

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARTINE J. JAGER, MD, PhD

ARVO Expands Global Activities



ARVO is doing well. It has developed into a global eye research organization with over 12,000 members and a yearly meeting, which in 2007 attracted over 10,000 attendees. The

fact that ARVO has for the first time an international member as president is further proof of its international growth, as is the current presence of three international members on the ARVO Board of Trustees. ARVO has truly become an international organization, with the development of chapters and collaborations with other eye organizations around the world. The first ARVO International Chapter Affiliate Council was held this year and, as chapters are a very useful instrument to stimulate research collaboration and raise money for research, I expect that many other countries will also start their own chapters. The Asia-ARVO meeting in Singapore was once again a great success,

with the next meeting scheduled for 2009, this time in Hyderabad, India.

Advocacy

Advocacy is an essential focus of ARVO and we receive continuous support from AEVR/NAEVR. The importance of lobbying cannot be underestimated, and I think that the US is a role model for many other countries in the proper support of eye and vision research. As support from NIH is essential for the continuation

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of eye research in the US, efforts to increase money for research is of the greatest importance. Only with proper support for young investigators will (eye) research continue to be a goal in life for those considering a scientific career. In many countries eye research is hardly supported by the local government. Only by first showing the importance of eye diseases in different regions of the world by good epidemiological studies can researchers convince their governments to invest in

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Annual Meeting Survey Results

More than 800 attendees responded to the 2007 Annual Meeting survey and provided important feedback about the scientific program, publications, and services. Ninety-three percent of respondents indicated that the Annual Meeting met or exceeded their expectations, and 91% ranked the quality of the scientific program as excellent or good.

One respondent noted, "I met so many interesting people and got lots of great

ideas for projects and future employment."

Another attendee commented, "This was my first ARVO experience and it was excellent! Not only was it informative but also very enjoyable."

Concerns Raised and Being Addressed

- Building Temperature
- Missing Message Center
- Meeting Publications
- Abstract Search/Itinerary Builder

Suggestions about the meeting publications, including the *Program Summary Book* and online and CD-ROM versions of the Abstract Search and Itinerary

Builder, will be considered. Additional

See Survey, page 4



Board of Trustees, May 2007

ARVO at Other Meetings

Visit the ARVO Exhibits and attend ARVO Symposia at the following:

European Association for Vision and Eye Research (EVER)

Portoroz, Slovenia
October 3-6, 2007

American Academy of Optometry

Tampa, Florida
October 24-27, 2007
Booth 717

American Academy of Ophthalmology

New Orleans, Louisiana
November 10-13, 2007
Booths 5341-5343

See page 17 for details.

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ARVO GOVERNANCE

New Trustees Elected at 2007 Annual Meeting

The BI, CL, and VN Sections held Trustee elections this year. The response rate for all Sections was well over 30 percent, with almost 80 percent of all votes registered online. The newly-elected Trustees are:



The Biochemistry/Molecular Biology (BI) Section elected **Jeffrey H. Boatright, PhD**, to a five-year term. Dr. Boatright is an Associate Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA. He has been an ARVO member since 1989, and has served on ARVO's Annual Meeting Program Committee, the Public Policy Network, and as a Travel Grant Reviewer.



The Clinical/Epidemiologic Research (CL) Section elected **Paul Mitchell, MD, PhD**, to a five-year term. Dr. Mitchell is Professor, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Sydney; Director of Ophthalmology, Sydney West Area Health Service, Westmead Hospital; and Director, Centre for Vision Research, Westmead Millennium Institute in Sydney, Australia. He has been an ARVO member since 1990, and has also served on ARVO's Annual Meeting Program Committee and the Awards Committee.



