Class of 2019
Leadership Symposium
FACT SHEET

Background

The AWS Leadership Symposium is an annual meeting designed to strengthen District Representatives’ leadership skills, give tips on planning activities, provide an opportunity to meet key AWS Staff, as well as a chance to learn about helpful resources available from AWS.

In addition, the Symposium provides a forum for Section leaders to communicate and share ideas, problems and solutions. It is anticipated that, by attending, Symposium participants will gain a greater appreciation of the Society and will become more enthusiastic volunteers, in addition to becoming more knowledgeable of AWS and its programs and services.

The Selection Process

One representative from each District, selected at or before each District Conference, attended this annual event. Five students were selected from a pool of applicants by the AWS Membership Committee to attend the event. Sections who wished to nominate a candidate were encouraged to provide a brief write-up outlining why the person should have been selected to their District Directors. This year we also had an Incoming District Director join the event. Current and former AWS Board of Directors are not eligible to be selected as the District Representative. If Sections wanted to sponsor another representative to attend the Symposium, they could do so at their own expense and on a first-come, first-served basis.

Symposium Dates

The Leadership Symposium was held July 28 – July 31, 2019, Sunday evening to Wednesday noon, in Miami, Florida. Holding the meeting at this time of the year enabled participants to return to their Sections energized and better prepared to help plan events for the coming Section year. Another separate AWS event, the AWS Instructors Institute was held July 21 - July 26, also in Miami.

Symposium Location

The Symposium took place at AWS Headquarters in Miami, Florida. The conference included an opportunity to meet AWS Staff.

About the Facilitator

Ms. Donna French Dunn from Tecker International, joined us for a second time this year. She has earned a reputation as an “association architect” and is happiest being part of a team that’s building something new. Donna has one motivation that is a personal mission: to make sure that people have what they need to be the best they can be. And she’s spent more than 25 years in association leadership putting her mission into action.

Sharing Information AFTER the Event

One of the guidelines recommended in choosing a District Representative was selecting someone who communicates information effectively to others. It will be this individual’s responsibility to funnel information learned to their District Director and to other Section leaders. The Leadership Symposium is also a standing item on each of the District Conference agendas so that feedback can be shared.
Funding
National provided travel and lodging reimbursements for 26 of the 34 District Representatives attending the event.

