



SOCIETY OF DECISION  
PROFESSIONALS  
Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

# NEWSLETTER

Issue 9

June 2018

## President's Message by Ellen Coopersmith



Hi Folks,

As I write my last newsletter article as your SDP President, I reflect on this past year and provide my vision for SDP as we support the new President, Jim Driscoll, and the new board of directors going forward. Before I share my view of this year and our future, I want to thank all of you who worked extremely hard this year on the board, the councils, the DAAG committees, and the chapters. It has been a unique privilege to get to know you and to observe the amazing and challenging work that you put into your second, volunteer job to make SDP what it is today and what it is evolving into. I will have a special memory of this year in my career and I thank you for the opportunity to serve you. I also want to thank Hilda Cherekdjian, our Executive Director of SDP, for her never ending patience and wisdom as she trains and facilitates our ever-evolving leadership and society.

### This Year in a Nutshell

We accomplished a great deal this year and have a lot to be proud of. We raised sufficient funds to make SDP a growing, sustainable organization. We expanded our geographical footprint with the formation of our second and third chapters and grew membership by 20%. So, how did we do this? Is it repeatable? I believe the answer is yes. I believe it is the direct result of the thoughtful implementation of the strategy which we developed under Larry Neal's leadership, combined with our hard-working board and expanding councils. We were tenacious and as a team, we accomplished a lot.

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*President's Message, continued from page 1*

This month, the SDP's chapter strategy will be presented and approved by the board. Led by Laura Keating, an energized group worked to set direction for chapter growth, launch and operation. The timing is perfect. By the end of the summer SDP will have five chapters (Houston, Calgary, Seattle, Vancouver and The Bay Area)! They will coordinate local DQ meetings throughout the year and share ideas as they expand their activities of interest. Our reconfigured Chapter and Outreach Council will be instrumental in supporting this effort going forward.

This year SDP hosted two events. There was a second SMDM forum in upstate NY, and DAAG 2018 in Vancouver had record attendance and two well attended training workshop days. Although our lookbacks on these events are not complete, we believe the energy of the local DQ community in Vancouver was instrumental in getting the word out about the conference and courses, and that, combined with high enthusiasm from our new chapters, greatly contributed to the DAAG 2018 attendance and success.

We also witnessed the results of a variety of successful pilots. Henk Krijnen will soon be reporting on the success of our first Technical Interest Group – the SDP Scenario TIG. Following on to this, Brian Putt has now launched our second TIG, focused on Cost and Schedule uncertainty. Thank you both! At DAAG, we tested two pilots, one parallel session, which was well received, and two days of courses. Bravo!

### **Our Future Call to Action**

If I've learned anything from this year, it is the importance of continuing to thoughtfully implement our strategic plan. So, what's next? Where must we focus our efforts? In my opinion, we need to establish a few more small strategic groups, similar to our ad hoc chapter strategy sub-team, to build out our youth education, broader swath, and non-profit enablement strategies. We also need to: improve our web support; develop and execute an integrated, internal AND external communication and social media strategy; and begin to test the waters for more local and global DQ events which will reach a broader swath of DQ professionals, other business professionals and leaders.

As your past president and non-voting member of the SDP board in the year to come, I pledge my service to help Jim Driscoll and the new board continue to make quantum leaps as we grow a wonderful, sustainable SDP. I am excited to do so, and look forward to meeting and working with many more of you going forward.

Very warm regards my friends,

Your colleague, Ellen M. Coopersmith

# Results of 2018 SDP Election

Dear Members,

As President-elect and Chair of the 2018 SDP Nominating Committee, I would like to congratulate our newly-elected officers and board members:

## Newly-elected SDP Vice President / President-elect



**Pat Leach** is an independent strategy consultant in Denver and an adjunct professor at the Colorado School of Mines.

## Newly-elected SDP Treasurer



**Troy Helm** is a senior consultant at Strategic Decisions Group

## Newly-elected members of the SDP Board of Directors



**Candice Junge** is a Strategic Clinical Development Director in Amgen's Center for Design and Analysis.



**Eyas Raddad** leads the Research Decision Analytics function within Lilly Research Laboratories.



**Jeremy Walker** is the Vice President of Business Development at Decision Frameworks.

When their terms begin on July 1st, our newly elected board members will join our existing board members Jennifer Harrington, Laura Keating, Leslie Lippard, Tyler Ludlow, Jon Mauer and Amy Stranieri. Terry Karner will continue in his role as SDP Secretary. I look forward to collaborating with such a passionate and talented team in the coming year.

