

# Foreword

*Paul Hyer*

OVER THE LAST half century, as the restored Church of Jesus Christ has “come out of obscurity,” thousands of Latter-day Saints have secured important professional positions and accomplished great things around the world. But for decades little was known as to who they were or what they have achieved. Consequently, in the late 1980s William Atkin, while managing a law office in the Republic of China (Taiwan) at the time, discussed with a group of friends the possibility of organizing an interested group of international Latter-day Saints.

The International Society was thus organized in 1989 as an association of professionals with international interests who are members and friends of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The threefold mission of the society is (1) to encourage collegiality among professionals involved in international business, law, education, humanitarian service, or other activities; (2) to promote shared professional and social interest and concerns of society members; and (3) to provide support for international programs of the Church and Brigham Young University, where possible. The society is now the fastest growing and most comprehensive network of Latter-day Saint international professionals.

The society networks with members throughout the world and has an executive board and an office with staff support located on BYU’s campus at the Kennedy Center for International Studies. Field representatives are located in cities or areas with significant numbers of professionals. The society also holds an annual conference in April to share the interests of members. To date, eighteen annual confer-

ences have been held. Proceedings are published annually and are available online at [ldsinternationalsociety.org](http://ldsinternationalsociety.org).

In addition, the society publishes a print and online newsletter with information about various member activities, regional reports, Latter-day Saints, BYU, Church news and announcements, and updates on the society's various activities. It also presents a Distinguished Service Award to a deserving individual each April at its conference to recognize his or her service and devotion. Past award recipients whose service has international dimensions include John K. Carmack, who directs the Perpetual Education Fund; Garry R. Flake, who directs crisis humanitarian work for the Church; Donald L. Staheli, who has done significant work in China; and William F. Atkin, who has long been involved in legal matters across the world that concern the Church.

Many of the essays included in this volume provide information or insights that are not generally found in the media, general conference addresses, or other such places. They will be of interest to a broad audience, prompt some important thought and discussion, and represent only a sampling of what is available in the publications of the International Society.

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