

2014 Board Election

Candidate for President-elect - Scott Baker



Scott Baker is a scientist at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland, Washington. At PNNL, Dr. Baker serves as the Science Theme Lead for Biology at the Environmental Molecular Science Laboratory (EMSL), a DOE National User Facility at PNNL. His research has been primarily focused on using genetic, genomic and proteomic strategies to understand important problems in fungal biology. Before joining PNNL in 2003, Dr. Baker studied epithelial cell adhesion in mammalian cell and tissue culture at Northwestern University, where he received his PhD in 1996. His postdoctoral studies included cell adhesion in a genetic system, i.e., the fruitfly,

Drosophila melanogaster at the University of Arizona. Dr. Baker's experience also includes work at the Torrey Mesa Research Institute (TMRI)/Syngenta, where he was a member of a team that took a genomics-based approach to the study of fungal plant pathogens. When TMRI was sold to Diversa, a biotech company, he continued to work on fungal genomics, but with an industrial emphasis.

Dr. Baker has been a member of SIMB since 2004. Most recently he was a Director on the SIMB Board of Directors and served on the SIMB Awards Committee. Prior to that, he was involved in SIMB Annual Meetings, organizing sessions and serving on the Program Committee. In addition, Dr. Baker is currently the Chair of the IUMS Mycology Division and serves on the IUMS Executive Board.

SIMB

SIMB has played an important role in my scientific career and I have gained tremendous experience organizing Annual Meeting sessions and serving on the SIMB Board of Directors. The life of a scientist and the missions of professional societies are changing in an age where social media and scientific publishing are rapidly evolving. The challenge moving forward for SIMB is to maintain and grow our membership while continuing

to provide opportunities to our all of our members. SIMB should continue to grow its presence online as well as provide opportunities for networking through the conferences that we organize. It is also exceedingly important that SIMB stay at the cutting edge of science, making sure that our publications, social media and conferences offer quality platforms for microbiology and biotechnology research, from "classical" genetics to synthetic biology. I am grateful for the opportunities that the Society has provided for my professional development and I look forward to helping others grow their careers through their membership in SIMB.

2014 Board Election

Candidate for President-elect - Debbie Chadick

Debbie Chadick has been an active member of the SIMB for 37 years. She was co-chair of a Food Safety Special Conference and prepared a display commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Society. As the current chairperson of the Election and Archives Committees, Debbie continues to prepare archival presentations at annual meetings. She is also an assistant editor with the SIMB News and has authored several features which highlighted various historical aspects of SIMB. Ms. Chadick was one of the founding organizers of the Women's Symposium and assisted with the second symposium for the 2013 annual meeting.

Ms. Chadick retired after 31 years as an applied industrial microbiologist with Altria, Inc. She was responsible for all aspects of tobacco microbiome as it related to product and process control. Other research involved the successful optimization of a naturally occurring biotransformation for the remediation of a waste stream. Ms. Chadick introduced the use of shelf-life and preservative efficacy studies to evaluate new preservatives and to establish quality assurance and control protocols including the use of bio-luminescence as a quick monitor-

ing tool for contamination. Ms. Chadick was also selected by Altria to participate in several task forces to establish a corporate-wide quality control system.

SIMB

I heard a comment during this year's annual meeting that microbiology is experiencing a "new renaissance." Industrial microbiologists are needed more than ever to do translational research that addresses challenges in the production of energy, biopharmaceuticals, natural products, sustainable agriculture, biocatalysis, fermentations and bioremediation. Technological advancements have provided new and much needed tools for microbial based research and industrial applications. The microbiologists using those tools are the foundation of SIMB strengths and can lead the society into the future. SIMB is in a favorable position to provide a home for the growing ranks of microbiologists. I want to foster a society that provides a home for both students and career microbiologists thereby, not only increasing our membership, but sustaining our society in the future. I will also encourage the members to become more involved in SIMB and expand our



global presence by collaborating with like-minded societies. I will strengthen those associations by working with the SIMB Board of Directors, staff, and members to assure our Society conferences, workshops, publications, newsletters and other outreach activities continue to provide the venue for applied microbiologists at all points in their career.