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Please allow me to offer my sincere thanks to our outgoing officers and board members for their service to our society:

All SDP members owe a great debt of gratitude to Ellen Coopersmith, our outgoing President. Under Ellen's leadership our society has grown its membership to new heights and has attained the strongest financial position in our history. When Hurricane Harvey hit, Ellen never faltered in her duties despite significant personal hardship. She has been tireless in her service to our members, to our sponsors and to our board. It was an honor to serve such a talented and caring President. While Ellen will be stepping down from her post at the end of this month, we will continue to benefit from her practical advice and savvy business sense as she takes on the role of Past-President.

Henk Krijnen has been an outstanding steward of the society's resources during his term as SDP Treasurer. His calm and logical counsel has been instrumental throughout our financial turnaround. Please join me in thanking Henk for his hard work and dedication to the society.

I would like to thank Elayne Ko, William Leaf-Herrmann, and Somik Raha for their many accomplishments as board members and council liaisons over the past three years. We are grateful for their service.

Lastly, I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to Larry Neal who will soon complete his term as Past-President and board observer. Larry's wisdom and sage advice has been invaluable to me and to the other officers and board members in situations too numerous to count. Thank you, Larry, for helping our society chart such a successful new course.

In addition to congratulating our newly-elected board members and thanking our outgoing leaders, I would like to update you on my discussions with our entire slate of talented candidates following the recent election:

Dan Hudson will continue in his role as chair of the Membership Council. In addition, I've asked Dan to join the Business Development Council where I expect he will make significant contributions to important strategic initiatives for the society in the coming year.

Matt Gorman is looking forward to serving SDP in a variety of different capacities. We are discussing how he might contribute to evolving our certification program as well as how he could assist in improving our member communications, specifically our use of social media. Moreover, Matt remains committed to serving as co-editor of the SDP Newsletter until such time as new editors are identified.

Yachtze Luchin has expressed an interest in getting involved in one or more of SDP's councils. While all would benefit from Yachtze's active engagement, he and I are evaluating which councils match his personal interests and have the greatest need for his leadership skills.

Josh Harrison plans to complete his term as Chair of the Program Council as well as fulfill his responsibilities as Past-Chair in support of the new Program Council leadership. When those commitments are fulfilled, Josh and I are committed to identifying his next leadership opportunity within the society.

Steve Begg and I are discussing his interest in founding one or more SDP chapters in his home country of Australia, the idea of an SDP-sponsored event there (i.e. "DAAG Down Under") and how to add decision skills as a basic curriculum in Australian high-schools.

I encourage you to reach out to all of the outstanding candidates in this year's election to thank them for stepping forward in support of our professional society. With such an amazing team of leaders, I know the future will be bright for our growing organization.

The full slate of the SDP Officers and Board members can be viewed at:

<http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/forms/sh34argdhe23it?sid=hr4usonlufxsr9>

Best,

Jim Driscoll

SDP VP / President-Elect



## News from the SDP Chapters

### Calgary Chapter

The Calgary chapter continues to host regular events. The next event will be on June 13, 2018, with Dr. Carolina Diaz-Goano presenting on 'Portfolio optimization and uncertainty analysis within the Canadian Oil and Gas sector' followed by snacks and drinks at a nearby pub. The Calgary chapter will be taking a break over the summer and will rev up again with our next event planned for September. To join the SDP Calgary Chapter mailing list or for more information, please visit the Calgary Chapter page on the SDP website under the membership tab or send us an email at [CalgaryChapter@decisionprofessionals.com](mailto:CalgaryChapter@decisionprofessionals.com).

