TO: SLA Board of Directors  
FROM: Students and New Professionals Advisory Council  
DATE: June 6, 2016  
RE: Recommendation re On-boarding Process for Students and New Professionals  

RECOMMENDATION: SNPAC recommends the following actions in order to 1) improve retention of student-chapter members (converting them to new-professional members); 2) improve retention of new professionals, especially those capable of leadership roles; 3) stem the attrition of our student and new-professional members to other professional associations such as ASIS&T:

1. Establish a collaborative process among SNPAC, PRAC, and the Fellows group to create and implement a consistent outreach, messaging, resources, and partnering relationship between SLA and the student chapters (SNPAC and PRAC) and SLA and its new professionals (SNPAC, PRAC and the Fellows). This needs to be a consistent set of documented processes that will be in place and executable by whoever is on a specific council during any given year.

2. Establish a student research paper competition among the student chapter members, with the result being a comped registration for the conference. This would be organized and managed by a SNPAC member (Margaret Carroll), who would also document all of the processes (including evaluation criteria, standards, etc.) involved so that future Councils could easily follow and manage the competition.

3. Consider creating a tiered “transition” membership level so that the jump in fees isn’t quite so severe for those moving from student to full-membership. Many students may take months to land decent jobs, and if the cost is substantial, SLA membership will be easy to forego.

4. Consider establishing at the Board level an individual or a process that will ensure the continued, consistent championing the interests and opportunities for engagement of the association’s new professionals, especially those identified as willing to step into leadership roles.

5. Establish an on-boarding process for all new professionals via interaction not only with SNPAC, but also with the divisions, the individual on the board responsible for championing NP interests, and the association president. The on-boarding process for NPs needs to be interwoven throughout the association; we cannot afford to lose these
members, but bringing them into the fold will require more engagement and outreach than SNPAC can provide on its own.

6. For the time being, add two more individuals to the SNPAC board to be able to more effectively address the NP constituency. Those individuals would be recent Rising Stars who would like the opportunity to influence and/or create programs that would be specific to encourage the engagement of Rising Stars (and, quite frankly, keep them in SLA).

**RATIONALE:** In conversations with SLA student chapters and new professionals, it has become evident that our current approach to working with students and NPs is failing both the association and these two critically important constituencies. We’re failing to convert student members into engaged, lifelong SLA members and leaving many new members feeling abandoned and disenchanted at best. Given the situation with declining membership, these two groups represent the organization’s lifeblood and future, and yet historically the association has rarely actively reached out to them and engaged them in the broader organization.

In order to address several aspects of these challenges, SNPAC members have been creating high-value tools, resources, and processes to support the student chapters (see Appendix A). However, when it comes to creating a more robust, dynamic on-boarding program for SLA’s new professionals, it’s clear that although SNPAC is ready to either lead or collaborate on an association-wide, integrated on-boarding process, we can’t create and implement these opportunities and outreach efforts ourselves. It needs to become a priority at the highest levels of the association, and needs buy-in, engagement, and accountability from leadership and communities throughout all of SLA.

In marketing terms, this is our membership pipeline; we simply can’t afford not to be doing a terrific recruitment/retention job here.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** Direct: one comped student registration. With the exception of the loss of revenue from one student registration, however, there should be minimal negative financial impact because most of what needs to be done is brainstorming and establishing programs that rely more on people than on financial investments. In terms of positive financial impact, however, if we are able to begin having a positive influence on student membership conversion and new member retention, we should anticipate long-term financial benefit (not to mention a thriving association).

**Students and New Professionals Advisory Council Members:**
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- Margaret Carroll
- Jan Chindlund
- Kim Dority (chair)
- Katherine (Katie) Glasoe
- Ruth Kneale (board liaison)
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