

## **Developing Food Safety Professionals PDG**

**Members Present:** Angelica O'Shaughnessy, Wendy White, Betsy Booren, Renee Boyer, Lynette Johnston, Keith Lampel, Tatiana Lorca, Nenge Njongmeta, Aaron Uesugi and Hyun- Gyun Yuk.

**New Members Present:** Chris Seeber, Sara Mortimore, Angela Valadez, Zeynal Topalcengiz, Charles Muyanja, Adam Borger, Chantal Nde, Rachel McEgan, Kirsten Hirneisen, Saeed Hayek, Vinoth Thirugnanasambantham, Chayapa Techathuvanan, Wei Chen, Han Wen, Julia DeNiro, Lauren Hudson, Stephanie Mako, Jessica Chen, Ruth Oni, Kristin Gulrud, Alma-Sue Haiduk, Sana Hussain, Apurba Chakraborty, Elizabeth Noelia Williams, Yangyang Wang, Hyun-Jung Chung, Aixia, Xu, Diezhang Wu, Yue Cui, Lee Carella, Paul Tayler, Nasandra Wright and Betsy Booren.

**Board/Staff Members Present:** Donald Schaffner.

**Visitors/Guests:** Pierre Louis Thiney (Guest Speaker), Sara Mortimore (Guest Speaker), Joshua Gurtler (Guest Speaker), Jennifer Shields, Rachelle Woods, Gregory Pluimer, Margaret Duckson, Jason Levy, Lily Yang, Stephanie Pollard, Raul Saucedo, Pei Liu, Yee Ming Lee, Pardeepinder Brer, Zhoy Yang, Sharon Birkett, You Li, Alex Brandt, Joanne Ruebl, Sujata Sirsa and Hannah Caputi.

**Meeting Called to Order:** 10:00 a.m., Sunday, July 28, 2013.

**Recording Secretary of Minutes:** Wendy White.

**New Business:** Don Schaffner, our Executive Board Liaison, gave us a board update. He told us that this meeting had record attendance and encouraged all to download the IAFP Smartphone App. He also encouraged our membership to hold webinars, throughout the year.

The PDG invited three speakers to share best practices and advice on strengthening our members' careers:

Pierre Louis Thiney, bioMérieux, provided the group with innovative career advice for going beyond the "QA Manager" role to really break into senior management. Pierre Louis began by giving us a peak into his developing years; how diversifying his experiences was vital to becoming well rounded (time in the laboratory, marketing, project manager, R&D) which ultimately proved invaluable to gaining advancement. He also took advantage of international opportunities and moved overseas to further enhance his development. He advised the group to first figure out where you want your career to head, and (almost as important) what you do NOT want to do/live. Don't necessarily take each and every position available/offered to you. Sometime the wrong step actually sets you back. Each individual is responsible for steering their career path and need to have a strategic plan.

Make sure you like what you do. Your passion will be noticed and your superiors will take that into consideration when opportunities arise. Also make sure that your immediate family is aligned with your desired path (Are they willing to move overseas,

will they support you in a highly demanding job?). Learn as much about the company and tailor your behaviors accordingly. Find a mentor (not your boss) and ask them questions and advice. Network within your own company, stretch your reach outside your department or business unit. That will eventually bring you more opportunities. Think, talk, dress like an executive. Look to not only enhance your technical skills, but your overall personal presentation.

Sara Mortimore, Land 'O' Lakes, introduced our membership to Land 'O' Lakes' innovative internship programs. She began by giving us a brief overview on LOL's strategy on recruiting young talent, which centers around a very structured program with a sharp strategic focus. Details include: targeting schools, 3 month length, potential for 2 internships in different areas. LOL had 24 interns inside the Supply Chain department in 2013. High performing interns were offered an opportunity to come back and participate in the 2-year TAP (talent acceleration program) Rotational Program. There is also a leadership development program for promising young employees.

The feedback from participants was that these programs gave them a real thorough snapshot of their entire company, not just a single project, gives them a well-rounded experience. The company gives them three major educational interventions: orientation, mid-session training/development, end of internship presentation at corporate; also opportunities to tour other plants and suppliers. There is also a scheduled opportunity to network with executives; one-on-one meetings to ask questions/advice. The company benefits greatly from the great body of work produced by these students, the opportunity to give back and start the development of these young people, and access to this pool of potential employees. The end goal of this comprehensive initiative is to replenish an aging work force.

Josh Gurtler, USDA, advised the group on becoming more active in IAFP & tips for developing symposia.

Four Major Principles:

1. Networking – Every person you meet is a potential employer, employee, President of IAFP. IAFP is a very friendly group, be sure to always carry business cards (if you don't have any, have some made, it's a sound investment, and their cheap). Write some reference notes on back of business cards you collect from others (where you met them, what you talked about). Don't come-off as a sycophant or overly ambitious. Ideas on where can you meet people (airport, elevator, pre-meeting workshop, work-out room, lunches, sessions, exhibitor floor, in the halls, talk to the speakers after sessions, PDG). Hang out with people other than those you know. Attend the IAFP business meeting; it's a smaller venue that attracts some influential individuals.
2. Don't burn bridges–If you burn a bridge, it will come back to haunt you; don't be a jerk, avoid negativity. This is an extremely small field.
3. Volunteer – This is an amazingly easy way to get your name "out there". Get to know IAFP staff and board, introduce yourself and ask how you can help.

Student judging, local meeting planning, help with workshops, session monitor, ask to help at a PDG.

4. Show more interest in others than yourself – help others, it comes back. Even if you remember someone from a past meeting, introduce yourself every time you see them (they might not remember you) to avoid awkward situations.

Tips to Develop Symposia:

1. A symposia's purpose is to educate; focus on what people want to know or need to know.
2. Sometime good topics trump a good team. If your talks sound interesting, they will yield a better turn- out than well-known speakers on the agenda. Topic needs to be original, innovative, maybe something that hasn't come up in a few years.
3. Keep a list of symposia ideas; talk to colleagues about it all year round. You can also arrange a debate/round table that will generate good discussion.
4. Choose speakers who will draw a crowd.
5. Use interactive feedback device (IAFP will rent equipment for you).
6. Do a good job, because you want to develop a good reputation inside this organization, so you'll be asked to speak at future events.

Wendy White informed the group that the PDG would like to have a Student Liaison and for any interested students to approach her after the meeting. Due to the great number of interested members, the Chair and Vice Chair do not believe that we should just select one, but create some forum to utilize all the interested students in some way. It will be an agenda topic, during the next PDG conference call, which we hope to have in the third quarter.

Wendy White reminded the membership that we will be selecting a new Vice Chair (pending Board approval) and to contact Wendy or Angelica for more information.

**Old Business:** A Speed Networking Event, a successful event held during the 2012 PDG meeting, took place. This event was very successful and gave the chance for everyone to have a one-on-one with another member for a 3-minute interval. This was well received by the membership and it was recommended that we hold the event again.

#### **Recommendations to the Executive Board:**

1. If possible, for next year's PDG meeting, we're requesting an end room and possibly an empty "buffer room" between this PDG and other meetings. Our "speed networking" sessions get a little loud, and a buffer will serve to ensure we're not disturbing other meetings. We had record attendance this year; we'd like to keep the large sized room. This year's room size was perfect.
2. We recommend that there is not a Student Liaison position for this PDG next year. We've had multiple students interested in this position and would like to find a way to leverage all their energy and talents.

**Next Meeting Date:** August 3, 2013 (or alternate date per the IAFFP Board).

**Meeting Adjourned:** 12:05 p.m.

**Chairperson:** Angelica O'Shaughnessy.