

To: International Nominating Committee

From: Mary B. Andersen

Re: International Treasurer Candidate Cover Letter –

Please accept my application for International Treasurer. My various competencies are on the attached application including supplemental information. The cover letter describes how my professional and fraternal experience will be an asset to the governance of a fraternal life insurance company.

My career as an employee benefits professional (corporate and consulting) will enable me to serve effectively as a member of the International Board. Employee benefits professionals must be versed in a number of disciplines including Human Resources, legal, accounting, actuarial concepts, auditing and technology. Understanding and communication of complex governmental regulations is critical due to IRS and DOL (Department of Labor) disclosure requirements.


My work experience includes leading teams that included attorneys, actuaries and experienced benefits professionals. Working with teams of individuals with various skill sets from different parts of the country lends itself nicely to serving as an International Board member. My work requires me to read, interpret and explain complex regulatory requirements to senior staff at major corporations. While employed at a Big 4 accounting firm, I oversaw many sensitive national consulting projects under client attorney privilege. Self-employment, which will end on 12/31/2022, requires me to wear many hats including marketer, communicator, webmaster, bookkeeper etc.! I believe in positioning people for success. Within the Third District this meant utilizing volunteers to the best of their abilities. It requires understanding member likes, dislikes and areas in which they excel. It is critical not to burn out our volunteers.

As a Principal at Vanguard, one the largest mutual fund companies, I was responsible for developing a strategic consulting group which oversaw the consulting and compliance needs of many corporations, large and small, for profit and not for profit. I effectively lead a team of 70 benefit professionals including actuaries and attorneys. The ability to work effectively with others is critical for success as an International Board member.

Familiarity with policy interpretation and implementation together with my time served on the Sons of Norway governance committee, including Chair of the short-lived Corporate Governance Annual Disclosure (CGAD) subcommittee while I was District President, allows me to quickly get up to speed and "hit the ground running" on governance issues facing the Order.

My track record of success both in the corporate/consulting world and within Sons of Norway demonstrates my ability to get the job done. The Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) has an incredibly stringent fiduciary standard. To maintain my professional credentials, including an insurance producer license, I must obtain a minimum number of continuing education credits including ethics. I am no stranger to continual learning and hard work, both of which are key attributes of an effective Board member. As a Sons of Norway member, I want to see our organization thrive and succeed as we move forward.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary B. Andersen

Andersen, Mary International Treasurer Candidate Application Cover Letter



# **Application for International Board Position**

## **2022**

# Sons of Norway International Leadership Candidate Application 2022

*(Please feel free to provide information on a separate sheet and/or attach a resume)*

Name Mary B. Andersen

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Required Qualifications

The following are mandatory candidate requirements:

- Eighteen (18) years of age or older
- Sons of Norway Benefit Member

2. Yes  No  I understand the job description, expectations of performance, and the time commitment necessary to carry out the duties of this office.

**Instructions:** Complete this application online and send to the chair of your district nominating committee within 30 days of the District Lodge meeting. Please provide the information requested below.

### 3. Education

High School St. Brendan's, Brooklyn, NY Diploma/Degree Academic, Regents

Community College \_\_\_\_\_ Diploma/Degree \_\_\_\_\_

University/College Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI Diploma/Degree BS, Math

Other LOMA 290 - Insurance Company Operations; Licensed Insurance Producer PA; Enrolled Retirement Plan Agent (ERPA); Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS). \_\_\_\_\_

### International Leadership Position Candidate

International Officer or Director  
(please specify\*)

International Treasurer

\* Please fill in the blank specifying the International office for which you are a candidate.

**4. General Knowledge Levels**

Please indicate your level of skills, experiences, competencies, and background for each of the following areas. Note that this is a general assessment and that each Board Officer is not required to have all these skills:

	<u>None</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Substantial</u>
A. Accounting/Audit	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
B. Actuarial	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
C. Legal	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
D. Investment	_____	<u>x</u>	_____
E. Insurance Management	_____	<u>x</u>	_____
F. Corporate Management/Governance	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
G. Marketing and Communications	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
H. Strategic Planning	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
I. Technology Skills (Internet/Social Media)	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
J. Human Resources	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
K. Community service/volunteering	_____	_____	<u>x</u>
L. Fraternal Benefit System	_____	_____	<u>x</u>

**5. Employment History**

Employed Self-employed until 12/31/22 Retired \_\_\_\_\_ (please select one)

Please provide details of your current or former employment:

- A. Employer: ERISADiagnostics, Inc. from 2002 to present Position President
- Employer: The Vanguard Group from 1997 to 2002 Position Principal
- Employer: Coopers & Lybrand, now known as PriceWaterhouse Coopers from 1985 to 1997 Position Senior Consultant
- Employer: multiple See Attached Resume for more information from 1973 to 1985 Position Consulting, Manager various

B. Please describe any of the following from your work experience:

**Leadership**

See Leadership Attachment

**Travel**

While at Coopers and Lybrand, conducted numerous compliance reviews for major corporations across the country; trained teams in various locations. Traveled for speaking engagements across the country.