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2014 Board Election

Candidate for Treasurer - Neal Connors



Dr. Neal Connors is currently the owner/president of Phoenix BioConsulting, LLC – a company providing consulting services to the industrial microbiology and biotechnology sectors – and a member of the Drew University, Research Institute for Scientists Emeriti (RISE). He has been a member of SIMB since his graduate school days and has been active in the society for the past several years. He has served as president (2011-2012), director (2006-2009), program chair for the 2006 Annual Meeting and Exhibition, and pro-

gram chair for the 2003 Recent Advances in Fermentation Technology meeting (RAFT V). He is currently serving on the editorial boards for the Journal of Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology and Enzyme and Microbial Technology.

Neal received his BS in Biology from Norwich University in 1984 and his PhD in Microbiology from Ohio State University in 1991. From 1991 to 2008, he was in the Bioprocess R&D department of Merck & Co., Inc. rising to the level of senior investigator. His bioprocess development experience reflects many of SIMB's core areas: fermentation and strain improvement for the production of anti-bacterial and anti-fungal natural products (e.g., Cancidas®), monoclonal antibody production using mammalian cell culture and recombinant yeast expression systems, whole-cell biocatalysis for the production of chiral intermediates, and fermentation of pathogenic bacteria for polysaccharide vaccine development. He is a contributing author on numerous peer-reviewed papers, book chapters, patents and conference abstracts.

While the society is run by scientists for scientists, it is first and foremost a business and its finances must be man-

aged like any other business. As a small business owner himself, Neal appreciates the revenue stream, expense, and cash flow issues the society faces. Continuing to provide value to meeting attendees and members while controlling costs is a key to the society's success. In addition to being the steward of SIMB's finances, the Treasurer must also be a productive member of the board and Neal's previous six years of experience on the board will allow him to continue helping the society navigate the challenges of the future.

2014 Board Election

Candidate for Treasurer - Jan Westpheling

After receiving her undergraduate degree in Microbiology from Purdue University, Dr. Westpheling worked as a research technician at Eli Lilly and Company for two years, with Steve Queener and Dick Baltz. She was a graduate student with David Hopwood at the John Innes Institute in Norwich, England where she received her Ph.D. in Genetics. After a brief postdoc with Julian Davies (on his way to Biogen) she did postdoctoral work with Richard Losick at Harvard. She is currently a Professor of Genetics at the University of Georgia and runs an active research program funded by the Department of Energy. Her research interests focus on the development of genetic methods for the manipulation of hyperthermophilic anaerobic bacteria that produce biofuels and bioproducts from lignocellulosic biomass. Recent work from her lab reports the direct conversion of biomass to ethanol by the anaerobic hyperthermophile, *Caldicellulosiruptor*. Jan has maintained an active interest and participation in both industrial and academic research and has been involved in SIMB activities

for many years. She has been a speaker, workshop participant, and session organizer for both the SIMB Annual Meeting and the Symposium on Biotechnology for Fuels and Chemicals. She currently serves on the Executive Committee for the Fuels and Chemicals Meeting. She also serves on a number of Industrial Scientific Advisory Boards, reviews for prominent journals, and serves on national and international committees for science. Her service to SIMB includes a term as a Member of the Board of Directors, Chair of the Publicity Committee, Chair of the Education Committee and she is the current Society Treasurer.

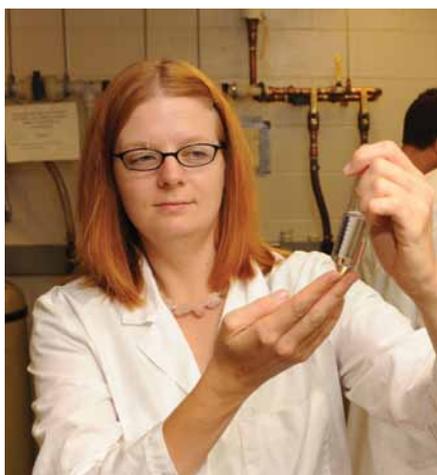
During her three-year term as Treasurer the Society has gone from a substantial deficit to a profit with projections to increase revenues without increasing membership fees. She seeks a second/final term to continue to work towards a stable financial buffer for SIMB with a view to using reserves to facilitate new initiatives for new meetings, expansion of the scientific mission of SIMB and to reach out to the greater scientific community



to keep SIMB science relevant and at the cutting edge of Industrial Microbiology. Examples of this include expanded sessions on synthetic biology and genomics at existing meetings, and a new SIMB meeting on Natural Product Antibiotics that will be held in January, 2015.