### Seattle Chapter

The Seattle Chapter held its first meeting in January of this year, organized by Troy Helm, Dave Leonhardi, Jim Matheson, and Amy Day. Although our second meeting in February was snowed out, we have held meetings each month since. Attendees have included people from a number of different companies in the Seattle area, including some new folks who got their first exposure to Decision Quality. In addition to interesting speakers, we've also had some very informative discussions about best practices and how others are approaching various types of problems in different industries or different organizations. Overall, feedback has been very good and we're looking forward to completing the formal setup with chapter officer elections and seeing the Seattle Chapter grow.



### Houston Chapter

The Houston Chapter has been busy this spring, hosting the University of Texas Center for Petroleum Asset Risk Management (CPARM) for its May meeting and holding a round table discussion in June regarding the state of DQ in Houston as the energy industry begins to emerge from the downturn of the last several years.

Newly installed 2018-19 officers of the Houston Chapter are Matt Kurtz, President, and Luis Mendoza-Natividad, Secretary/Treasurer. President-elect and 2019-20 President will be named at a later time. Any SDP members in the Houston area looking to become more involved with the chapter or in becoming a chapter leader can reach out to Matt Kurtz at [matthew.kurtz@worleyparsons.com](mailto:matthew.kurtz@worleyparsons.com).



## Spotlight on SDP Member Kate Brum

*In every issue of this newsletter, we turn the spotlight on a randomly-selected member of the SDP to learn more about that member's life as a decision professional.*

*The editors*



SDP member Kate Brum has followed a multi-step career path to her current position of Decision Analysis Advisor doing economic analysis within Chevron's Corporate Business Development group in Houston, Texas. She earned a bachelor's degree in Geology from Lehigh University, intending to pursue a career in the oil industry. But, because oil companies were not hiring at the time due to severe financial pressures, she took a job as a consultant with Booz, Allen, Hamilton, followed a few years later by a project management position with the financial corporation Vanguard. She then earned a master's degree from The Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University, whereupon she was successfully recruited by Chevron in San Ramon, California.

Within Chevron, Kate started in marketing for the Downstream part of the business and then moved to Upstream (exploration and development) where she first took on the role of Decision Analysis Advisor. Although admittedly quite green in the realm of the Decision Analysis practice at the start, she quickly came up to speed through on-the-job training. After 5 years in California, she moved to Atyrau, Kazakhstan and spent a few years working in a JV owned in part by Chevron. She then moved to Houston in 2011 where she joined a team managing assets in Angola and Republic of Congo in southern Africa. After three years supporting southern Africa, Kate moved to the Corporate Business Development group where she spent some time doing portfolio analysis, then transitioned to her current position doing economic analysis to support the acquisition and divestiture of oil and gas assets, providing insights for contract negotiations and bidding strategies.

Kate found both great satisfaction and strong challenges while working as a decision professional in Kazakhstan. She looks back with satisfaction on the success she had in establishing a resident decision analysis capability within the projects organization. Starting out as the sole DA person supporting major capital projects, she hired two Kazakh nationals to join her group and, through internal coursework and on-project coaching, she developed their capabilities to the point where they could continue providing DA support to the business unit after she returned to the US. But there were significant challenges in implementing DA in Kazakhstan. Poor infrastructure and extreme temperature swings in winter and summer presented great difficulties in planning the development of oil fields. And it was sometimes challenging to convince operational managers to try to optimize the long-term value of their business instead of focusing on meeting short-term performance goals.

Away from Kazakhstan, Kate experienced considerable satisfaction in guiding a decision to invest \$10.5 billion (gross) in asset development in southern Africa. That decision process took about 18 months to complete.

A challenge that she has frequently encountered in her work at Chevron is needing to grasp both technical and commercial aspects of an investment decision and to communicate effectively with people immersed in one side or the other of that divide.

Kate has very much enjoyed being a member of SDP. She found great value in participating in the SDP mentoring program last year, saying that having a mentor outside of her company gave her an external sounding board and an impartial source of career advice.