The Visual Neurophysiology (VN) Section elected **Robert F. Miller, MD**, to a five-year term. Dr. Miller is the 3M Bert Cross Chair in Visual Neuroscience in the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN. He has been an ARVO member since 1969. ■

Trustee Nominations for 2008

At business meetings held during the 2007 ARVO Annual Meeting, the following Sections nominated candidates to stand for election as Trustees in 2008:

AP Section: **Hans E. Grossniklaus, MD, MBA**, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
Jacob Pe'er, MD, Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel

GL Section: **Peng T. Khaw, MD, PhD**, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, England
Louis R. Pasquale, MD, Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary, Boston, MA

The 2008 Trustee elections will be conducted using an online election system, which has proven to be quite successful over the past few years. Only voting members of the Sections with nominees will be eligible to take part in the 2008 elections. ■

ARVO Thanks Outgoing Committee Chairs and Volunteers

ARVO extends its thanks to all members who served on committees this past year. Special thanks go out to those who completed their terms as Chair this year: **Alan D. Marmorstein, PhD** (Advocacy's Scientific Policy Subcommittee); **James E. Puklin, MD** (Advocacy's International Advocacy Subcommittee); **Carol B. Toris, PhD** (Animals in Research); **Joseph L. Demer, MD, PhD** (Awards); **Gail M. Seigel, PhD** (Diversity Issues); **Dwight Stambolian, MD, PhD** (Ethics and Regulations in Human Research); **Donald T.H. Tan, FRCS** (International Members); **Gary W. Abrams, MD** (Long Range Planning); and **David C. Beebe, PhD** (Publications). ■

Spotlight On Committee Activities

ARVO's Committees develop and implement specific programs and projects that address the long-range goals of ARVO. In this edition of ARVONews we will focus on the work of three Committees.



Diversity Issues Committee

The Diversity Issues Committee (DIC), chaired by **Laura Robles, PhD**, is pursuing ways to augment ARVO's participation in the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native American in Science (SACNAS) Annual Conference, the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS), and the National Medical Association (NMA) Annual Meeting. Funds have been budgeted in 2008 for ARVO to award prizes at each conference. Prizes include a travel grants to the ARVO Annual Meeting for the best presenters at each meeting and ARVO T-shirts and certificates for the other top presenters. The Committee intends to have at least one member on site at each of these meetings.

As an adjunct to increased involvement in the above-mentioned conferences, the DIC, in collaboration with the Members-in-Training Committee, is developing a brochure on careers in eye and vision research, which will include information about ARVO membership, the Annual Meeting, brief descriptions of the types of careers pursued by ARVO Members (with Member testimonials), and educational requirements needed to pursue a career in vision and vision research.



Animals in Research Committee

Based on the recommendation of the Animals in Research Committee (ARC), chaired by **Catherine Thut, PhD**, the ARVO Board of Trustees approved ARVO joining the National Association for Biomedical Research's (NABR) Legal Strategy Group, a legal team that works with universities whose researchers come under attack. Specifically, the Group works with the legal and public outreach departments of universities to develop education programs on the use of animals in research and teach how to respond to attacks on the faculty who use animals in their research. The Group is also working with NIH to include a check-off box on grant application forms for universities to indicate a clear understanding that if NIH funds are received, the university is required to take responsibility for their researchers if they come under attack.

The ARC is reviewing international standards for possible incorporation into ARVO's "Statement for the Use of Animals in Ophthalmic and Visual Research." The ARC also encourages all non-US ARVO members to consider joining the European Biomedical Research Association (EBRA), an association of individuals and organizations in the scientific, medical, and veterinary professions in Europe. More information can be found at www.ebra.org.



Commercial Relationships Committee

Todd P. Margolis, MD, PhD, ARVO President-Elect and Commercial Relationship Committee (CRC) Chair recently represented ARVO on a panel of experts convened by the Federation of American Societies in Experimental Biology (FASEB). The panel has developed an online conflict of interest (COI) toolkit for managing financial relationships between academia and industry in all fields of biomedical research. The COI Toolkit specifically addresses the conduct of research (including clinical trial registration), publishing, mentoring, etc.

This spring, the CRC provided input on the first draft of the Toolkit. After reviewing the final draft, the CRC, Publications Committee, and the Ethics and Regulations in Human Research Committee recommended that the ARVO Board of Trustees endorse the Toolkit and approve posting a link to the Toolkit on the ARVO Web site. Look for the link in the "Other Resources" section at www.arvo.org. ■

www.arvo.org

2007-2008 Committee Chairs

The following have been named as ARVO Committee Chairs for this coming year. Go to www.arvo.org/committee for Committee descriptions and activities:

