

Region 1 Roundup
by Ian Randal Strock
Region 1 RVC
(written April 29, 2018)

American Mensa is experiencing a young adult surge: in interest, membership, and activity, our young adult members are a vibrant, important part of American Mensa. I've experienced it on the AMC, where three of our appointed officers and two or three of our electeds are in the young adult demographic.

Membership Officer Henri Buccine-Schraeder—one of our younger AMC members—has been detailing the differences between young adult members and our older adult members through her membership surveys and reports. At the AMC meetings, we are a collegial whole. Yet I've also noticed that our younger members have different interests, different ways of spending their free time during meeting weekends.

I've also seen the growth of young adult activity beyond the confines of the AMC. In my own local group, for instance, Sara London was recently elected President, and brought with her to the Board several of her close age-mates. They have been planning activities and events that are new to Greater New York Mensa, and while some of them are the exclusive purview of those recently graduated from school and newly into the working world, they also have events that appeal to the entire membership. So, while it's personally depressing to no longer be part of that demographic, for the organization as a whole, I think it's a good thing. As our long-time members get older, our younger members will be taking up the mantle of volunteer work, of leadership, and they are the future of the organization.

Thus, with the connivance of Henri, I have appointed Region 1's first Young Adult Mensan Coordinators: Ashley Wilson of Boston Mensa, and Alexander Ho of Greater New York Mensa. This is not an attempt to segment Mensa into different age groups. Rather, it is a recognition that our younger adult members are interested in different activities, and that we need to make them feel as welcome as everyone else.

Tonight I went to dinner with eight other Mensans, representing four local groups in three different Regions. Though I'd met them all in real life, I think we all first met each other via Mensa's electronic fora. This is a major shift from the Mensa I knew when I first joined, but as with the young adults enjoying Mensa differently than the long-timers, this too is a change that will make the organization something other than it was when I joined. That's not a bad change, but it is a change.

Among the myriad topics of conversation tonight, we also talked about attending the upcoming Annual Gathering, and I got excited to attend. Thus, when I got home to write this, I was slightly miffed to remember that the AG is nearly ten weeks away. However, I'll have the Cape Cod Mini-RG in two weeks to tide me over. And I hope to see as many of you as possible in Indianapolis this summer.

Remember, the newsletters (and calendars) from your nearby local groups are available to you

on the Mensa web site (from the main us.mensa.org web site, pull down the “Read” tab and click on “Local Group newsletters”), and I urge you to share your events with those surrounding groups’ calendar editors. Keep up to date with the latest goings on in the region in Region 1’s Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188180494045/>

Upcoming Region 1 Regional Gatherings:

Boston Mensa’s Cape Cod mini-RG (which over the years has been outgrowing the “mini” label) in Dennis Port, Massachusetts (May 11-13): for more info, see <https://cape.bostonmensa.org/>.

And registration and hotel reservations are open for this year’s Annual Gathering, in Indianapolis, Indiana (July 4-8). For all the details, and to join American Mensa’s big annual get-together, see <http://ag.us.mensa.org/>

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Glossary:

AMC: American Mensa Committee, the national board of directors

RVC: Regional Vice Chairman, a member of the AMC with responsibility for a specific region of American Mensa

Region 1: The northeast region of American Mensa, comprising New England, Northern New Jersey, and most of New York

AG: American Mensa’s once-a-year five-day Annual Gathering, featuring the Annual Business Meeting, more than a hundred speakers, and more than a thousand Mensans.

RG: Regional Gathering: a weekend-long get-together hosted by a local group featuring speakers, games, events, and more with 100–400 of your closest friends you haven’t met yet.

ExCom: Executive Committee, in some groups known as Board of Directors: the members who have volunteered and been elected to take care of the day-to-day business of operation a local group. The local group version of the AMC.