**Written communications**

Co-author of the Form 5500 Preparers Manual (an industry standard), wrote a monthly column for benefit publication (Thompson Publishing). Communication skills are critical in explaining complex regulatory rules to clients and audiences.

**Verbal communications (speaking, training)**

Frequent speaker at both in house and external conferences and various organization's monthly meetings. Trained staff at various employers regarding conducting compliance reviews.

**6. Licensing**

List all professional, occupational, or vocational licenses (including whether you are a licensed insurance agent)

License Enrolled Retirement Plan Agent (ERPA) License Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS)

License Insurance Producer (PA) License \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Organizational Membership and Leadership**

List all community and professional organizations with which you are currently or were a member and list leadership any roles:

Organization Central PA Chapter of Certified Employee Benefit Specialists Leadership role/s President (2x), Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary (2x)

Organization Reporting and Disclosure Committee of American Retirement Association Leadership role/s led/participated in various subcommittees

Organization Outdoor Club of South Jersey Leadership role/s led backpacking and camping trips

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Leadership role/s \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Sons of Norway Lodge Membership and Leadership**

Lodge Bondelandet City Lancaster State PA from 2007 to present

Lodge affiliate of Restuaration and Nor-bu City Media, PA and Lake Telemark, NJ State PA and NJ from varies to present

What lodge leadership positions have you held?

A. Vice-President B. newsletter editor C. social media support D. \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Sons of Norway District Leadership**

What district leadership positions have you held?

A. President (2x) B. Vice President C. Publicity Director D. Counselor

**10. Sons of Norway International Leadership**

What international leadership positions have you held?

A. served on governance committee B. served on leadership committee C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Reasons for Your Interest in this International Leadership Position**

What skills, experiences, education, expertise, and background do you bring as a candidate for this position on the International Board? Regarding #4. General Knowledge Levels, for any of the knowledge levels you identified as "substantial", please provide details. SEE ATTACHED

**12. Please provide a one-page cover letter in which you describe how your background will be an asset to the governance of a fraternal life insurance company.**

Your letter will be attached to the front of your candidate application that is provided to the District and International delegates. Let's be uniform: please use Times New Roman font, size 11.

You are likely aware of the Minnesota audit and the feedback we received concerning "enhancement of the quality of its Sons of Norway board" members with financial, accounting, business ownership/management, executive leadership, etc., experience/backgrounds. This is now a key issue that state insurance departments look at as they regulate insurance companies and financial institutions such as Sons of Norway.

Additionally, in the state of Minnesota, the Department of Commerce (or the insurance regulators) requires Sons of Norway to file an annual Corporate Governance Annual Disclosure (CGAD), which explains the organization of the Sons of Norway board and the respective qualifications/experiences of its officers and directors.

This cover letter is about your education and professional experience that qualifies you for this position. Here are the skills, experiences and competencies they look for on governing boards: accounting/audit, actuarial, legal, investment, insurance management, corporate governance, business ownership/management, strategic planning, technology, marketing, human resources.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the International Nominating Committee:

Gloria Benazic – [gloriabenazic@gmail.com](mailto:gloriabenazic@gmail.com)

Ken Johnson – [ken.johnson@sofnboard.com](mailto:ken.johnson@sofnboard.com)

Jon Tehven – [tehven@msn.com](mailto:tehven@msn.com)

Mary B. Andersen

Application for International Board Position  
Attachment in response to Employment History

Section 5 A

Resume Following

**MARY B. ANDERSEN, CEBS, QPA, ERPA**

P.O. Box 7  
Exton, PA 19341

(610) 524-5351  
maryandersen@erisadiagnostics.com

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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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ERISAdiagnostics, Inc., Exton, PA

2002 -

**President**

Founded consulting firm specializing in compliance reviews, project management and employee benefit consulting. Frequent speaker at ISCEBS local chapters; past President of the Board of the Central Pennsylvania Chapter of ISCEBS; Chairperson of the 2006 ISCEBS annual symposium. Member of IRS Mid-Atlantic Liaison Council. Member of ASPPA Reporting and Disclosure sub-committee. Former contributing Editor to the Pension Plan Fix-It Handbook by Thompson Publishing. Co-author of the 5500 Preparer's Manual by Wolters Kluwer.

