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Walter G. Larson

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The Minnesota Academy of Science: What is It?

WALTER G. LARSON
Executive Secretary, MAS

Since becoming the executive secretary of MAS, I have found that the question most frequently asked of me by representatives of industry, government, and education is, "Just what is the Minnesota Academy of Science?"

Like most members of the Academy, I was familiar with three or four aspects of the program that had concerned me as a teacher of biology before I assumed the executive secretary's duties. Since then, however, I have been learning of new facets of the Academy's commitment to science in the state of Minnesota, and I have begun to wonder how many other members actually understand and appreciate the scope of this commitment. The more I have learned, the prouder I have become of both my membership in the organization and my professional affiliation with it. I would like to share that pride with you.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

It is an organization of persons formed in 1932 with about 55 members who were interested in promoting scientific activities within the state of Minnesota. Because the suggestion for such a science organization was made by Dr. R. B. Harvey at the Fall meeting of the Minnesota Education Association, the Academy was begun with an educational orientation.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

According to our constitution, we are dedicated to the advancement of research, education, and understanding of science. Our objectives are to provide an organization for persons interested or engaged in science, especially in the state of Minnesota; to hold meetings for the presentation and discussion of scientific matters; to advance pure and applied science by fostering research, education, and understanding; to publish scientific papers; to stimulate interest and encourage activity in science among students of secondary schools through the Junior Academy of Science and to sponsor Science Fairs; and to promote and sponsor conservation activities within the state.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

It is the organization that, on the state level, coordinates the program of our national affiliate, the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Although the AAAS is our parent organization, we are also affiliated with the National Science Teachers Association and with their Future Scientists of America program and Science Service that sponsor the International Science Fair, the Westinghouse Talent Search, and Science Clubs of America.

Our state program, therefore, includes regional and state science fairs, Science Youth Congress, Visiting Scientist Programs, Inservice Institutes for Science

Teachers, State Mathematics Contest, Grants-in-Aid for high-school encouragement of research, scholarships, high-school science clubs, collegiate academy chapters, preservation of natural areas in the state, and annual meetings of the membership.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

It is a service organization for the scientists of the state of Minnesota. The *Journal* provides an outlet for the publication of scientific papers and dissemination of scientific information. The *Transactions* perform similar functions for the Junior Academy of Science program.

We provide an addressograph service to facilitate communication with the scientific community and educators; we participate in a library exchange program in conjunction with the University of Minnesota Library; and we act as a general information center and liaison with all segments of science education in the state.

We try to bring industrial science together with the science educators through our Industry-Education Conferences, mutual involvement in the visiting scientist program, industry-education scholarships, and the research paper section of the annual meeting.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

It is the fiscal agent annually for about \$250,000 National Science Foundation monies allocated to the State of Minnesota. In cooperation with the State Department of Education and the University of Minnesota, MAS sponsors the Minnesota National Laboratory, which was initiated by Dr. Paul Rosenbloom as a curriculum study center.

What is the Minnesota Academy of Science?

It is an umbrella under which various science groups may function, such as the Minnesota Science Teachers Association, the Junior Academy of Science, and the Science Section of the Minnesota Education Association.

* * *

To give only one short definitive answer to the question is almost impossible. The Academy has many purposes that it implements in many programs, such as those given above. Yet the mere listing of the programs does not reach the nub of the Academy's strength. Essentially, MAS is an organization of men and women who are dedicated to the ideals and philosophy that is science; who want to continue to learn and work to help others discover the joys of scientific revelation; and who want to see the scientific heritage that is Minnesota's preserved for research, education, and enjoyment for the generations to come.

Membership in the Minnesota Academy of Science is open to all persons who attest to its purposes and goals. All such persons should be encouraged to become members.