

## **Karsten E. Thompson** **Candidate for President-Elect**

InterPore member since 2014.

Department Chair since 2011.



### **Volunteer experience**

I have participated in InterPore conferences/workshops since 2011. In 2018 I chaired the local organizing committee for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual InterPore Conference and Jubilee in New Orleans – a role that at the time required heavy involvement with both programming and logistics; 16 months of close interactions with the InterPore team provided a good understanding of the society and its organization. Subsequently I helped form the Committee for Industry Engagement, which I currently co-chair.

Similar past roles include committee member and session organizer for the Transport Division of AIChE, Academic Advisory Committee to SPE, and organizing committee member for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International GeoX meeting in 2010.

### **Name a key issue that InterPore will face during your term of office. What are key factors InterPore will have to consider and how will you lead InterPore and its membership in addressing that issue?**

InterPore grew dramatically during its first decade. It became stronger and more diverse, but endured growing pains such as some loss of intimacy in the annual meeting. I believe a key issue for the coming years will be planning for and promoting growth, but with the focus less on numbers and more on balance – particularly on increasing industry involvement and increasing participation in certain topical areas.

While these goals are not new and not easy to bring about, the successful 2020 conference was an eye-opener for many of us and provides ideas for the future. To be sure, in 2020 we all missed the in-person interactions that are impossible to replicate online, but there were benefits: people attended who would not have traveled to the in-person conference, even if it had not been affected by the pandemic. And, the alternative format with on-demand access meant missing fewer talks that were of interest. One of the News Flashes from that week summed up the impact well, noting that an attendee who would have been the lone participant from his/her company, was joined by a number of colleagues once the conference began.

I believe this experience provides a roadmap to help broaden participation and help address challenges I saw firsthand while organizing the New Orleans meeting, where the schedule included sessions on bio, thin materials, separations, and more. However, despite the quality and innovation in these sessions, their small size meant that they lacked a critical mass needed to draw in researchers from outside InterPore.

Moving forward, InterPore (like every other society organization, university, and company) has both a challenge and an opportunity, to integrate the best of what has

become possible with remote technologies with the best of what we achieve when gathering in person.

I don't have a blueprint for these ideas, but my approach would include listening to constituents from industry and from topical areas targeted for growth. I would use ideas we have generated in the industry engagement committee, and I would use experiences from years of working on industry-sponsored research (not only from the oil & gas sector but also companies such as Kimberly Clark and Millipore). Simple but effective ideas that could make an impact include short courses designed for online delivery to spur industry engagement, and creating special conference sessions with remote participation, which can help generate a critical mass of participants in areas where this has been lacking.

I hope it goes without saying that these activities should complement but not replace in-person activities, ensuring InterPore retains what has made it thrive for twelve years while growing into its full potential.