



Dear EAM Colleagues,

I hope this finds you well and having enjoyed your summer in spite of the uncertainty for many of us surrounding what to expect as the fall semester resumes. For those of you who attended EAM 2020, I hope you share my sense of pride over what was an absolutely fantastic virtual conference thanks to the tireless efforts of 2020 VP-Program, and now President-Elect, Mousumi Bhattacharya. During last week's meeting of the new EAM Board, we made the difficult but unavoidable and unanimous decision to hold EAM 2021 as a virtual conference. The overwhelming majority of our members are at institutions which have frozen travel funding and/or had other significant budget cuts which would greatly hamper our ability to meet our contractual obligations to the Pittsburgh Marriott. We have collected feedback from those who attended EAM 2020 and while the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, we strive, in the spirit of continuous improvement, to make EAM 2021 completely responsive to your needs and preferences. Toward that end, please know that we value your feedback and encourage you to provide any additional feedback to Tejinder Billing, 2021 VP-Program, as we prepare for our second virtual conference. Regarding EAM-I 2021 the plan at this point is to reschedule that conference to the summer of 2022, still in Lyon, France. Additional information will be forthcoming in the very near future from the EAM-I Conference Directors.

I am extremely excited by our new Board and the opportunity to work with them and you over the coming year which, like this past year, will be fraught with change and uncertainty but also opportunity. Given the ongoing impact of the pandemic on our institutions and members, there are four (somewhat interrelated) areas in which I intend to focus my time and energy during the coming year; sponsorship, membership, programming, and volunteerism.

**Sponsorship** – given the budget cuts being experienced by higher ed institutions / business schools, it reasons to say that much discretionary spending (such as higher level conference sponsorship) will be axed. While I still intend to solicit sponsorship from business school deans, I intend to focus more on higher level sponsorship from exhibitors for whom our members are a key target market. Sponsorship from business schools will be more actively solicited at lower levels and I hope that each of you can encourage your dean and/or department chair to provide some level of sponsorship to the extent that their budgets allow.

**Membership** – in light of the probable reduced sponsorship support we can expect, I intend to focus on a new revenue stream, namely expanded membership. Our general geographic area is teeming with smaller institutions whose missions are centered on teaching yet are able to provide little internal institutional support for ongoing professional development (or at least that which is specific to the management disciplines). Most of the management faculty at our smaller, regional institutions have no “academic home,” meaning they’re not even members of the larger Academy of Management. A number of these faculty also do not hold a terminal degree even though they are full-time, and in some cases, tenured, faculty. There is a tremendous opportunity here for us to build our membership ranks. I will be working closely with Heidi Bertels and her membership committee to recruit and “onboard” new members into the EAM family and welcome everyone’s participation on this initiative as

well. Please encourage your department colleagues, including adjunct faculty, to join EAM, especially in light of the added benefit of additional programming discussed below.

**Programming** – a key to our being able to recruit new members (as well as retain existing members) is to provide them with some immediate value for their membership. Hence, we'll be launching continuous programming through the year in the form of "Learn and Share" Zoom meetings. Lisa Stickney, VP-Program Elect, will be coordinating these workshops which will focus on timely issues and concerns facing our members. At this point, we have two such events already planned for fall semester. In late September we'll offer our first session on online/hybrid teaching and learning which will focus on strategies for keeping students engaged, experiential exercises for online pedagogy, how best to manage virtual student teams, etc. In November, we'll offer a session on managing work, career, and life during the pandemic which will focus on how to maintain engagement and productivity, avoid feelings of isolation, balance working from home (especially when there are other family members and other distractions present), and issues associated with tenure and promotion. Additional workshops will be offered during the spring semester and we welcome both your suggestions for topics/activities as well as your participation. Further details on the September and November events will be forthcoming very soon.

**Volunteerism** – while EAM has an elected Board with specified terms and leadership roles, it is critical that we all remember that EAM is a MEMBER organization where every individual member is valued, critical to our success, and is encouraged to contribute to whatever extent their time and interest allow. We need YOU, your passions, energy, input, and expertise to make EAM a stronger and more member-responsive organization, maintaining its long-established reputation as THE best regional affiliate. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or other Board member for opportunities to get involved in areas such as, but not limited to, conference program, professional development workshops, membership committee, treasurer's committee, social media and communications committee, technology committee, or any other area in which you have interest and skill. Volunteer opportunities can involve engagement as short as a one-time several hours project to ongoing committee work. We need and very much value your expertise and engagement.

Despite the unprecedented challenges higher education faces, we have a vibrant, engaged, collegial, supportive membership and tremendous opportunities await us to build and strengthen our organization. I look forward to your participation in our initiatives as well as supporting you personally in any way I can with your EAM work as well as your work and career outside of EAM.

Sincerely,  
Jeff

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