

—President's Message

Like many other organizations that have successfully navigated challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, The Optical Society has continued to serve our community with virtual conferences and meetings. Leveraging optical technologies to connect and forge new partnerships during this unprecedented global health crisis, OSA has extensively served our international network of scientists, engineers and students.

Yet this engagement and outreach began long before the pandemic. Over the last two decades, OSA's membership base, international events, programs and products have all grown tremendously. Our society is truly global, with over 432,000 customers in 181 countries. OSA organizes about 30 conferences, congresses and meetings annually, with registrants drawn from around the world. OSA's portfolio of journals likewise features a global slate of contributing authors and reviewers, and serves the needs of academia and industry worldwide. As part of the society's core value of inclusivity, OSA journals and conferences offer significantly reduced fees to researchers from emerging economies.

This year, OSA has highlighted its efforts to support innovation in the field—by participants ranging from students to Nobel Laureates—in a series of articles and podcasts titled “We Are OSA” (www.osa.org/WeAreOSA), which I encourage you to explore. The series offers a curated collection of inspirational stories and perspectives from scientists and engineers changing our world for the better. From OSA Ambassadors describing their career journeys to members working on the challenge of increasing diversity in STEM, the narratives provide a compelling view of the state of our industry and the accomplishments of our peers.

In one podcast episode, 2011 OSA President Chris Dainty and OSA volunteer Arlene Smith describe their mentor-mentee relationship and how it has impacted their own research and contributions. Both Chris and Arlene have served in many capacities as OSA volunteers—Chris as a deputy editor for *Optics Express* and an active member of OSA's Presidential Advisory Committee and the Strategic Planning Council, and Arlene as general chair for the Applied Industrial Optics meeting and of the editorial board of the magazine you're reading, to name only a few.

Another episode explores the personal stories of four emerging leaders in optics and photonics and their involvement in the community that helped shape their careers. OSA Ambassadors Amol Choudhary, Chad Husko, Gabrielle Thomas and Mengjie Yu describe their experiences as volunteers, serving as traveling lecturers and educating their local communities about the society's mission.

These testimonials illustrate how scientists and engineers in different parts of the world have embraced OSA as their professional home and continue to view the society as an international organization. This is particularly important to me, as I have always viewed science as the best language to connect people, and scientists as the best bridges among cultures. I have always experienced OSA as a global organization, whose mission is to serve our community across geographic boundaries.

This is your society as well as mine. Become involved as a volunteer; collaborate and join in its efforts to foster young scientists and engineers, and to advance groundbreaking discoveries to make our world better.



I have always viewed science as the best language to connect people, and scientists as the best bridges among cultures.

—Constance Chang-Hasnain,
OSA President