**ATTENDEES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Attendee</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1        | Kevin DeSousa  
          | Central Mass/RI Section  
          | Welding Instructor  
          | DIMAN Reg. Vocational Tech High School | 508-509-0016  
          | kevindesousa@hotmail.com |
| 3        | Rachel Ochs  
          | Lancaster Section  
          | Welding Instructor  
          | Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology | 786-213-1057  
          | ochs@stevenscollege.edu |
| 4        | Gary Cleveland  
          | Triangle Section  
          | Operations Manager  
          | Arc3 Gases |
|          | Shawn Miller  
          | Carolina Section  
          | Welding Instructor  
          | Guilford Tech Community College  
          | 336-500-1475  
          | smmiller@gtcc.edu |
|          | Kristie Miller  
          | Tidewater VA Section  
          | Lead Welding Instructor/  
          | Overnight Program Coordinator  
          | Tidewater Tech Trade School  
          | 757-503-1899  
          | kriselswick2018@gmail.com |
| 5        | Houston Murphy  
          | South Florida Section  
          | General Manager  
          | Nance and Underwood Rigging | 786-837-4368  
<pre><code>      | houston@nanceandunderwood.com |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Attendee</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ronald Stahura</td>
<td>716-207-7869 <a href="mailto:rstahura@esab.com">rstahura@esab.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kevin DeVault</td>
<td>716-385-9056 <a href="mailto:kevin_devault@lincolnelectric.com">kevin_devault@lincolnelectric.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bryan Lyons</td>
<td>614-432-2474 <a href="mailto:bryan@osu1.net">bryan@osu1.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jim Thompson</td>
<td>256-347-6481 <a href="mailto:jim.thompson@wallacestate.edu">jim.thompson@wallacestate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Justin Mixon</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jody Heusman</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jeremy Whittemore</td>
<td>225-964-2000 <a href="mailto:jeremy.whittemore023@gmail.com">jeremy.whittemore023@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clayton Jernigan</td>
<td>205-910-4497 <a href="mailto:cjernig1@jeffersonstate.edu">cjernig1@jeffersonstate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danny Taylor</td>
<td>205-387-8720 <a href="mailto:dannytaylor@jeffersonstate.edu">dannytaylor@jeffersonstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
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<td>Contact Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Travis Crate</strong>&lt;br&gt;Drakewell Section&lt;br&gt;Welding Instructor&lt;br&gt;Venango Technology Center</td>
<td>814-758-5962&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:tcrate@vtc1.org">tcrate@vtc1.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>Jim Kovacs</strong>&lt;br&gt;NW Ohio Section&lt;br&gt;Manufacturing Automation Leader&lt;br&gt;Kaufman Engineered Systems&lt;br&gt;<strong>John McKenzie</strong>&lt;br&gt;Detroit Section</td>
<td>419-340-6702&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:jim.kovacs@kes-usa.com">jim.kovacs@kes-usa.com</a>&lt;br&gt;586-255-5511&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:jdmckenzie@msn.com">jdmckenzie@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Hannah Wolf</strong>&lt;br&gt;Madison-Beloit Section&lt;br&gt;Instructor/Outreach Coordinator&lt;br&gt;Madison College</td>
<td>608-609-9915&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:hjwolf1@madisoncollege.edu">hjwolf1@madisoncollege.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>Theresa M Molln</strong>&lt;br&gt;Illinois Valley Section&lt;br&gt;Assistant Welding Lab Instructor&lt;br&gt;Illinois Valley Community College</td>
<td>815-440-2517&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:theresa_molln@ivcc.edu">theresa_molln@ivcc.edu</a></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td><strong>Travis Jumper</strong>&lt;br&gt;St. Louis Section&lt;br&gt;Assistant Professor &amp; Coordinator Welding Tech&lt;br&gt;Lewis &amp; Clark Community College</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>Josh Thieme</strong>&lt;br&gt;Kansas Section&lt;br&gt;Sales Engineer&lt;br&gt;Lincoln Electric</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><strong>William D. Richardson</strong>&lt;br&gt;North Texas Section&lt;br&gt;Combination Welder Fabricator&lt;br&gt;A-ABA Fabrication</td>
<td>817-938-3894&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:willow.wr@gmail.com">willow.wr@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>District</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 18       | **Roger Dean**  
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wang18@ualberta.ca |
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Incoming District Director  
Retired AWS CWI | 858-735-4506  
steel.man@cox.net |
## 2019 AWS Leadership Symposium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Attendee</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td><strong>Melvin Johnson</strong></td>
<td>916-799-1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sacramento Valley Section</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational Welding Instructor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State of CA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Naomi Wentland</strong></td>
<td>530-613-6678</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sacramento Section</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nwentland@att.net">nwentland@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section Treasurer</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT THE ATTENDEES

Attendees serving in a leadership capacity of their Sections:

100%

This included a mix of Section Chairman, Secretaries and several Vice Chairmen and Treasures. Some of the attendees actively served on various Section Committees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers/Owners/Supervisors</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welders</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspectors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Challenges Identified

What issue or question do you hope to have answered?

*Numbers to the right of questions are the number of votes each topic received. The top 6 topics (appearing in bold font) were moved forward for further discussion within dedicated groups.