- Support insurance brokers providing ERISA and Affordable Care Act consulting
- "filled the gap" for insurance organizations and law firm for staff member on leave, resulting in no disruption in delivery of client services
- "filled the gap" for Compliance Manager position and trained existing staff, resulting in no disruption in delivery of client services and eliminated need to fill the vacated spot
- Assisted client in 401(k) vendor search
- Participated in conversion team for recordkeeper change for major company
- Assisted investment advisory firm in the transition of multiple 401(k) clients to new platform
- Function as ERISA specialist for various insurance brokers (plan documents, summary plan descriptions, Forms 5500, general consulting, DOL/IRS audit preparation)
- Frequent speaker at professional educational sessions
- Developed self-audit guides for 401(k) plans and health & welfare plans
- Wrote a monthly column for the Pension Plan Fix-It Handbook
- Co-author of the 5500 Preparer's Manual by Wolters Kluwer

THE VANGUARD GROUP, Malvern, PA

1997 – 2002

*The Vanguard Group is the second largest mutual fund company.*

**Principal, Plan Consulting Group**

Recruited by senior management to develop a proactive consultative group to provide benefits consulting services to clients as well as to develop and introduce QDRO and hardship withdrawal determination services, and assess and refocus the compliance testing unit. Provided leadership to 70 benefits professionals including nine attorneys, three actuaries, and one CPA.

- Strategically developed consulting services resulting in increased client loyalty and new client acquisition.
- Raised awareness of Vanguard's capabilities by speaking at industry conferences as well as Vanguard events, including client symposiums and e-meetings.
- Increased professional competency levels and credibility of client service employees.
- Revamped and enhanced the Basic Nondiscrimination Testing service (i.e., ADP/ACP) resulting in tripling of existing business.
- Developed new services including QDRO Determination, Hardship Withdrawal Services and enhanced Nondiscrimination Testing (i.e., cross-testing)
- Served as board member of the Delaware Valley Chapter of ASPA.



COOPERS & LYBRAND, New York, NY

1985 – 1997

*Coopers & Lybrand (currently known as PriceWaterhouse Coopers) is a Big 5 accounting firm.*

**Senior Consultant**

Key member of the general consulting unit that provided technical and strategic consulting to clients. Conceptualized, spearheaded and developed the tools for the Compliance Review practice. Trained staff at various Firm locations and supported national marketing efforts.

- Developed methodology, engagement tools and national training session for conducting compliance reviews in response to the Internal Revenue Service's Voluntary Compliance Resolution program.
- Played a lead role in obtaining and conducting over 50 compliance reviews resulting in approximately \$3.5M in fees.
- Managed numerous multi-disciplinary and multi-office compliance and operational reviews covering defined benefit, defined contribution and health and welfare plans focusing on compliance, controls and efficiencies in the plan administration process.
- Implemented outsourcing services for acquired division of a major manufacturing company.
- Managed preparation of Form 5500's for clients.
- Speaker at both the New York and Northern New Jersey chapters of CEBS, NJ chapter of WEB, as well as internal training sessions.

NOBLE LOWNDES BECKER COMPANY, East Orange, NJ

1984 – 1985

*A regional consulting firm serving small to midsize market.*

**Senior Consultant**

MERRILL LYNCH & COMPANY, New York, NY

1982 – 1984

*A major financial institution*

**Manager, Health and Welfare Plans**

**Senior Benefit Consultant**

CHURCH & DWIGHT COMPANY, INC., Princeton, NJ

1980 – 1982

*Church & Dwight Company is the manufacturer of Arm & Hammer Baking Soda*

**Manager, Benefits Administration and Planning**

BUCK CONSULTANTS, INC., New York, NY

1975 – 1980

*A well known actuarial benefits consulting firm, now part of ACS*

**Assistant Benefit Consultant**

NATIONAL HEALTH, WELFARE & RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION, New York, NY

1973 – 1975

*A benefits provider to non for profit organizations, currently know as Mutual of America*

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**EDUCATION**

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**BS, Math, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, Kalamazoo, MI**

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**CONTINUING EDUCATION & TRAINING**

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- Certified Employee Benefits Specialist; Fellow of the Society of Certified Employee Benefit Specialists
  - Enrolled Retirement Plan Agent
  - Qualified Pension Administrator
  - LOMA 290 Exam – Understanding Insurance Company Operations
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**VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY**

