

Lilit Yeghiazarian **Candidate for President-Elect**



InterPore member since 2013

Faculty member, Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering, University of Cincinnati, USA, since 2009

Volunteer experience

Founding Committee Member, InterPore MidWestern Chapter (2022-present)

Chair of InterPore Membership Committee (2016-2022)

Member of Kimberly-Clark InterPore Lectureship Award Committee (2016-present)

Member of InterPore 2018 Jubilee Committee (2016-2018)

Chair of Local Organizing Committee and Member of the Programme Committee, 8th International Conference on Porous Media and Annual Meeting of the InterPore, Cincinnati OH, USA, 2016

Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee for The 6th International Conference on Porous Media and Annual Meeting of the International Society for Porous Media (InterPore), Milwaukee, WI, USA, 2014

General Chair, American Water Resources Association's Specialty Conference. Geospatial Water Technologies – Complex Systems, 2020 and 2022

Organizing Committee Member, AWRA Specialty Conference – GIS in Water Resources, 2018 (Orlando FL, USA) and 2016 (Sacramento CA, USA)

Associate Editor, *Frontiers in Water* (Specialty section: Water and Human Health), 2020-present

Executive Board Member and Research Committee Member, Armenian National Science and Education Fund (ANSEF), 2002 - present

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?

In one phrase, my vision for InterPore is fostering culture of interdisciplinary collaborations and new generations of diverse scientists. I believe these two issues are at the core of InterPore's development and growth regardless of the actual mechanisms, which can be formation of chapters, student associations, and public-private relationships. These key issues are inextricably linked, so I really think of them as one.

Fostering culture of interdisciplinary collaborations: InterPore is unique because it is impossible to confine the science, engineering and technologies related to porous media to a single field. Much cutting-edge work happens at the interface of sciences, and having experts engage in dialogue across the disciplinary divides generates new, exciting ideas and areas of exploration. Innovation that arises from such collaborations can then be transitioned to practice through public-private relationships between academic groups and industry partners.

I propose to foster a culture of interdisciplinary collaborations bottom-up through *use cases*. We will set up a new Interdisciplinary Collaborations Committee, who will solicit specific use cases from the community. They can involve scientific or technological challenges, specific (basic or applied science) problems, and can come from any member – with or without funding associated with solving the use case. People interested in tackling these use cases, or those who have partial or even complete solutions, will form a working group that can potentially apply for funding. Colleagues from different fields who could contribute will be invited to join the working group – enriching and potentially expanding the InterPore membership. Depending on use cases, working groups can also be formed within Chapters.

The more success these working groups generate, the greater is the excitement and the faster is the adoption of this culture. The use case approach also works very well in accelerating academic-industry partnerships because it produces solutions to specific problems.

Fostering new generations of diverse scientists: Young researchers with different backgrounds are the lifeline of InterPore, and providing them with ample resources to grow professionally and personally is critical to InterPore's success and sustainability. Important parts of this process are education and creating pathways to recognition and leadership positions.

InterPore is a global organization, and diversity means different things in different parts of the world. Recognizing this is the first step to develop practices for inclusion and equity. We want to develop resources and opportunities that not only span the entire organization, but are tailored to specific locales – meeting our members where they are. This means that we need to rethink our strategies through the lens of digital transformation that, over the last two years, has completely changed the way we work and learn. It has also opened ways for professional societies to create personalized communications and experiences for our members. We need to take advantage of these digital-forward approaches to open new opportunities for education and new pathways to recognition and success. We need to better understand what are the existing gaps, how to integrate our young members across various geographies in positions of leadership, and what pathways and types of recognition would work best.

I do not have the answers to these questions because they can only be found through a continuous process of exploration and engagement with all members. If elected President, I commit to this process.