- Is an incarcerated student member able to apply/receive a scholarship? – 18
- **How can we recruit people and get them to stay (as volunteers)?** – 25
- How do we handle merged districts (Sections)? – 0
- How do we do outreach for new members? – 7
- How do we have committed volunteers “move on” and welcome new ideas and people? – 1
- How do we stop the “rotation” of long-time leaders? – 2
- **How do we attract younger people?** – 23
- How do we deal with the baggage of history? – prove that it’s not the same – 1
- How do we increase quality/diverse leaders for our Sections? – 6
- **How do we build mentor core?** – 14
- **How do we transition students to active Section membership?** – 18
- How do we deal with barriers to meetings (time, traffic, etc.)? – 4
- How do we build corps of speakers enticing to students? – 8
- How do we deal with the perception that HQ is all about the $? – 6
- **How do we keep/retain connection with students?** – 26
- How do we motivate officers to follow through? – 4
- What’s the best way to maintain communication between Officers? – 1
- Is it possible to offer PDH for meetings? Will companies offset time (ROI of membership)? – 5
- How do we better work with HQ to promote successful programs? – 12
- **How do we get scholarship recipients to promote scholarships? Contribute to Sections?** – 13
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Topic: Scholarships

Team: Daniel Lambeth, Jeff Davis, Rachel Ochs, William Richardson, Ying Wang

Question: How do we encourage application & engagement w/ AWS?

The team developed the following thoughts on this topic and question:

Drive:
• Increase membership and participation
• Prepare new generation to meet career goals
• Offer financial support

Barriers:
• Lack of interest
• Lack of awareness
• Section members lack of involvement/volunteer
• Not reaching out to all possible candidates
• Lack of guidance through application process

What Do We Know?/Current Realities:
• Parents pushing 4-year degrees
• Recognize need for trades for replacing aged workforce (Boomers)
  o Engineers, Sales, Supervisors, Welders, Robotics, etc.
• High potential for various careers + $$
• Funds increasing yearly for scholarships
• Blue collar work not appealing to social dynamics of younger generations
• Where is the direction of trades in the U.S. future heading if workforce is not obtained?

Ethical Implications:
• Diverse distribution of scholarships
  o Career path (iron work vs. art)
• Proper utilization of scholar money
• Are translation options available?
• Do scholarships have a fair processing criteria?

Addressing Issue/Solutions:
• Outreach programs for members/Section Officers
  o Schools, Military, Fairs, Conventions, Trade Shows
• Guest speakers, publicity options, marketing
• Offer mentor programs and follow-ups for recipients
• Include parents and guardians
• Talk options/types of scholarships
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- Section chairs meet w/ local schools, instructors, students, etc. to aid in process and better inform

**Recommendation:**

- Outreach programs for members/Section Officers
  - Schools, Military, Fairs, Conventions, Trade Shows
    *Daniel mentioned that the Army has a program called Soldier For Life – Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) provides information, access to important documents, and training to ensure Service members separating from Active Duty are prepared for their next step in life - whether pursuing additional education, finding a job in the public or private sector, or starting their own business. Daniel suggested getting in touch with the base commander, if there is an Army base in your area, to arrange to have a Section provide a presentation related to welder training and/or careers.
    **An additional suggestion shared during the group’s presentation was to have a booth or gathering at car show or other local event(s) where target audience will be present.**

**Why?:**

- Lack of student/public knowledge will be improved by increasing exposure to availability of scholarship and AWS opportunities
- Domino effect – reaching out will result in expansion of members, applicants, volunteers, and future leaders in the welding industry <3

**Alternative:**

- Talk options/types of scholarships
  - Sections must meet with schools, instructors, families to aid in application process and options available
Topic: Transitioning Student Member to Individual Member

Team: Gerald Wentland, Jody Heusman, Melvin Johnson, Naomi Wentland, Shawn Miller, Theresa Molln

Question: What can we do to help students to transition to active section members?

