

Professors' Influence on Display in APS Membership Initiative

January 31, 2017

Back when APS was established, our membership grew quickly, largely through word of mouth. Many of our current leaders today tell us that they joined as students because they were strongly encouraged by their professors and research mentors to be part of this important new group dedicated to the science of psychology.

Invoking that same spirit on the eve of our 30thth year, we recently asked our current faculty members to engage their students with APS.

“As a professor and mentor, you play an integral role in shaping your student’s careers,” said APS Executive Director Sarah Brookhart in an email to faculty. “As an APS Member, you know the value that comes with being affiliated with the most effective voice for all areas of psychological science.”

The response was astounding: At the behest of their professors, nearly 8,500 students joined APS in a matter of weeks. We heard over and over again from these new members about how much they love psychological science and how important it is to them to be connected to the community of students, educators, and researchers with similar interests. We also heard from these students just how much their professors’ guidance and support means to them.

More than two-thirds of these newest APS members are grad students, and while most are from the United States and Canada, we have a strong showing from around the world, with many new members coming from Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand.

In the coming year, we hope to learn much more about these new members — their research interests, their career aspirations, and their zodiac signs. (Okay, just kidding about that last part.)

If you’re among this group, we want to hear from you, and we want you to be a member of APS for a long time. After all, in a few years it might be you at the helm, telling people about that influential professor who in all of his or her wisdom told you to join APS as a smart career decision and as a meaningful affiliation with others who share your passion for the science.

Please send your comments and responses to apsobserver@psychologicalscience.org.