

Committee: Government Affairs

November 14, 2023, 12:30 pm Eastern

Participating: Loucas Tsakalacos, Linda Olafsen, Bill Hammetter, Dan Becerra, Colleen Scott, Steve Smith, Chris Shuck, Michael Bozlar, Jen Nekuda Malik, Babu Chalamala, Danielle Boston, Todd Osman, Glenn Ruskin

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introduction of Danielle Boston – Loucas & Todd
2. Recap of 2023 GAC Activities – Glenn
3. Current “State-Of-Play” – Capitol Hill & Administration – Glenn
4. Looking Ahead – GAC 2024 Activities – Glenn, Loucas
5. Information Items - Todd
6. Wrap-up & Next Meeting Date – Loucas, Linda

Government Affairs Committee Chair Loucas Tsakalacos opened the meeting and welcomed Danielle Boston, the MRS Member Engagement Manager, to the committee.

2023 RECAP

Washington Principal Glenn Ruskin noted the significant amount of work undertaken to revitalize GAC and get Board approval for the new charter.

May 10-11 Congressional Visits Day

Ten GAC representatives visited 19 Senate and 9 House offices along with the House Space, Science, and Technology Committee to deliver strong support for sustained DOE, NSF, NIST and NIH funding. Of the 27 offices visited, only 4 voted against the September 30 Continuing Resolution.

Federal Agency R&D Funding webinars

Four Federal Agency R&D Funding webinars went well with 200 to 300 attendees at each session to hear program and division directors from NSF, DOE, DOD.

Congressional Fellows

Congressional Fellows Working Group Chair Jen Nekuda Malik reported on the 2024-2025 Congressional Fellowship process. Applications are now being accepted until January 5, 2024. Interviews are scheduled for March 2-3, 2024. There were 8 participants that attended the November 2 online Information session and were very engaged and asked a lot of questions. MRS Congressional Fellow Marie Fiori participated in the webinar.

The traditional MRS coffee hour for the outgoing and incoming Congressional Fellows was held with five former Fellows in attendance.

Marie Fiori, the 2023-2024 MRS/Optica Congressional Fellow, is assigned to the office of Rep. Derek Kilmer of the House Appropriations Committee.

Capitol Hill Briefings with ACS Collaboration

50 Capitol Hill staffers attended the October 24 Hearing on Space Materials.

ACTION ITEMS: Glenn will post the video to the MRS website; Judy Meiksin will cover the briefing in

Schedule

Day before CVD

Arrival in DC

Onsite training at DC base of operations at ACS facilities (ACS isn't charging for using the site).

Practice messaging

CVD Day

Go to Capitol Hill

Possibility - Following CVD Day (Yet to be determined)

Visit federal agencies or bring them to a central location for a discussion.

Planning Work Group Volunteers

Josh Caldwell, Dan Becerra, Steve Smith, Michael Bozlar

Babu Chalamala, Topical Staging Group members as appropriate (coordinate with Gopal Rao)

What should MRS be advocating for on Capitol Hill? Need to determine our Capitol Hill "asks" and develop leave behinds and talking points for the Hill visits. For example, perhaps one topic might be the need for continued funding of the CHIPS & Science Act as well as a graphic illustrating that \$1 of federal investment yields a many-fold return on that investment. Judy Meiksin can be included. Science Writing program writers can be assigned so that the one-pagers are woven into the standard news and press coverage.

Steve Smith sees appeal in combining CVD and the federal agencies, but should the same people be on those two groups? The Agencies want to talk to higher-up people, not the program officers who can't implement change. This needs to be included in the thought process.

Choosing and piloting the best approach can be decided in January.

MRS RESPONSE TO WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

MRS is nonpartisan with a globally diverse membership and is part of the AAAS Human Rights Commission, which has a broader reach.

ONSITE ATTENDANCE

Paula will send out an email to see which GAC members will be onsite in Boston.

LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY:

New GAC member orientation.

Choosing target dates, selecting/piloting best approach for conducting CVD and Federal Agency Summit.

Loucas thanked GAC membership for their help in achieving the programs and services that MRS promotes.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm Eastern.