The team developed the following thoughts on this topic and question:

1. Job/Money
2. Interest/Motivation
3. After Graduation – not enough communication or mentoring to continue with AWS

Stakeholders Needs/Wants/Preferences

- Students need jobs
  - They might have to move
- Students need to understand how the AWS can help
  - Then/NOW
- AWS would like to improve its retention of members
- AWS can add value to a welder’s career
- Students are easiest to reach digitally (app)
- Students tend to lose interest once they leave their instructor’s sphere of influence

Capacity of our organization relevant to decision

- Industry influence
- Funds
- Programs like S.E.N.S.E., already in place which involve students early
- Systems of accreditation already in place
- A history of success (member)
- Strong knowledge base of current members
- Committee meetings – as an entryway to participation

Option 1: Giving items for becoming a full AWS member.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Sign up once</td>
<td>- Requires AWS National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Easy to promote</td>
<td>- Short term fix</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Who pays?</td>
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</table>
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Option 2: Offer an AWS Digital Library to students to get them accustomed to using AWS as a reference source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Student more receptive to digital platform</td>
<td>- RAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- App:</td>
<td>- Disappears upon membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 1st page/tab opens to all that AWS can do for the students. Benefits.</td>
<td>- Value is not great for average student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 2nd page/tab -&gt; resources -&gt; Digital Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 3rd tab -&gt; Only as an AWS member if not renewed locks them out.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Option 3: Provide more AWS membership/benefit/education info to our welding instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Posters provide quick easy info</td>
<td>- RAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Requires teacher involvement</td>
<td>- Requires teacher involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Info already exists</td>
<td>- Material difficult to obtain</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Low cost</td>
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Option 4: AWS Section can purchase student membership to full AWS membership.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- One-time item</td>
<td>- Very costly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Only some sections could afford</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Option 5: Additional discount on costs for online publications and products, certs…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Convinces members to stay</td>
<td>- Cost to AWS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Option 3: Provide more AWS membership/benefit/education info to our welding instructors – was identified by this group as the best option to move forward with.*
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**Topic**: Mentors

**Team**: Gary Cleveland, John Chen, Josh Thieme, Justin Mixon, Ron Stahura

The team developed the following thoughts on this topic and question:

**Barriers**:
- Communication
- Retention of volunteers/mentors
- Succession planning – lacking
- Mentors (identify & define)
- Lack of mentorship program established

**Stakeholders**:
- New member
- Future member
- Eager volunteers
- Lower skill set member
- Student member

**Questions**:
1) How to start mentorship program?
2) How to retain volunteers?
3) How do we organize succession plan?
4) How do we identify subject matter experts?

**Question 1**

Needs: career advancement
Wants: contribute, ROI – membership value, comradery, passion for industry
Preferences: personal growth

**Variables**
- Currently no formal program or procedure
- Various subject needs
  - Governance
  - Technical
  - Career path
  - Personal development
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Future Assumptions

- Member involvement/Life changes
- Change in ways members/Sections communicate?
- Minimal time frame to replenish mentor pipeline

Strategic position/capacity

- Available champion person at AWS HQ? at Section/District
- Standard operating procedure
- What is expected for mentor time input?

Option 1: Do Nothing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Save money, no additional work</td>
<td>- Longer transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lower morale for members wanting to contribute</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- Loss of knowledge/experience</td>
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</table>

Option 2: Institute Mentoring Program (National Level)

**Advantage**
- Would facilitate and grow future section leaders
- Would provide technical resource pool for Section members
- Would facilitate comradery among section members
- Would provide ROI for membership cost

**Disadvantage**
- More time and resources needed to implement and maintain

Option 3: Section-level “program” (informal)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Fast to implement</td>
<td>- Potentially smaller knowledge pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Less resources needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Same advantages as National Level program</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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**Topic:** Working with AWS HQ

**Team:** Bernard Booth, Bryan Lyons, Bryan Stastny, Jeremy Whittemore, Travis Jumper

The team shared the following thoughts on this topic:

**Who do I need to talk to?**

The group suggested providing Sections with a contact list for AWS Staff but then shared that they agreed that it was better to direct most questions to the Sr. Manager, Sections and Student Chapters (currently Darrill A. Gaschler) who could then redirect or contact AWS Customer Service & Support to ensure questions were being directed to and handled by the most appropriate representatives.

