

Debbie received her PhD in Microbiology from UC Davis. Prior to her graduate work Debbie worked for two years at SRI International in the microbiology department on oil field microbiology. Debbie has been with Novozymes, the world's largest supplier of industrial enzymes and microorganisms, for 20 years. At Novozymes Debbie directs research departments that focus on engineering microbial strains for production of enzymes, other proteins, and small molecules as well as genomics and bioinformatics. She is an inventor on many patents and author of several publications. Debbie has remained active at UC Davis where she has taught for many years a graduate level seminar on industrial biotechnology from discovery to product, which is part of the Designated Emphasis in Biotechnology program. Debbie is also a member of the Executive Committee for the UC Davis NIH Training Grant for Biomolecular Technology, the Advisory Committee of the UC Davis CREATE-IGERT Training program, and the

Advisory Board for the Center for Biocatalysis and Bioprocessing at University of Iowa. Outside of work Debbie enjoys running, gardening, reading, and spending time with her family.

Debbie has been active in SIMB for many years. She has been a member since 2006. Novozymes has been a Diamond Corporate Member of SIMB since 1979 and has been a consistent sponsor of the SIMB Annual Meeting as well as the Symposium on Biotechnology for Fuels and Chemicals. Debbie has been a speaker as well as chaired sessions at SIMB annual meetings and is currently a member of the Annual Meeting Program Committee for the Biocatalysis track. She was also on the Organizing Committee for SIMB's 2012 Recent Advances in Microbial Control meeting.

Debbie's vision for SIMB is that the Society continues to organize high quality meetings that bring together scientists from around the world to share recent results, forge collaborations, and discuss



important issues and trends in industrial microbiology and biotechnology. She would also like to see the Society's journal *JIMB* continue to increase its impact factor and citation index so that it becomes a top journal for industrial microbiology and biotechnology.

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