

# OUTGOING PRESIDENTS' LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP 2018-2020

## CHARLES BENEKE

**May 1, 2020**

Dear SGCI Members,

SGCI always has exciting initiatives at hand and there is always news to be communicated about our organization. The most important thing I want to convey to you today, however, are my deepest hopes that you are all well and that you and your families/loved ones remain healthy and safe. Like all, our community and its members have been affected, directly and indirectly, by the Covid-19 pandemic. I hope that the bond that we have as printmakers, whether we know each other personally or not, can be a source of strength and comfort as we forge ahead. So today, I'm flipping this letter on its head like the rest of the world and beginning where I would normally close. I am wishing you all my very best!

Today is a beautiful day for SGC International; our [2020 – 22 Executive Board](#) is now in place and ready to lead us forward! Personally, I could not be more excited to be a part of this board as Immediate Past President. This accomplished and engaged group of printmakers will lead SGCI to exciting new places. I invite you all to welcome and extend your support to Sarah Ellis, Zach Fitchner, Faisal Abdu'Allah, Claire White, Cat Snapp, Aleksandra Janik, Sabrina Pastard, R. L. Tillman, Arron Foster, and Nicole Geary. Thank you all for the commitment you have made to SGCI!

To say that this winter/spring has been a wild ride for SGCI would be an epic understatement. But we have faced the challenges in our path as a united community and we have continued to strengthen the many facets of our organization while stridently confronting adversity. But this is not the defining mark for the outgoing executive board. In the past two years we have:

- launched a new [website](#);

- built user maintained membership and registration platforms;
- created MakeReady, our social platform for our members that will continue to evolve, including a desktop version for our website;
- shifted our accounting from calendar to fiscal year reporting to streamline accounting relative to our programming;
- engaged in a complete overhaul of our accounting process to bring SGCI's finances into the clearest, most organized position in which it has ever been preparing us for a financial audit;
- begun working with HPN, a conference planning company, to help ensure that we enter into the wisest contractual agreements with hotels and convention facilities;
- developed [institutional memberships](#);
- gathered for [Texchange](#), a fantastic conference in Dallas in the spring of 2019;
- slotted SGCI 2022 for Madison, Wisconsin;
- planned [Puertográfico](#), an landmark conference to have been held in San Juan, Puerto Rico;
- [raised funds to purchase a press](#) for the Universidad de Puerto Rico – Recinto de Río Piedras through the generous support of SGCI members, our friends, and the Takach family;
- postponed [Puertográfico](#), which will now happen in 2023 if all things proceed as we hope;
- ensured that all [Puertográfico](#) registrants have the opportunity to make choices for the handling of their registration fees (make certain to [log your choice by June 1, 2020](#));
- opened the call for participation for [Verified by Proof](#), SGCI 2021 in Providence, RI;
- revised the *SGC International Constitution and Bylaws* which will be presented to the membership with proposed amendments in the coming year;
- edited the *SGCI Handbook* and *Conference Handbook*, our executive board's governing guidelines;

- and updated [SGCI's Strategic Plan](#), which I present here for your review to prepare for an upcoming membership vote for approval.

We have had a fantastic, productive run!

Thank you all for the opportunity to lead SGC International for the past two years. I especially want to thank Kate McQuillen, our program coordinator, for her uplifting energy, incredible organization, and dedicated hard work that make accomplishing the goals and tasks of the SGCI president possible. Thank you to past SGCI presidents Nicole Pietrantonio and Joseph Lupo and former board members Sandra Murchison, Nicole Hand, and Justin Diggle for your mentorship. Please everyone join me in thanking Margot Myers, the 2020-22 treasurer, for the countless hours you have given to place SGCI's accounting into the excellent, unmatched shape in which it now stands. Anna Nicholson and Nydia Fernández Toledo, the work you did to make *Puertográfico* our best conference yet was outstanding; thank you for the teamwork and friendship. And I am especially grateful to the rest of the SGCI 2018-20 Executive Board—Valerie Dibble, Nancy Palmeri, Sarah Ellis, Margot Myers, Jennie Suddick, Eliana Rodriguez, Faisal Abdu'Allah, Sangmi Yoo, and Nicole Pietrantonio—for their time, efforts, and camaraderie that made everything we have accomplished possible.

I think of printmakers more as individuals who exercise a rich way of thinking than those engaged in a specific artform. Conceiving, exploring, developing, assessing, deconstructing, reconstructing, shifting, evolving, completing, and evaluating are all a part of our daily practice. Problem solving, inclusive thought, and innovation are at the core of everything we do whether on press, in our careers, or at home. Right now, this agility is serving us well as individuals and as an organization. SGCI is strong. We are proving our resilience. We continue as an organization with evermore amazing adventures in our future. And as we enter into the next chapter for SGC International, we have the hope and excitement that comes with the truly inspiring group of new advocates to lead our organization ahead.

Again, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and best wishes to you all!

Be well,

Charles Beneke

SGC International, Immediate Past President