**Website Navigation/Update**

The group shared that the current AWS.org website is not user-friendly, making it challenging to find information one is seeking. The group suggested revisiting the layout and navigation of the website and content it displays.

**Follow up or Follow Through**

The group shared that past experiences have shown that members calling AWS HQ seeking information have been transferred to multiple extensions or experience delays in getting a response. Efforts to improve the customer experience have been implemented, including the creation of a Customer Service & Support Department and dedicated support for AWS Sections and Student Chapters via the Sr. Manager of Sections and Student Chapters (currently Darrill A. Gaschler).

**Information Flow from Sections to HQ (web-based form? Credentials update)**

AWS HQ is continuing to streamline the process of capturing requests from Sections. A refined process for submitting requests for email distributions, website updates, social media (Facebook) posts, and event reports that are sent to the Welding Journal for consideration for publication.
Topic: Attracting Young Members

Team: Clayton Jernigan, Danny Taylor, Hannah Wolf, Jess Eller, Kevin DeSousa, Kristie Miller, Roger Dean, Travis Crate

The team developed the following thoughts on this topic:

Barriers

- Monetary
  - Why spend the money?
    - Is it worth it?
    - What do I get for my $$$
      ▪ Question: How can we alleviate the monetary barriers for students?
      ▪ What benefits are provided for monetary output?

- Transportation
  - Hard to get to meeting locations
    - Time in cities
    - Distance in rural
      ▪ Question: How to plan meetings to be accessible for all?

- Generational disconnect
  - Ways of communicating differ per generation
    ▪ Question: How can we create a neutral environment as a shared space for all ages?

Stakeholders

- Students
- Young people

Needs

- Information
- Relevant to young people
- Presented from a peer
- Presented in a way that reaches us
- A welcoming committee
- An environment that facilitates an exchange of ideas
- Mentorship that continues after school
- *Support systems
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**Wants**
- Make it fun
- Technical info presented in an approachable way

**Current Realities**
- Membership down all over
- Need for new welders and welding related professionals
- Ever changing communication pathways
- Meeting participation is low even in large Sections
- Section events not interesting for young people
- Less employer support for employee involvement
- Priorities have changed
- Many more social opportunities -> people are busier

**Capacity + Strategic Position**
- Opportunities for under 18 or 18-21
- Student mailings or communication
- Other time commitment in competition/life
- Student/Young representative
  - Future Leaders -> to the students

**Ethical Implications**
- Ensure equal opportunity provided to all students
- Dry events to not exclude the under 21 crowd

Go to schools (non-active)
Present opportunities (scholarships, ambassador, community, mentorship)
Increase in social media presence

**Key takeaways noted during presentation:**
- Barriers – monetary commitment, transportation/geography, generational disconnect – looking to peers rather than adults for guidance.
- Address Stakeholder Wants – there are more social opportunities competing for stakeholder’s time. Provide incentives: Gear Give Away, Free Food, points to track member participation and provide reward/prize based on points.
**2019 AWS Leadership Symposium**

**Topic:** Recruit & Retain Volunteers

**Team:** Houston Murphy, Jeremy Mowry, Jim Kovacs, Jim Thompson, John McKenzie, Kevin DeVault

The team developed the following thoughts on this topic:

- Time commitment
- Membership fees
- Continued (existing) benefits/attracting
- Excitement/Engagement
- Help from HQ

How can we generate excitement to drive engagement within a Section?

- Make meetings into/alongside events
- Incentive programs
- Social Media

How do we express the benefits of membership and fees, keeping in mind the efforts involved?

What are some success stories other Sections have had and what tools were used to make them successful?
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