

AACC International Members Rule!

BILL ATWELL

Professional Development Panel Chair



There was a time in my life when I was not associated with AACC International. Despite the efforts of my mother, father, friends, relatives, and various teachers, I didn't have much wisdom at that time. It didn't stop me, though, because I thought I knew it all. I expounded at length on pretty much any subject at any time to anyone who would listen. I had a lot of book knowledge and was glad to share it.

Knowledge isn't wisdom though. Wisdom allows much deeper insight and fosters sound judgment. It comes with personal experience, and its accumulation is facilitated through keeping a receptive mind and interacting with people with ideas different than the ones you've already adopted. That's why no matter how hard mothers and fathers try to instill wisdom into their teenagers, the last part of successful parenting is to let go, let them experience things on their own, and allow them to gain some wisdom in the process. It is this wisdom that lets college graduates see their parents in a different light. It is how the parents go from being the "worst mothers and fathers in the world" to people with functional heads on their shoulders.

When I joined AACC International in 1979, I opened myself to people in my field of expertise from all over the world. These people collectively have a broad spectrum of experience and perspective. Many of them I call friends now, and I am a better scientist and person for knowing them. AACC International has many products and services, which provide members all kinds of

advantages. However, the most significant value of membership, in my mind, comes from interacting with the other members. Those in our discipline who are not members are missing out—AACC International members have so many advantages over them. AACC International members rule!

At this stage of my life, I find mentoring extremely gratifying. A few weeks ago, I met with a new protégé for the first time. At one point, I asked him whether he was an AACC International member and he said no. He had some vague rationale for that decision, and while he was describing, it I was formulating my response. When I spoke, I delivered a rationale for membership in the form of a string of positive benefits, including networking to identify resources and career opportunities, access to the latest information in the field, facilitating business relationships, forums for reporting your own research/activities, building a reputation in the process, etc. Like the parent and the teenager, communication may not have been optimal. Perhaps enough stuck so that he will become a member. I hope so.

AACC International now has a Member-Get-A-Member program (see www.aaccnet.org/membership/membergetamember.asp). There are some special benefits for those who recruit more than five members. The real benefits are not for us, however, as we already enjoy them. The real benefits are for the new members we recruit. They should be allowed to rule too.

Bill Atwell is a Research Fellow and Manager of Bakery Technology in the Cargill Global Food Technology Group and is the Technical Leader of Cargill's Bakery Category. Atwell can be reached at Bill_Atwell@cargill.com.

Professional Development Panel

The Professional Development Panel is responsible for recommending policy in the areas of professional development that includes mentoring programs, networking, recognition of member achievement, volunteerism, programs for life-long learning, leadership programs, membership recruitment and retention, and education and career development. If you have suggestions for the panel to consider or would like to participate on the panel, contact Bill Atwell.

Chair: William Atwell, *Cargill Bake Lab*
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