

# TOS MAKES PROGRESS ON ITS STRATEGY 2030: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

IN JANUARY 2021, I took over the position of president of The Oceanography Society (TOS) from Martin Visbeck, who had just finished navigating a remarkably challenging year punctuated by divisive US politics, global unrest, and a devastating pandemic that changed lives everywhere. Science took a back seat, with field seasons canceled, education systems stalled, and many of us struggling to balance our new working arrangements. And yet, under Martin's steady leadership, the Society embraced many positive changes. With a stabilized budget and healthy membership growth, Martin turned his sights to our longer-term strategy—one of his goals for TOS was to articulate a vision for the Society for the coming decade.

After the close of the Ocean Sciences Meeting in San Diego in February 2020, and just weeks before the pandemic shuttered our everyday lives, Martin convened a strategy and visioning workshop for TOS. Drawing energy from the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, he called the session “Strategy 2030: Looking to the Future” and posed several questions for its participants: “How should TOS adapt to the changes in ocean science? How can TOS provide value for our members? And how can we strengthen the profile and impact of TOS?”

Many exciting ideas were proposed at the first Strategy 2030 workshop, and feeling energized, participants decided that some of these ideas needed to be implemented without delay, before the visioning process was complete. High on the priority list was the notion that we need to both support excellence in core ocean sciences research and exploration and yet firmly encourage a vision that helps

ocean science solve some of our planet's most thorny challenges. It appeared that a good starting place for TOS would be to improve our scientific inclusivity, member equity, and diversity. We want broad participation to include members who represent solution-driven science at the intersection of oceanography and socio-economics, policy, social sciences, big data, and informatics. One way to encourage an inclusive and diverse membership is for the make-up of the TOS Council to reflect the scientific diversity of its members. As a result of this first workshop, we have added an Ocean Data Science Councilor and an Ocean Social Science and Policy Councilor. TOS's commitment to its student and early career members remains strong, and so we have also added an Education Councilor and an Early Career Councilor, and have initiated a Student Committee, chaired by the Council's Student Representative.

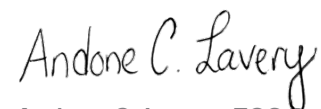
An area that has seen explosive growth in engagement and awareness on the national stage, and has some very significant urgency in our own Society, is the issue of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI). The TOS JEDI committee was inaugurated this last year, with the goal of celebrating our differences and creating a culture of belonging. The JEDI committee has been diligently working to firm up our core values and terms of reference, which will soon be shared with the TOS community. As president of TOS, I feel we are in good hands with the wisdom of our JEDI committee.

While the pandemic offered few silver linings, it did turn out to be a time of opportunity for experimenting with member engagement. We have learned that member engagement can be more

creative, more personalized, and successful even without the privilege of in-person meetings. Some of the recommendations from the first Strategy 2030 workshop for enhancing member engagement include hosting our annual membership meetings online, a policy we have now adopted and will implement this coming year, and hosting webinars to engage members, which we have also started planning, with a fireside talk webinar focused on “Oceanography and Technology” about to be rolled out.

While some of the actions recommended, and implemented, as a result of the Strategy 2030 workshop are reason to celebrate, my goal as president of TOS is to pick up where Martin left off and complete the TOS Strategy 2030, embracing a use-inspired mission that benefits our global society and the environment. I look forward to the challenges ahead and to working with the TOS Council, and I especially hope I can lean on my predecessors to help find the right path forward.

I am writing to you from the main lab on one of our ocean class research vessels, about to embark on an expedition to explore the intersection of ocean acoustics and shelf break physical oceanography, hopeful that this is the beginning of the end of a painful year in which the pandemic has stifled the advance of observational ocean science. Yet, I am also heavy hearted, knowing that for many international members of our Society, the pandemic is still raging. I look forward to a time when we can all engage equally in this scientific endeavor.



**Andone C. Lavery, TOS President**