



MESSAGE FROM THE STR DIVISION CHAIR



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“Walks have been my salvation during the pandemic. The routine of getting out the door, and the promise of warm tea and oatmeal upon return adds much-needed structure to the day. But, I enjoy the walks too. The rural Eastern-Connecticut setting, amidst the trees and rolling hills are a nice contrast to the virtual world in which I exist 8 hours a day. I relish the tingly feeling when spotting a family of White-tailed deer crossing the road, or glimpsing the grey fox that seemingly owns the square mileage around my home, or hearing a woodpecker or rooster or running stream break the silence. It is really my only time to see other people. I hardly ever see more than four, and I know them only by their muffled greetings. Little do they know that my sanity clings to their simple acknowledgement.”

- Timothy B Folta (excerpt from short story written in January 2021)

Just as the pandemic has spurred a torrent of research and new teaching approaches in our field, so it has inspired new creative works of the written word, the canvas, the recording, the act of kindness, the political will, the adventure (Above, you see a little evidence of my inspiration). It has also caused STR division leadership to reconsider how the division might create value for its members, realizing that we need to contribute throughout the calendar year, and not just during the annual conference. A multitude of virtual efforts were launched in a flurry of activity beginning in April 2020, and captained by Samina Karim through August 2020. Since August 2020, we have worked to institutionalize these and additional efforts. A survey conducted of our membership in October 2020 revealed that, over 85 percent of respondents recommend we devote at least 25 percent of our resources to non-(annual) conference activities, and we are pursuing this vigorously by:

- institutionalizing a STRonger Together task force (Jiao Luo, Roberto Vassolo, Gwendolyn Lee), which assembled a tantalizingly interesting set of research symposia, Meet the Scholar sessions, and PhD Workshops.
- asking our Teaching Committee to help members adjust to the online environment, so they (John Mawdsley, Vijaya Narapareddy, Henning Piezunka, Giada di Stefano, Jenniver Knippen, and Peter Murrman) assembled a fabulous virtual panel of teachers in November

- expanding the role of the [Membership Engagement Committee](#) to attend to the social, psychological, and physical needs of members throughout the year. They (Bilgehan Uzunca - Chair, Joao Albino-Pimentel, Caterina Moschieri, Lisa Tang, David Clough, Shelby Gai, Eunice Rhee, Andrea Contigiani, Vivian Guo, and Andy Wu) produced an abundance of life-giving activities, including many cultural conversations, writing retreats, fitness challenges, and virtual pub quizzes.
- liberating our [Global Representatives](#) to creatively attend to the needs of STR members within their regions. Under Elena Vidal's leadership they (Obi Damoah, Joon Mahn Lee, Remzi Gozubuyuk, Carlos Rodrigues, Weiting Zheng, and Michael Leatherbee) responded beautifully with a series of paper development workshops in Chile, Oceania, and Turkey, and a research series in Korea.
- unleashing our Communications team, lead by Paolo Aversa, to grow our social media presence. We now have divisional accounts for [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#); an increasing portfolio of [YouTube](#) videos, including an STR Nuggets series featuring short bits of advice from leading scholars; and our own podcasts. Followers have risen rapidly. To stay informed, please visit our [webpage calendar](#), and/or sign up for social media.

We are immensely grateful to the many members contributing to these events. Indeed, it takes so many helpful hands and minds! Please look [here](#) for more detail of all the events.

Going Forward

There is still much to anticipate on our STR schedule of events, listed below through July. Please register if interested.

- May 6 - MTS: [Bruce Kogut](#)
- May 18 – MTS: [Marvin Lieberman](#)
- May 20 – Research Symposium: [Firm-State Ties: Addressing the Grand Challenges](#)
- May 27 – MTS: [Nicolai Foss](#)
- Jun 11 – MTS: [Tammy Madsen](#)
- June 25-26 - [STR Paper Development Workshop for Turkey](#) (Jun 25-26). Organizers: Remzi Gözübüyük, Elena Vidal. Host Institution: Sabanci Üniversitesi. Discussants: Isin Guler, Pinar Ozcan, Gokhan Ertug, Metin Sengul, Asli Colpan.
- Jun 28 – MTS: [Carliss Baldwin](#)
- Jul 14 – [Research Symposia: Editor Perspectives on Alternatives to the Hypo-Deductive Framework in Empirical Management Research](#)

Also, there will be new events not yet scheduled. Indeed, there is no shortage of opportunities. We are launching the STR Alternative Career Path Initiative aiming to illuminate and legitimize career paths alternative to one at an academic institution. Such alternatives include, but are not limited to, roles as consultants, policy makers, or strategists in firms, ventures, or non-governmental organizations.

5-Year Report

This year, the division submitted its [5-year report](#) to AOM, thanks to the hard work of Metin Sengul and Ram Ranganathan, and all members taking the time to complete the October survey. We were approved for another 5 years! Yay! You can also find AOM feedback at the link noted above. I will send another email detailing some key takeaways from the 5-year report.

Annual Conference

The annual conference is a division highlight, giving us a change to celebrate much great work by our members. It is being featured elsewhere by Program Chair Michael Leiblein and Assistant Program Chair Louise Mors. Many thanks to those two and their whole team. I want to draw particular attention to the STR

Plenary on Monday, August 2, titled “*Managing Tensions between Stakeholder and Shareholder Objectives*”. There are increasing pressures for firm strategies to better balance tensions between markets and society, humans and nature, and the present and the future. These tensions introduce enormous complexity for CEOs and have huge implications for strategy research on firm performance. This plenary features a discussion between two leading CEOs who have effectively managed this complexity (Jim Snabe – Chairman of Maersk and Siemens, and Davis Smith – CEO of startup Cotopaxi), and two leading scholars (Jay Barney and Subi Rangan) who push the boundary of our understanding of this topic.

Finally, I cannot tell you how many compliments I have gotten from members about how STR has responded to the pandemic. All of AOM has been witness to our efforts, and I think we can all be very proud of what we have accomplished during this crisis of significant magnitude. We are fortunate to be part of this community. Of course, special thanks to Past Division Chair Samina Karim for a quick and robust response last year. There remains much more we might do, and I invite you to dream with me here. Exercise your creative juices, and reach out to me with ideas you want to share. I am confident we will meet the enormous opportunities in front of us.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Gratefully,

Tim