

Making Your Mark in the Biomed World

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About the Author



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Steps to Take

1. Join your local biomed society.
2. Volunteer at schools, introducing students to the profession.
3. Take on more responsibility at work.
4. Write for a professional journal or magazine.
5. Join AAMI.
6. Get involved with the BMET Board of Examiners.

It is a great time to be in the biomed field. Maybe you've been working for several years and wonder what you can do to give back to our profession. Perhaps you are new to the field and would like some guidance in your growth. There are lots of opportunities to give back at a local level, on the job, and at a national level. The work is not only personally satisfying, but allows you to grow professionally.

The first step is to start locally. What makes a great biomed society? What would you like to see in a great meeting? What direction would you like to see the organization take? Get involved and you can help with these decisions. Reach out to other biomed societies for more direction and suggestions on making local biomed society grow. If you need a list of biomedical societies in your area, visit AAMI's website at aami.org/resources/links/biomed.html.

The next step: Get involved in your community. Over the past couple of years, biomedical engineering has been recognized as one of hottest careers by various media outlets. Promote our field by volunteering to give a presentation at a local junior high or high school. Educators say it is never too early to introduce your profession to a student. We do an annual presentation at Southern Methodist University's Visioneering event every February in Dallas to hundreds of grade-school students interested in the engineering profession. It is

very satisfying to see the students' interest when you show them the medical equipment.

Several members of the North Texas Biomedical Association volunteer to help students at Texas State Technical College and MediSend on the basics of medical equipment.

You could also share your expertise by posting comments on the various biomed listservs, such as Biomedtalk, Imagetalk, and TechNation. Maybe you have found a second source for a hard-to-find part for that telemetry system. This would be a great place to share your find. The biomed listserv has been a great forum for this type of exchange of information since being founded by Mike Kaufmann in 1997. It is also a great way to network with fellow professionals. The various listservs are free to join. ECRI now owns and manages the biomed listserv and you can sign up here: www.ecri.org/biomedtalk/Pages/default.aspx.

Volunteer for responsibilities outside your scope of work at your facility. Paul Kelley of Washington Hospital Healthcare System in California is a great example of doing this for his organization. He was appointed to a task force at his hospital to review green practices. His willingness to develop a green program led him to being named its director in addition to his title of director of biomedical engineering. Volunteering for extra jobs at your organization can make you more visible and more valuable to your organization.

Get involved with AAMI. You can, for example, volunteer to help with the annual conference planning. AAMI also offers opportunities to volunteer on their technical committees, which work on projects dealing

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with issues such as medical device software, infusion devices, and human factors. Visit their website at www.aami.org/standards/tc_join.html for more information.

Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) is another organization to consider. With the big focus on the electronic health records (EHRs),

there is a great need for biomedical involvement with HIMSS. The American College of Clinical Engineering (ACCE), AAMI, and HIMSS are collaborating to coordinate the issues around biomedical engineering and information technology (IT). You can visit their website at www.ceitcollaboration.org. You can visit the HIMSS site at www.himss.org/ASP/index.asp. You may visit the ACCE webpage at www.accenet.org.

You can also offer to write an article for *TechNation*, *24x7, Biomedical Instrumentation & Technology (BI&T)*, or the *Journal of Clinical Engineering*. Not an expert at writing? Don't worry. The publications have editors and volunteers that review articles before they are published. Their expertise and feedback will help you immensely.

Are you certified and want to help the field grow? Get involved with the BMET Board of Examiners. They review the questions on the certification exams for biomedical equipment technicians (BMETs), laboratory equipment specialists, and radiology equipment specialists.

They meet twice a year—once at AAMI's annual conference and once in January over a three-day weekend. They also review the continuing practice journals submitted each year, write test questions, review the past year's exam results, and review exam content. Go to AAMI's website under certification for more information—www.aami.org/certification.

Don't forget that biomed schools also need volunteers to serve on their industry and advisory boards to review their curriculum and to offer advice on their future teaching needs. With the rapid growth in our profession, these schools are always in need of someone in the field to help guide their program.

As you can see, there is a wealth of opportunities that you will not only look good on your resume and build leadership skills, but will lead to greater networking opportunities and ultimately greater satisfaction in your career. So go make your mark in the biomed field by giving back to our profession. ■

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