

Happy New Year!

I attended my first ITAA conference over 26 years ago. Many things have changed over the past 26 years. I wrote my thesis on a typewriter and drove a manual (stick) car. My television had four stations and was a whopping 13 inches. Presentations were given using plastic templates made from a photocopier.



During one of my first ITAA meetings, I was seated at a table during lunch and stared at a member in awe. I realized that I needed to say something before I was arrested for stalking. I babbled to her “I cited your research publication...you are amazing.” I was star struck. You would have thought I had just met George Clooney. After the luncheon, I remember thinking: (a) she is so smart, kind and humble; (b) there are so many accomplished people at this meeting; (c) everyone seems so happy; and (d) can I just crawl under the table. Instead of crawling under the table, I decided to join a committee and keep coming back annually to the meetings. I wanted to emulate these smart, humble and kind members.

Much has changed over the past 26 years. Examples include: (a) the color of my hair changes annually; (b) my cell phone connects automatically with my car; (c) presentations are loaded onto a one inch thumb drive; and (d) my television is 48 inches. If I had more wall space I would purchase a larger television in order to watch Netflix on a “really big screen”. What hasn’t changed is that ITAA continues to attract smart, accomplished, friendly and exceptionally funny ITAA members. We continue to grow in size and diversity of culture.

I salute our graduate students and the increasing number of younger members. Please join committees, attend conferences and get active in the association. With a blink of an eye you too will realize that you have been a member for 26 years. The time passes quickly. You will soon realize that you mark ITAA by the conference locations you attend and the lifelong friends you have made.

“As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands,  
one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.”

*Audrey Hepburn*

We have 800+ members. Introduce yourself. Pass around your business card. Sit at a table with strangers (i.e., not your friends) and talk with them during the conference. Volunteer to help on a committee. If you are like me, you will receive internal and external rewards in helping others. If you aren’t sure of what type of activity you would like to do, please email me at [bickle@hrsm.sc.edu](mailto:bickle@hrsm.sc.edu) or call me on my cell at 803-361-0730. Together we can brainstorm ideas. Council members will also help you get connected. The 2017 Council team members include: Tammy Kinley (Counselor), Jane Hegland (President-Elect), Sonya Meyer (Secretary), Kathy Mullett (Treasurer), ByoungHo Jin (VP of Planning), Youn Kyung Kim (VP of Scholarship), Joe Hancock (VP of Conferences), Barb Frazier (VP of Education), Pam Ulrich (VP of Publications), Jung Ha-Brookshire (VP Operations), Rachel LoMonaco-Benzing (Graduate Student-Liaison) and Nancy Rutherford (Executive Director).

I wish you all a wonderful semester.

Regards,

Marianne Bickle