## James Smith Certified as SDP Practitioner



Congratulations go to James Smith of Nexen Petroleum in the UK for recently earning certification as a Practitioner in the Society of Decision Professionals.

### Upcoming Events



SOCIETY OF DECISION  
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- Webinar: [Best of DAAG 2018: Emotions and Decision Analysis](#)  
Wednesday, June 20,  
2018, 8 am PT | 11 am ET

- **DAAG 2019 – SAVE THE DATE!**  
March 5 – 8 , 2019  
GRAND HYATT DENVER  
1750 Welton Street  
Denver, CO, 80202, US



- [40th Annual North American Meeting](#)  
October 14-17, 2018  
Montreal, QC, Canada

EDPN  
EUROPEAN DECISION PROFESSIONALS NETWORK



London  
Decision Quality  
Group

- [London Decision Quality Conference](#) – Geological Society in London  
November 5 – 6, 2018  
November 7 – SDP Workshop  
More info on page 8

Do you know of upcoming professional events that might be of interest to other SDP members? If so, please email the SDP newsletter at [newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com](mailto:newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com)

### Useful Links

The SDP Board has posted the Society's Bylaws and Policy and Procedure Manual, which can be found at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/about/governance>

The SDP Knowledge Sharing Council maintains a Fellows Blog at:  
<http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/?scrollTo=blog-news#blog-news>

A listing of courses in decision analysis available to SDP members is at:  
<http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/courses/training-program>





# London Decision Quality Conference 2018

## *Making Good Outcomes More Likely*

This multi-industry conference is being held at the Geological Society in London, on **Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th November 2018**, where global experts will share practical guidance on improving business decision making.

The conference is structured around the six elements of Decision Quality, and will provide an opportunity for decision professionals to improve skills and share knowledge on various applications of Decision Quality in business and government.

### **For 2018 we have secured a strong speaker line-up:**

- Carl Spetzler, CEO, Strategic Decisions Group
- Russell Smith, VP Global Concept Developments, BP Plc
- Cath Bishop, Olympic Rower, Leadership Consultant & Speaker
- Jeremy Brann, Head of Economic Excellence, Shell Exploration & Production
- James (Jim) Weatherall, Head of the Advanced Analytics Centre, AstraZeneca
- Dominic Brittain, Principal, Dominic Brittain and Associates
- Reidar Bratvold, Professor of Decision and Data Analytics at the University of Stavanger and the Norwegian Institute of Technology
- Ellen Coopsmith, Founder, Decision Frameworks
- Ray Riddoch, Managing Director UK, Senior Vice President Europe, Nexen Petroleum U.K. Ltd

### **Additional features:**

- Software Roadshow at lunch time on both days
- Panel Session on Embedding Decision Quality
- Followed by a short course on **Leading Decision Quality Workshops** sponsored by the SDP on **7th November**.

To see the full programme and to register please visit the EDPN site: [www.edpn.org](http://www.edpn.org)







### *Dear SDP Fellows: "What triggered your interest in the Decision Sciences?"*

After I graduated from Reed College with a BA in philosophy, I was hired by a college friend into the regional planning department of the local electric utility. He figured if I could play war games, he could teach me to write computer models. In my job, I worked with various modelers, including Ed Cazalet, in regional planning processes at Bonneville Power Administration. I loved his "regional decision model", because of its clear handling of decisions and uncertainties, and how it had a broad enough scope to handle region-wide planning issues without getting bogged down in details. So one day I told him I'd buy him lunch if he would tell me how he got so smart and got to play with such cool toys. He said "Well ... I guess you could do like I did ... go to Stanford and study decision analysis." I did, and I've loved it ever since. Buying him that lunch was the best investment I ever made!

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I majored in mechanical engineering and minored in economics. I have always been interested in analysis and figuring out what to do. As part of that, there were two major turning points for me.

The first was in my undergraduate years when a co-op student came back from working at General Motors. He gave a talk about his project, which was redesigning the door-lock mechanism on the 1990 Buick Skylark (a horrible car—apologies to 1990 Buick Skylark aficionados). He was VERY excited and really loved his work. I was happy for him, but was thinking "Oh my gosh, that is not me. I want to figure out if we should even be making the 1990 Buick Skylark." At that point, I decided to look for graduate programs that would allow me to make system-level decisions. That ultimately led me to Stanford.

