2018-19 Chapter Season
Membership Attendance - Retention and Growing
Meeting Attendance

The ASM Detroit Chapter Board has remained focused on its purpose to advance, promote and disseminate scientific, engineering and technical knowledge through innovative programming, technical training/seminars, and networking/social events. At a time when the professional society landscape continues to be challenged with declining memberships and significant changes in members’ professional, educational and social needs, the ASM-Detroit Chapter has focused its efforts to remain a healthy chapter by bringing value to its over 600 members.

The ASM-Detroit Chapter revamped its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan to ensure the Chapter continues to deliver optimal value to its membership. The Board recognized that one measure of success would be to retain and grow meeting attendance and reverse the flat-to-downward trend that had been generally observed. The Chapter set a goal to improve meeting attendance 5% year-over-year.

Firstly, the Chapter meeting/programming needs to be of interest to its diverse membership. So as part of the Strategic Plan, the Board agreed to survey its members more frequently to make sure the programming was aligned to its members’ interests. For example, during the 2018-2019 Chapter Year, the programming consisted of a traditional mix of metallic alloy, processing and heat treatment topics, but also included newer innovative topics in Bio-Based Materials and Additive Manufacturing. Secondly, with the adoption of a multiple-venue approach of rotating the meetings around to different Metro Detroit locations, this offered different members an opportunity to attend based on convenience and geographical location. Finally, the Chapter ensured that the overall experience at the technical meeting was exceptional. In order to accomplish this, the approach was quite simple:

1. Provide a welcoming table, hosted by the Chapter Administrator and at least one other Board Member.
   - Provide a special welcome for first time guests/visitors.
   - Allow for quick check-in for all attendees (including online pre-pay or credit card options).
   - Advertise future meetings/events.

2. Record and report membership attendance to Chapter meetings and events.
   - Detailed tracking of attendance at each meeting and event
   - Executive Board report-out following each Chapter meeting/event and discussion at the following Chapter’s Executive Board meeting.

3. Seek opportunities to improve membership experience at Chapter meetings and events.
   - Working with multiple venues to optimize room setup based on anticipated number of guests. Audio/Visual equipment setup ahead of time and functioning.
- Make hardcopy Chapter Newsletters available at dinner tables to advertise future meetings and events.
- Ensure adequate meal selections available, considering dietary restrictions/preferences.
- Keeping to the Program schedule, respecting attendees personal time.

Through the efforts of the Board, the attendance at the Chapter Meetings has successfully surpassed the 5% year-over-year increase target since adopting the five-year Strategic Plan. The upward trend in attendance since 2015 is shown below.

Since the 2015-2016 Chapter Year ($\bar{x}_{\text{att.}} = 42$), the Chapter has seen increases of 5% in 2016-2017 ($\bar{x}_{\text{att.}} = 44$), 15% in 2017-2018 ($\bar{x}_{\text{att.}} = 51$), and 17% in 2018-2019 ($\bar{x}_{\text{att.}} = 60$). The ASM-Detroit Chapter hopes to continue the upward trend in meeting attendance, as a measure of bringing value to its membership.