Advocacy Committee

Barry S. Winkler, PhD

Animals in Research Committee

Catherine Thut, PhD

Annual Meeting Program Committee

Sally S. Atherton, PhD

Awards Committee

Reza Dana, MD, MPH, MSc

Commercial Relationships Committee

Todd P. Margolis, MD, PhD

Diversity Issues Committee

Laura J. Robles, PhD

Ethics and Regulations in Human Research Committee

Leonard A. Levin, MD, PhD

Exhibits Committee

Thomas R. Friberg, MD

Finance Committee

Donald C. Hood, PhD

International Members Committee

Robert Ritch, MD

Long Range Planning Committee

Frederick L. Ferris, III, MD

Members-in-Training Committee

John Paul SanGiovanni, ScD

Professional Development and Education Committee

Maureen G. Maguire, PhD

Publications Committee

Nicholas A. Delamere, PhD

Volunteer Management Committee

Todd P. Margolis, MD, PhD

Volunteer!

Share your expertise and play a part in shaping ARVO's goals and future. Volunteer to be on your favorite ARVO Committee. Read more about the wide variety of opportunities and complete an online Committee Volunteer Form on the ARVO Committees' home page at www.arvo.org/committee.

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Proposed Bylaws Amendment to Update Section Trustee Nomination Process

In 2005, ARVO began taking Section Trustee Nominations in advance of the Section Business Meetings held each year at ARVO in an effort to increase the number of candidates to nominate. Individuals still had the option to nominate candidates from the floor of the Business Meeting. Since ARVO implemented this process, the number of nominations received in advance of the Section Business Meeting has increased. Therefore, it is questionable as to whether there is a need to continue accepting nominations on the floor of the Section Business Meetings.

At the General Business Meeting of the 2008 Annual Meeting, the ARVO membership will vote to amend the ARVO bylaws to adopt an online electronic voting method to nominate the two Section Trustee candidates in advance of the Section Business Meetings. The candidates will be announced at the Section Business Meetings.

100 votes are required to amend the ARVO bylaws, so we strongly encourage you to attend the 2008 General Business Meeting in Fort Lauderdale.

The Proposed bylaws amendment is listed below:

5.03 Election. (a) Nomination of Trustees. During the course of each Annual Meeting of ARVO, each Scientific Section of ARVO shall hold a separate business meeting. By the end of the first day of the ARVO Annual Meeting, ~~At the separate business meeting,~~ each standing Scientific Section whose Trustee's term of office will expire at the end of the following year's Annual Meeting shall nominate by online vote no more than two (2) candidates. The two candidates will be announced at the separate business meeting. ~~One of whom~~ candidate will be elected as the Successor Trustee by an online electronic election prior to the following year's Scientific Section's separate business meeting, which will take place at the Annual Meeting.

ARVO Gearing Up to Develop New Long-Range Plan

This October, the ARVO Board of Trustees will meet with the ARVO Strategic Planning Group, chaired by Rick Ferris, MD, to begin developing ARVO's next five-year strategic plan.

Much has been accomplished under the last strategic plan (created in 2004) that has benefited the ARVO membership and the eye and vision research community as a whole. The plan has led to the implementation of international chapter affiliates and collaborations with numerous eye organizations to continue advancing vision research around the world. New programs

and activities also have been launched to support the work of clinician-scientists in eye and vision research and cross-sectional scientific interests. A complete list of all the accomplishments under the last strategic plan is available on the ARVO Web site at www.arvo.org/strategic.

ARVO would like to thank the members who provided input on the future direction of ARVO through the member survey sent in August. Your comments and suggestions are vital in planning ARVO's future and will be discussed at the October Strategic Planning Meeting. ■

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eye research. With the increase in elderly people in the world, it is certain that age-related eye problems such as macular degeneration and corneal problems will occur in more patients; with the incredible new surgical techniques for corneal diseases and the medical possibilities for the macula, very many clinical comparative studies will be necessary. The further identification of the genetic basis of diseases will make it possible to identify the pathobiological basis of many diseases which may lead to better preventive measures. These topics and many more in any field of ocular research are fascinating, but in order to perform studies, research money is needed. ARVO will do its best to help researchers anywhere learn how to raise money for research and will also help with the development of educational sessions on clinical trials.

