Future of ACUBE

The future of ACUBE is an often-discussed topic. As the incoming president I presented a few remarks during the 45th Annual Meeting at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. However, before addressing the topic, I first must thank all of the individuals who served as officers, Steering Committee members, and the editors of Bioscene during the past year and to welcome the new officers and Steering Committee members to their respective duties and thank the editors for their continuing work on our journal. The Steering Committee and the officers of ACUBE have the task of guiding the organization through the 46th Annual Meeting. We would appreciate your input. As you may remember, I touched briefly on three basic issues.

First, my comments reflected upon what we might do as educators who want to make biology a more active and engaging process for our students. I suggested that we live in a rapidly changing world in an important time and that a basic knowledge of the biological sciences is critical to a quality global future. We have the ability to make our courses more relevant to societal issues without losing sight of course goals and objectives. I believe that there is a need to make our curriculum transparent to our students. They need to understand that what they learn in biology is significant in solving problems we encounter in everyday life. In my original remarks I suggested that teaching environmental issues, the topic of our 46th annual meeting, is a topic relevant to nearly all the courses in a biological sciences curriculum. I ask you to consider the following:

• What does bioterrorism have to do with ecological concepts? With the spread of a density-dependent disease?
• What are the implications of large differences in the gene frequencies among human populations for the recessive trait that confers resistance to the HIV1?
• What is the relationship between doctors prescribing antibiotics for viral infections or the relationship between patients failing to complete the prescribed treatment and the resistance of bacteria to many of our antibiotics?

These examples are environmental issues, speaking broadly, and they are relevant to courses in cell biology, ecology, genetics, evolution, microbiology, immunology, etc. The questions posed and the courses listed could be greatly expanded. I would like to encourage ACUBE members to share their teaching methods and their ideas this fall by making presentations, delivering workshops or presenting a poster, especially with regard to how their teaching relates to environmental issues.

Second, I remarked on our membership. In 2000, ACUBE had about 450 members. Currently, our paid membership has fallen to about 200. I believe that our organization has a great deal to offer our colleagues. ACUBE members need to bring their colleagues back into the organization and we need to recruit new members. I am not looking for growth for growth’s sake; I am looking to share ideas that make us better teachers and I believe that a somewhat larger organization brings us more diversity. This organization belongs to all of us and we have profited from being ACUBE members over the years. So I ask:

• What would bring you to the annual meeting regularly?
• How can we help each other professionally?
• Won’t you consider getting more involved?
• What would you like to see ACUBE do that we are not doing? You can help guide the organization.
• What would you like to do to help ACUBE address your suggestions?

Third and last, I believe that we need to develop a multi-faceted approach to increase the visibility of our organization and to facilitate an interest in ACUBE by exposure to new venues and prospective members. The Steering Committee and I welcome suggestions. You can contact me by e-mail, levin.malcolm@uis.edu.

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President, ACUBE 2001-2002