That is where the second turning point occurred. I went to Stanford to work on energy policy. During the second quarter we had to take a course entitled "Decision Analysis I," taught by Ron Howard. I thought to myself, "Well, this ought to be easy. I already know how to make decisions." Then Ron did the thumbtack demo in the first lecture and I thought "This is it! This is everything I never knew I always wanted to do." Decision analysis was the seed crystal that brought everything together for me. And, the rest is (an evolving) history.

*The following SDP Fellows contributed to answering this question: Eric Johnson and Eric Bickel*

*If you have a question for the SDP Fellows about good practice among decision professionals, please send it to us at [SDP Newsletter: Ask The Fellows](#).*



## A Word From SDP Sponsor Pfizer

*In every issue of this newsletter, we include a message from one of the SDP sponsors, whose support contributes significantly to the on-going success of the Society.*

At Pfizer, we apply science and our global resources to bring therapies to people that can extend and significantly improve their lives. We strive to set the standard for quality, safety, and value in the discovery, development, and manufacture of health care products. Our global portfolio includes medicines and vaccines as well as many of the world's best-known consumer health care products. Pfizer colleagues work across developed and emerging markets to advance wellness, prevention, treatments, and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time. We collaborate with health care providers, governments, and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world.

A core group of individuals work within Pfizer's Portfolio and Decision Analysis (PDA) group, specializing in implementing decision analysis (DA) process, methodology, and tools supporting Pfizer's therapeutic area business units, including Inflammation & Immunology, Internal Medicine, Oncology, Rare Diseases and Vaccines, plus Pfizer Essential Health and Pfizer Consumer Health. Led by Joanna Wolkowski, PDA consists of the following functions and responsibilities: project/asset evaluation, portfolio prioritization, benchmarking, governance and disclosure, and portfolio systems. PDA celebrated its 20-year anniversary within Pfizer in May 2018.

PDA relies on a consulting-based model to establish robust decision analysis practice, utilizes the six elements of Decision Quality (DQ) in pursuit of high quality decision making company-wide, and provides DA training to partners and relevant stakeholders. PDA is primarily responsible for the Strategic Asset Maximization (SAM) process, which is an internal brand applied to DA principles used to inform drug development decisions, from early clinical development to proof-of-concept stage through launch strategies and loss-of-exclusivity planning. Using the SAM process and analysis, PDA helps establish sound recommendations to management by ensuring a robust set of strategic alternatives, identifying and managing cognitive biases, articulating tradeoffs between alternatives and gaining team consensus for the recommendation and organizational commitment to action. PDA also leads portfolio prioritization where individual project analyses are aggregated at the portfolio level to provide senior leadership an understanding of the broader portfolio and inform how best to allocate investment.

In 2016, Pfizer received the Raiffa-Howard Award for achievement in organizational decision quality. Looking ahead, the PDA group continues to strive towards implementing DA and achieving company-wide DQ.

# Brain Teaser

## Congratulations to Tim Nieman

The correct answer to the brain teaser posed in the April issue is that the four digits ABCD are 2178. A full explanation of the answer can be found by [clicking here](#). Tim Nieman was the first to submit the correct answer.

## THE JUNE BRAIN TEASER

*Instructions: You can win “bragging rights” by being the first to submit the correct answer of this brain teaser to the newsletter editors ([SDP Newsletter: Brain Teaser](#)). We will announce the winner in the next issue.*

## Making 55

Write a mathematical expression that equals exactly 55. The expression must contain only three numeral 4's and mathematical symbols and operators. It may not contain any other numerals, constants (e.g., “ $\pi$ ”), or unknowns (e.g., “x”).

## Join Us in Producing the SDP Newsletter

We, the editors, are actively looking for other SDP members to join us in producing this newsletter. If you are interested, please contact us. [Click here](#) to email the editors.

Matt Gorman and Steve Tani  
SDP Newsletter Editors

