Focus on OSA’s Corporate Associate Members
Key Players in the Life of the Society

This month, OSA co-hosts the Optical Fiber Communication Conference and Exposition (OFC) in Atlanta, Georgia. OFC, in sheer size, serves to highlight just how important the industrial sector is to our Society and to the field of optics as a whole: in 2002, exhibiting companies totalled 1200 and attendees totalled 32,000. Along these lines, I would like to devote this month’s letter to OSA’s Corporate Associate members: a dedicated group of nearly 300 companies that provide the “voice” of the applied community through their volunteer activities and participation in Society governance.

Corporate members are perhaps most visible on the exhibit floors of our large conferences. Behind the scenes, however, they are equally active in OSA governance. Represented on the OSA Board of Directors and on other Society councils and committees, corporate members provide insight about the needs and interests of member companies and recommend programming, products and services. Further, Corporate Associates provide a vital link between the Society and the individual OSA members who work in the commercial sector.

Corporate Associate membership has soared during the past two years, growing 88% in 2001 and 31% in 2002. This growth is an exciting development, as OSA seeks to broaden and diversify its reach. The profiles of our corporate members range from the largest, long-established manufacturers and research laboratories to high-energy start-ups, educational institutions, photonics clusters, consultants, publishers, venture capital firms and optics/intellectual property focused law practices.

To meet the varied needs of membership, OSA offers an array of corporate benefits including: special networking and promotional opportunities; discounts on OSA products and events; and free job postings/resume bank access on www.WORKinOPTICS.com. Corporate membership dues, based on annual sales volume, range from $500 to $2500 per calendar year.

Corporate members in the telecommunications sector are encouraged to participate in the Photonics & Telecommunications Executive Forum, an event that is developed and led by a committee of corporate members. This year will be the Forum’s fifth. From March 23 to 24, at the Ritz Carlton in Atlanta, senior executives will join their peers and the venture capital community for two days of presentations and networking on trends and business strategy. This year’s theme is “Focusing on the Future: Optical Communications at the Crossroads.” Panel topics will include: the optical “food chain” in the new millennium; pockets of strength in optical communications; drivers and constraints to growth; roll-ups, consolidation and the state of the venture capital industry; and an interactive, audience-driven scenario-planning session. Corporate members can take advantage of the special two-for-one registration offer and send two colleagues to the Forum for one $595 fee. In addition, a special half-day program, focusing on business trends and opportunities in China, is being offered this year for the first time under the joint sponsorship of OSA Corporate Associates, PennWell and Lightwave. Attending the China Forum will cost $200 for Executive Forum participants and $450 for others. You can find out more at www.osa.org/partner/china.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the team behind the Executive Forum, John Dexheimer (Lightwave Advisors), Bill Diamond (DenseLight), Steve Eglash (Worldview Technology Partners), Winston Fu (US Venture Partners), David Hardwick (Confluent Photonics Corporation), Drew Lanza (Morgenthaler Ventures), Tim McGarry (CoreOptics) and Gary Spiegel (Newport Corporation) have spent hours and taken part in countless phone conferences with OSA Corporate Associates Senior Manager Rita Kaufmann to put together the program and events comprised by this valuable meeting. Early planning is underway to stage a Corporate Associates event at the “Frontiers in Optics” Annual Meeting in Tucson in October 2003. Here is where you, our reader, can contribute: Your ideas are welcome as the Corporate Associates create a new program to further the marriage of technology and business and to strengthen our Society.

Our Corporate Associate Members work throughout the year to contribute to and lead many of OSA’s activities and strategic plans. As President, I look forward to working closely with this community as we strive to ensure that the applied communities are welcome and active members of the Society. If your company has not yet joined as a corporate member, I hope you will consider doing so this year. I am confident that you will find it worthwhile and that OSA will benefit from your participation.

To learn more about Corporate Associate membership and to use our membership search engine, visit: www.osa.org/partner/join. To learn more about the Executive Forum, visit: www.osa.org/partner/network.

G. Michael Morris
OSA President