PCSA delegation members at their 2014 annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pa., with 2013–2014 ACerS president David Green.

Chair's update on PCSA activities and welcome to the student *ACerS Bulletin* issue

By Jessica Rimsza
PCSA chair

Rimsza

The June/July issue of the *ACerS Bulletin* is a wonderful opportunity to showcase a handful of the accomplishments of the President's Council of Student Advisors (PCSA). PCSA is an avenue to engage students as long-term Society leaders and to encourage diversity in the ceramic and glass community.

This issue focuses on the topic of clean energy and includes articles written by PCSA delegates on their work on cutting-edge ceramics research—including ceramics for nuclear applications, lead-free piezoelectric ceramics, ceramic oxygen transport membranes, solid oxide fuel cells, and semiconductor materials. PCSA students and other students across the nation also are engaged in world-changing efforts outside of the lab, including K–12 STEM outreach and community volunteer work to promote ceramic science and engineering.

Since the introduction of PCSA in 2008, 149 delegates from 47 universities have worked to improve ACerS student involvement and expand student outreach events. PCSA has strived to represent as diverse a student group as possible by encouraging all students to apply, including international, domestic, graduate, undergraduate, female, and male students.

The percentage of international PCSA delegates has steadily increased during the past three years, with the 2014–2015 class of delegates containing seven international delegates from England, Italy, and India. The accompanying infographic depicts the diversity of countries and specific institutions represented by PCSA delegates.

Graduate students represent 55% of PCSA delegates, because undergraduate students tend to have broader interests than a particular subset of materials. Thirty-four percent of PCSA delegates are women—6% higher than the concentration of women working in science and engineering jobs overall. Perhaps more importantly, women have held 51% of the PCSA leadership positions that have been available, demonstrating that PCSA has provided ample opportunity and support for women to gain leadership experience in ACerS.

Among PCSA alumni, 78% now work in the ceramic and glass industries, holding positions with companies such as GE, Corning, IBM, and Intel. Other PCSA alumni work at national labs, in academia, or have pursued additional training opportunities. Explore the infographic for more about PCSA's diverse group of leaders.

Overall, PCSA provides an avenue for ceramic and glass student leaders to gain leadership experience and invaluable skills while supporting ceramic students worldwide. If you have any questions or comments on how the PCSA can encourage diversity in ceramic and glass science, please feel free to contact me at jessicarimsza@my.unt.edu.

Jessica Rimsza is a Ph.D. candidate in materials science and engineering at the University of North Texas. She is the current chair of PCSA. ■