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- Various positions Sons of Norway including Third District President
- Chester County Master Gardener
- Central Pennsylvania Chapter of ISCEBS

Mary B. Andersen, CEBS, ERPA, QPA

Mary B. Andersen

Application for International Board Position

Attachment in response to Leadership item

Section 5 B

My work experience spans corporate, consulting and solo practitioner settings. All positions were in employee benefits with the myriad of ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act) and corporate requirements. The following is a synopsis which will demonstrate my work-related leadership experience and is classified as consulting and corporate. Each position required leadership skill whether it be leading a department, encouraging employees, implementing new benefits, Board presentations, etc. Listed below are just a few examples.

### **Consulting**

Consultants are required to be knowledgeable, ethical, accurate, prompt and able to change direction quickly. Overarching skills include communication and a well rounded knowledge base in a wide range of areas.

### **The Vanguard Group**

When hired, I was given the directive to develop a consulting group to provide consulting services to Institutional clients. This required assessing the current state of consulting and compliance related service offerings as well as understanding the culture and operations of the organization. This directive required developing competitive strategic services including hardship withdrawal processing, QDRO (Qualified Domestic Relations Order) processing, non-discrimination testing and plan document services. Getting the work done required involving multiple disciplines. I assembled a team of 70 professionals with actuarial, legal, technical, administration and consultative skills. I consulted with some of the largest clients, was a resource to client service crew members and was frequently called upon to speak at client conferences and internal meetings.

### **Coopers & Lybrand (now PriceWaterhouse Coopers)**

I worked in the Actuarial, Benefits and Compensation Consulting Division which changed names multiple times during my tenure and was last known as Human Resources Advisory. At the time, a cornerstone of an organization's employee benefit program was a defined benefit plan which required understanding of actuarial concepts. As you probably know, the traditional defined benefit plan slowly gave way to the cash balance plan, which combined the principles of defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans. Participant communication material had to be reviewed for accuracy and readability. The employee benefit world is governed by ERISA and various IRS and DOL (Department of Labor) rules which change frequently. Compliance with the rules is challenging. In response to increased government scrutiny, I developed a national compliance review practice and conducted sensitive compliance reviews for Fortune 500 companies. I trained staff and developed multi-disciplinary teams across the country to enable the Firm to quickly respond to clients needs. My last position at Coopers & Lybrand was as a member of the General Consulting Group. The General Consulting Group provided technical and strategic consulting to clients within a complex regulatory environment, responded to IRS and DOL inquiries and led compliance reviews.

## **Corporate**

I served in a management capacity at both a medium sized company, Church & Dwight, Co. (maker of Arm & Hammer baking soda) and a large financial organization, Merrill Lynch. I was Manager of Benefits at **Church and Dwight** which operated within the Human Resources Department. The position required me to travel to various plant locations (Syracuse, NY; Old Fort, OH; and Green River, WY) to understand the company operations and to be a benefit resource for local HR staff. While at Church & Dwight, I implemented a 401(k) plan, administered a TRASOP (a type of stock ownership plan), oversaw the benefit function including the use of an IRC§ 501(c)(9) Voluntary Employee Benefit Association Trust used to self-fund certain benefits. My responsibilities included developing all benefits related communication material. The position required me to work with both union and nonunion staff and frequently interact with senior management and Board members.

At **Merrill Lynch**, my position as Health and Welfare benefits manager required to interreact with employees at all levels from high producing brokers to the back-room staff. Effective communication was critical. I oversaw a department of 15 members focusing on the health and welfare benefits package. I monitored department expenses, benefit expense trends and frequently confirmed that our benefit offerings were comparable if not better than the organizations competing for our employees. I worked with actuaries to determine equivalent premiums for the self-insured medical program and presented at various internal meetings.

Mary B. Andersen

Application for International Board Position

Item 11 –

*What skills, experiences, education, expertise, and background do you bring as a candidate for this position on the International Board? Regarding #4. General Knowledge Levels, for any of the knowledge levels you identified as “substantial”, please provide details.*

My work experience, professional credentials, and skills as an employee benefit consultant as well as my fraternal leadership experience within Sons of Norway will enable me to serve effectively as a member of the International Board.

Employee benefits professionals must be versed in a number of disciplines including Human Resources, legal, accounting, actuarial concepts, auditing and technology. Understanding and communicating complex governmental regulations is critical. Communications is especially critical due to the IRS and DOL disclosure guidelines.

I will provide some details relating to the General Knowledge Levels marked “substantial”.

