Greetings from the Great Plains! I hope you are doing well and enjoying summer as you read this column.

The Conference in Chicago

SIOP 2004 was the largest SIOP conference ever. A record 3,685 people registered for the conference, up almost 700 from the previous year. International attendance was outstanding, with 279 people from outside the U.S. coming from 39 different countries. There were 59 booths in the exhibit hall and placement was up 40%.

Participation in conference events was strong: One hundred thirty-three ran in the Fun Run and 66 attended the Hamburger U tour. Moreover, the conference tee shirts sold out. Only one of our usual events did not take place. Southerners Chuck Lance and Jose Cortina decided that the beginning of April in Chicago might be a tad cool for golf, so they’re laying plans for next year when we return to a warmer clime.

Rob Ployhart and the Program Committee deserve a huge round of applause: One thousand sixty-nine reviewers reviewed over 1,000 proposals! Over 600 proposals were accepted and more than 1,900 people appeared on the SIOP program. As our friend Ben Schneider says, “The people make the place.”

Luis Parra and the Workshop Committee put together an outstanding set of workshops and the presentations were great. Karen Barbera and Irene Sasaki’s Placement Center ran smoothly and provided a valuable forum for recruiters and applicants. The SIOP staff—Esther Benitez, Linda Lentz, Larry Nader, Jen Domanski, and Lee Hakel—handled registration and many last-minute issues with great skill.

The Conference Chair, Jeff McHenry, deserves special mention. This was Jeff’s final year as Conference Chair, and he has done a superb job over the past 3 years. Jeff planned the opening plenary session with the help of Steve Ashworth; it was well received. The highlight, of course, was Mike Burke’s presidential address. Dan Turban and the Awards Committee announced an outstanding set of award winners, and Leaetta Hough’s Fellowship Committee introduced a group of truly distinguished new Fellows.
Executive Committee

During the past 3 months, I’ve spent a lot of time finding people to chair SIOP committees and fill various roles. I want to thank these people for agreeing to serve. SIOP could not function without volunteers filling many critical roles.

Talya Bauer is our new Membership Chair, Jim Beaty is the Electronic Communications Chair, Wendy Becker is the Visibility Chair, Paul Hanges is the APA Program Chair-in-Training, Eric Heggestad is the APS Program Chair-in-Training, Mary Doherty Kelly is the Communications Task Force Chair, Gary Latham is the Fellowship Chair, Liberty Munson is the Placement Cochair, Mickey Quinones is the chair of the Committee for Ethnic Minorities, Doug Reynolds is the Professional Practice Chair, and Steven Rogelberg is the Education and Training Chair.

Laura Koppes and Lisa Finkelstein have already begun work as our new TIP editor and Program Chair, respectively. Upon the recommendation of several committees, a new position was created this year: Continuing Education Coordinator. Judith Blanton will serve as our first permanent Continuing Ed Coordinator and help define this role. Two chairs-in-training will be in critical roles for our conference over the next few years: Joan Brannick (Workshop) and Julie Olson-Buchanan (SIOP Program).

I would like to thank Dianna Stone for her work as Financial Officer. Any CFO position involves a lot of hard work and frequently receives little appreciation. Dianna delivered a balanced budget for the 2004/2005 fiscal year with no dues increase, so thank you, Dianna! John Cornwell is our new Financial Officer. John is certainly a glutton for punishment, as he served previously as our Financial Officer.

There are two other important changes on the Executive Committee: Leaetta Hough is our President-Elect and Kurt Kraiger is Member-at-Large.

Next Year’s Conference

File your income taxes early so that you can attend the 2005 SIOP conference April 15–17 in Los Angeles. It’s in the Westin Bonaventure Hotel where part of the Govinator’s True Lies was filmed. The hotel recently completed a $50 million renovation and is in mint condition. If you haven’t visited downtown LA recently, prepare to be surprised. The new Disney Concert Hall, designed by Frank O. Gehry, is in its sensational inaugural year and the new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, designed by Spanish architect Jose Rafael Moneo, will both surprise and inspire you. And both of these outstanding sites are just a quick walk from our hotel—through landscaped plazas displaying fine contemporary sculptures.

As always, details about the conference are on the SIOP Web site. I look forward to seeing you there!