2014 Board Election

Candidate for Director - Laura Jarboe



Laura Jarboe received her B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Kentucky and PhD in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering from University of California, Los Angeles. After working as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Florida's Center for Renewable Fuels and Chemicals she joined Iowa State University's Chemical and Biological Engineering department in 2008. She is affiliated with ISU's graduate programs in Microbiology; Bioinformatics and Computational Biology; and Toxicology.

Jarboe's research focuses on Metabolic Engineering for microbial robustness, particularly in regards to biocatalyst

inhibition by the product or by "dirty" biomass-derived sugars. Her approach to engineering robustness relies on a fundamental understanding of the mechanism of inhibition, typically identified through omics and phenotypic analysis, as well as reverse engineering of evolved strains. In work with the NSF Engineering Research Center for Biorenewable Chemicals, we are addressing tolerance of short-chain carboxylic acids. Another project focuses on biocatalyst inhibition by contaminants in "dirty" sugars produced by thermochemical processing of biomass. Two other projects include production of omega-3-fatty acids by marine bacteria (an industrial collaboration) and identifying mechanisms of bacterial attachment to environmental particles.

Jarboe has shown a dedication to education by mentoring more than 50 undergraduate researchers, teaching a graduate-level Metabolic Engineering course and introducing biological concepts to core undergraduate Chemical Engineering courses. She has performed outreach activities and hosted K12 researchers and teachers in her lab, hosted a "Metabolic Engineering" webinar for K14 teachers and interacted with Iowa's Community College Biology instructors to design biotechnology-related course modules.

Previous service to SIMB includes acting as session (co-)chair (2010, 2011), co-organizer and moderator of the student oral session (2011, 2012, 2013), poster session (co-) chair (2011, 2012, 2013), poster judge (2011, 2012), participant in the 2012 student mentoring luncheon and various oral and poster presentations since 2007.

Laura is honored to have been selected as a candidate for a Director position. Since first attending an SIMB meeting in 2007, this Society has proven to be an excellent venue for the exchange of ideas, particularly between industry and academic participants. The frequent opportunities for interactions between SIMB members and the encouragement of participation by young researchers are particularly appealing. If elected to the SIMB Board of Directors, Laura plans to encourage increased visibility for both the Society and the associated JIMB publication; increased member participation within SIMB and JIMB; increased awareness of collaborations that have arisen from SIMB activities; and promoting discussion of outreach opportunities for future scientists.

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2014 Board Election

Candidate for Director - Steve Van Dien

Dr. Van Dien is an expert in the areas of metabolic engineering, industrial microbiology, systems biology, and microbial fermentation. As Director of Technology Development at Genomatica he leads the company's efforts at engineering microbes for the production of industrial chemicals from renewable resources. He received his BS in Chemical Engineering at Rice University in 1991, and a doctorate in Chemical Engineering from U.C. Berkeley under the direction of Professor Jay Keasling. After postdoctoral positions with Victor de Lorenzo in Madrid, Spain and Mary Lidstrom at the University of Washington, he was recruited by Ajinomoto Co. (Kawasaki, Japan). He joined Genomatica as a Senior Research Scientist in 2003, where he focused on the integration of metabolic models with experimental data, and led the company's efforts in the bioprocessing sector. As Director, he then led a team to develop a process for the production of 1,4-butanediol (BDO) from sugars, a process which received the ACS/EPA Presidential Green Chemistry Award in 2011 and the Kirkpatrick Chemical Engineering Achievement Award in 2013. In addition, he is co-author of over 25 journal articles covering both experimental and theoretical aspects of microbiology and metabolic engineering, and inventor on five issued US patents in the areas of specific chemical production strains and processes. He 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 as Program Chair for the 2012 Annual Meeting, and is currently on the program committee in Metabolic Engineering.

SIMB

I would be honored to serve as a member of the SIMB board, and am eager to contribute to the Society and the industry.

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

- Further bolstering our content: To me, this is the core of our reason for being. I'd like to work with the board and our members to develop better ways to reach out and get the leaders in our field to share their work – through our journal, at meetings, and via educational 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 SIMB?
- Introducing more 'commercializability' thinking into our meetings: We do and share great science at our meetings. But I know that many, like myself, want to better understand what it takes to turn their innovations into reality. My experiences at Genomatica provide valuable lessons here, and could translate into additional important lines of discussion at our meetings.
- 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.

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 serve as program 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. This experience helped fuel my current passion to expand my role with SIMB.

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