International Travel Grants

Internationally, ARVO has reached out to its young researchers by expanding its own travel grant program and by collaborating with industry and private individuals to create more travel grants for those who otherwise could not afford to come to the ARVO annual meetings. In 2008, ARVO will award 100 travel grants to researchers from outside the US. The incredible number of applications shows the popularity of this program, and the ARVO office will continue to put a lot of effort into managing and expanding it.

ARVO exists as a base of support for eye researchers. If you have any ideas to further stimulate our goal of improving eye research, please let us know. The Association is here for you. ■



Martine J. Jager, MD, PhD

Surveys, continued from page 1

comments were provided about the Annual Meeting location, audiovisual services, and meeting services and activities. Excellent comments were offered about ARVO's complimentary shuttle bus service to and from the Convention Center. In particular, feedback about the cold temperature in the Convention Center and the lack of a Message Center were viewed as critical. All of these areas

will be reviewed and concerns will be addressed in the planning process for the 2008 Annual Meeting.

All feedback about the Annual Meeting is welcome. If you have suggestions about the Annual Meeting, or would like to propose an ARVO Education Course, Summer Eye Research Conference, or other educational program, contact Ellyn Terry, Director of Meetings and Education, at eterry@arvo.org. ■

Indo-US Workshop to Generate Collaborations

Interest in generating additional research collaborations between India and US researchers brought together a group of established and prospective collaborators at the 2007 ARVO Annual Meeting. Chaired by Drs. D. Balasubramanian and P. Kaufman, the participants heard Dr. P. Sieving support the collaborations and emphasize the National Eye Institute's (NEI) interest in studies vis-à-vis the phenotype profiles in the two countries. Dr. L. Aiello spoke about the diabetic retinopathy clinical research (DRCR) project and how Indian groups under the leadership of Aravind are participating. Drs. G. Dagnelie and R. Tandon introduced the bi-national effort on genetic predisposition and antioxidant trials that they hope to have funded through the NEI in the US and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in India.

Joint grants scenarios

Dr. T.S. Rao of the DBT and Dr. L. Ellwein of NEI focused on three types of joint grant proposals: (i) Asking for funds from NIH where supplementary amounts are asked for the Indian partners (Dr. D. Beebe and Dr. J. Costello work with Dr. Balasubramanian under this arrangement). (ii) Joint proposals submitted simultaneously to NIH and to DBT: the joint pre-proposal (short summary of what is intended) is first seen and agreed to by the Joint Working Group (JWG), which is composed of eye researchers representing the two governments. The next step is to submit the joint proposal to both NIH and DBT so that proposals are funded by the respective governments. The Dagnelie/Indian group is an example. (iii) For a project already funded for the US partner, such as through an ongoing R01, the Indian partner adds his part and sends the proposal to the DBT, which reviews it via the Indian JWG, and then processes it for possible funding, such as the Aravind/Aiello DRCR project.

Material transfer

Under the 2005 Agreement to Expand Vision Research Collaborations signed by the US and Indian governments, and the work by Dr. T.S. Rao of the DBT, the exchange of human biological material between the two countries has become far simpler and faster. A single window clearance from the DBT suffices; all that the researchers need to give is a short write-up justifying the need and the amount of material.

Exchange of researchers

Dr. T.S. Rao talked about the facility for exchanging researchers through the existing DBT's Visiting Scientist from Abroad Program (VSAP), and the Overseas Associate Program (OAP) for Indians. It is very likely that DBT will designate three to four such visits each year, each way. Drs. J. Bennett and M. Friedlander will be going to India, thanks to VSAP, while a member of the Sankara staff is in the US through the OAP. Note that this dual scheme is funded totally by DBT.

Sending US medicos to India

Talks have been initiated between Dr. Balasubramanian and NIH's Fogarty Center to re-establish a program for post-third-year MD students to spend a year abroad in Indian eye centers.

Workshops to kindle and sustain interest

In addition to holding workshops at the ARVO Annual Meeting there is the hope that workshops could also be held in conjunction with the twice-yearly JWG meetings.

ARVO maintains information on the Indo-US Collaborations at www.arvo.org/usindo. An inventory of collaborations can be found there as well as the names of researchers who have been involved with collaborations. ■



Dr. T.S. Rao, India Department of Biotechnology, and Dr. L. Ellwein, US National Eye Institute



Workshop moderator Dr. D. Balasubramanian and speaker Dr. D. Beebe



Participants question workshop speakers.

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