**Accounting/Audit** – My 12 years at Coopers and Lybrand, (now PriceWaterhouse Coopers) required me to be able to communicate with the Accounting/Auditing side of the organization. Independent Qualified Public Accountant Opinions are a critical component of Form 5500 filings for large employee benefit plans. At Coopers & Lybrand, it was necessary to read and understand the Auditor’s opinion ensuring that the financial information presented agreed with the information reported to the government. It was necessary to be able to explain DOL and IRS requirements to the accounting staff as they worked on the audits.

In leading client compliance reviews, I often worked side by side with the client’s internal audit function.

**Actuarial** – Bottom line, it is difficult to work in the employee benefit field at a senior level without understanding actuarial concepts. One of my first jobs was at George Buck Consulting Actuaries. This was my introduction to the rigors of actuarial science as applied to funding of defined benefit plans and IRS §501(c)(9) Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association plans (VEBA). VEBAs were often used to self-insure certain aspects of employee benefit plan offerings. While at Church & Dwight, I was responsible for ensuring adequate reserve requirements, government reporting, and operational efficiency of the VEBA. I have worked with actuaries throughout my benefits career.

**Legal** – The primary focus of my company ERISAdiagnostics, Inc. is to keep plan sponsors out of IRS and DOL “jail”. This requires extensive knowledge of the law and its application. It requires being aware of new legislation as well as certain proposed legislation that would affect plan sponsors. I am a certified employee benefit specialist (CEBS) which required completion of 10 exams. I am also an Enrolled Retirement Plan Agent (ERPA) licensed to represent clients with the IRS on employee benefit issues. The ERPA designation requires the completion of 72 hours of continuing education credits including ethics over a three-year period to maintain the ERPA designation. Although I don’t sell insurance, I am a licensed producer in Pennsylvania.

**Corporate Management/Governance.** – compliance is about governance. Good governance generally results in compliant organizations. I regularly assist clients in employee benefit governance by conducting compliance reviews, training and consulting.

I demonstrated corporate management skills by effectively leading a department of 70 crew members at Vanguard. As a Principal, I was expected to run the department within corporate budgetary requirements as well as adhering to the Company's mission and vision. This was true for each of my corporate experiences. This experience was transferrable to my roles as District President and President of the District President's Council. While on the District President's Council I served on the Governance and Leadership Committees when District Presidents were included.

**Marketing and Communications** – I have been self-employed for a little over 20 years. Numerous skills are required to be a successful practitioner. Strong communications is critical in explaining complex benefit issues and complying with DOL and IRS disclosure requirements. Marketing the benefits programs to employees and senior management is a critical function of a benefits manager. Effectively marketing your services is a critical component of a company's longevity. There are many other intricacies of marketing including the old adage "when you are off, you are on" meaning you are a representative of your organization at all times. That is constant marketing.

**Strategic Planning** – strategic planning has been a critical component of my work and fraternal experience. Communicating employee benefit changes to a financial organization with thousands of employees requires planning! Another important requirement is utilizing volunteers to the best of their abilities. It requires understanding their likes, their dislikes and areas in which they excel. It is critical not to burn out volunteers. I effectively guided and then encouraged a team to view our 3D Land of the Vikings facility as a business. Having the facts and figures available was a critical component of the Board agreeing to sell LOV in a COVID economic downturn.

**Technology Skills (Internet/Social Media)** – as noted previously, self-employment requires many skill sets! I maintain a company website. While on the 3D Board, I lead a team to redesign the 3D website; with the assistance of others implemented a Facebook page as well as a twitter account. 3D also has an Instagram account which requires attention. While 3D President, I utilized the free version of Zoom before it became popular to conduct regular Executive Committee meetings. In addition, I introduced Trello as a method to organize and track assignments for our extensive Lodge leadership manual. I am co-administrator of my lodge's Facebook page, the 3D Facebook page and the 3D twitter account.

**Human Resources** – employee benefits is often a critical component of the HR team (unless it falls under accounting/finance). I provided descriptions of relevant HR skills in other sections.

**Community Service/Volunteering** – I have served on an Exton Region Chamber of Commerce committee, CEBS boards, chaired a ISCEBS Symposium, and as a Chester County Master Gardener. At one time, I was an active leader in the Outdoor Club of South Jersey.

**Fraternal Benefit System** – I have been very involved with Sons of Norway as noted throughout my application and related material. As Counselor, I reinstated 3D Charitable Trust's favorable IRS status. I attended the Fraternal Benefits Alliance Conference with particular focus on governance.