

ASSOCIATION OF LIBERAL ARTS CHEMISTRY TEACHERS

(ALACT)

February 2, 1968

Dear Colleague:

Many of you received a questionnaire last spring concerning the desirability of establishing a regional association of teachers in liberal arts colleges. The purpose of such an association has been formulated as providing a means for discussion of common problems, thereby perhaps finding approaches to the solutions of these problems. The association model was to be MACTLAC, an association which has been highly successful for fifteen years in the Midwest. The response to the proposal was overwhelmingly in favor of such a group being formed in our area. Invitations were then sent to about 100 people in six states and Washington, D.C., announcing the holding of an organizational meeting on the Western Maryland College campus October 27 and 28. Forty-one people from 22 institutions attended. In addition, approximately 30 people from another 20 institutions indicated their interest in coming but because of prior commitments could not attend.

On Friday, October 27, 1967, the 41 conferees met at 1:30 p.m. in a general session to discuss procedural matters. The first area of agreement was the necessity of adopting a constitution, using the MACTLAC constitution as a vehicle. Several committees were formed, each of which discussed a part of the MACTLAC constitution with the idea of adapting it to our usage. The entire group reconvened at 4:30 p.m., and after suitable discussion, a constitution was adopted. The object paragraph of the adopted constitution -- which indicates the general direction, purpose and boundaries of our association -- is quoted below.

"It shall be the purpose of this Association to bring together teachers of chemistry in the non-tax supported liberal arts colleges of the East Central region of the United States for exchange of ideas and for general mutual helpfulness in their profession. This region shall be defined as including the States of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia, together with areas reasonably adjacent to the borders of the above seven states, not otherwise served by a similar association or agency."

The meeting was then recessed for dinner until 8:00 p.m. At that time Dr. Edward L. Haenisch, Chairman, Department of Chemistry, Wabash College, addressed the group by discussing some of the areas in which MACTLAC has been able to achieve some success and some in which it has encountered some problems. He then suggested several possible areas which the association might profitably examine. The talk was followed by a discussion period, whose main topic was the ability of the liberal arts college to continue to prepare students adequately for graduate and industrial careers.

On Saturday, October 28, three groups met informally to discuss selected topics. These topics were: (1) the use of paperback books and programmed instruction in chemistry; (2) content of advanced inorganic chemistry courses; and (3) foundation and industrial support for liberal arts colleges. These sessions were attended by 8-15 conferees. Enclosed you will find a capsule description of these discussions.

At 11:00 a.m. a general session was convened for the election of officers and state councilors as provided in the constitution. These officers and state councilors (a list of which is enclosed) constitute an executive council, which will conduct the majority of business of the association. Should any of you wish to have a copy of the constitution, you may secure one by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to me.

The new members of the association were, without exception, very enthusiastic about what we were able to accomplish in our first annual meeting. Since this organization appears to have a promising future, we hope you will want to become members by taking an active part in our future meetings and other activities.

This year's meeting has been scheduled for Friday and Saturday, October 18 and 19, on the campus of Dunbarton College, Washington, D.C. We are now in the process of selecting a nationally known speaker for the evening of October 18. Eight discussion topics have been proposed by the executive council for the meeting. If you have any particular topic you would like to see discussed, please send the suggestion to me. The executive council will consider it for inclusion in either next fall's meeting or a later one.

The members of the association will receive detailed information about this second annual meeting sometime during early September. This will include information about housing, meals, discussion topics, and the invited speaker's name and topic.

Our present mailing list has been compiled by seeking names of people the conferees believe would be interested in the association. If you know of others who might be interested, we would be glad to contact them. In order to pay the administrative costs of mailings, phone calls, paper, envelopes, and similar items, we have set dues at \$2.00 per calendar year per member. Please make your checks payable to Association of Liberal Arts Chemistry Teachers. Your payment -- along with your name, rank, area of current teaching interests, and college -- may be sent to Dr. Fred Snavely, Secretary-Treasurer, ALACT, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

We believe that much can be gained by a group of our type. We look forward to receiving your membership.

Sincerely,



Donald E. Jones, President  
Association of Liberal Arts Chemistry Teachers

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Enclosures