

Message from the President

We can all be advocates for vision research

What matters most to ARVO members?

A recent survey among members showed that obtaining money for research is No. 1 on the “problem” list, no matter where our members are located. Convincing government agencies, industry and private individuals that eye research is essential is one of ARVO’s key roles.

In the US, ARVO helps support two great vision research education groups: the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR) and the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR).

These groups organize briefings on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC as well as visits for ARVO trustees and Annual Meeting Program Committee members to the offices of legislators. They help ARVO members and others educate Congressional staff about eye research and the importance of increased funding. NAEVR actively supports legislation that broadens the pool of funding available to vision researchers.

In other countries, the ARVO name can help to bring in money from industry or government just as it does in the US. ARVO members are currently building a network of international chapters (see

page 2). Any country may organize an affiliate under the ARVO flag, meeting annually, stimulating collaboration among scientists and educating their own governments and industry about the importance of eye and vision research.

Around the world, funding will improve when we all become advocates for eye research. We will only be able to achieve our goal — to prevent or cure eye disorders — when we have adequate research money. ARVO can support all of us in that endeavour, and you can help.

As one year ends and another starts, consider a last-minute donation. Perhaps the ARVO Foundation for Eye Research (AFER; see page 18) can be your goal: it helps young researchers attend the ARVO Annual Meeting and supports the careers of clinician-scientists. In the future, AFER will stimulate collaboration between developing countries and established laboratories. The great man behind AFER, John Dowling, will be honored at the 2008 Annual Meeting (see page 18), and the work of the Foundation will continue to expand.

You would not have been able to read this if you could not see. Vision is valuable, and worthy of our efforts to persevere in research until we achieve our goal of preventing blindness. ■



Martine J. Jager, MD, PhD

Despite funding disappointment, US Congress hears vision community

Although the omnibus spending bill passed by Congress on December 19 essentially failed to increase funding for NIH’s National Eye Institute, the vision community still had an influence.

“We were very disappointed by what amounts to a net decrease in funding for NEI after inflation,” said James Jorkasky of

the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research. “But the vision advocacy community should be proud that its message about the value of medical research was heard by Congress.” He was referring to the NIH budget increase originally included in the FY2008 Labor, Health

See Bill, page 8

Check out your ARVO 2008 Meeting Preview enclosed



Lenworth Johnson is making a difference page 9

Robert Frank speaks out about IOVS page 16

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International chapter affiliate program to expand

After a successful 18-month pilot, ARVO is inviting members in other countries to join Argentina, Brazil, Israel and Hungary in creating international chapter affiliates. To find out more, download the ARVO Chapter Affiliate Start-Up Manual from the Global Activities section at www.arvo.org. This pdf manual includes eligibility requirements and an online application form. ■

ARVO GOVERNANCE

Proposed Bylaws Amendment: Updating Section Trustee nomination process

Background: In 2005, ARVO began taking Section Trustee nominations in advance of the Section Business Meetings held each year at the Annual Meeting. The aim was to increase the number of candidates on the ballot. Members also could nominate candidates at the Business Meeting itself. Since then, the number of advance nominations has increased.

The proposal: The Board of Trustees would like to further streamline this process, and is proposing to amend the bylaws to adopt online-only, advance nominations. Section candidates would be announced at the Section Business Meetings. This new procedure would be implemented in January 2009.

The vote on the proposed amendment will take place at the General Business Meeting at the 2008 Annual Meeting.

Amendments to the ARVO bylaws require 100 votes, so we strongly encourage you to attend the 2008 General Business Meeting on Wednesday, April 30, in Fort Lauderdale and have your say.

The proposed amendment is as follows:

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. ■

AP and GL members: First all-online election

The Board of Trustees elections go to all-electronic voting for the first time this spring, as voting members of Anatomy/Pathology (AP) and Glaucoma (GL) Sections go to the polls via the Internet. The new voting procedures were adopted last year to help make the Trustee elections as accessible and representative as possible (see Section 5.04 of the Bylaws on www.arvo.org for details).

Every vote counts — so if you are a voting member (Regular, Family, Sustaining, Life and Family Life), make sure you have your say in your Section's leadership! Voting opens March 17. Watch your e-mail and www.arvo.org for candidate bios and voting instructions. We will announce the results at the Section Business Meetings during the 2008 Annual Meeting.

The AP and GL Sections have each nominated two candidates to stand in the 2008 Board of Trustees elections. ■

AP Section



Hans Grossniklaus, MD, MBA
Emory University
School of Medicine
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 and
Ear Infirmary
Boston, MA

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Strategic planning initiative: ARVO redefines vision and goals

Every five years, ARVO leaders look back at where the association has been and where we should be going — otherwise known as the Strategic Planning Initiative.

In October 2007, the Strategic Planning Group met in Chicago to develop a new five-year plan to take up where the 2004-2009 strategy leaves off. Frederick L. Ferris, III, MD, Long Range Planning Committee Chair, led the session, which included ARVO Trustees, international chapter and industry representatives, past and present Annual Meeting Program Committee members, and ARVO senior staff.

In preparation for the Strategic Planning Meeting key stakeholders from government, chapters and related organizations were interviewed. ARVO also surveyed members to highlight key issues and concerns and gather suggestions for change.

Results

Participants at the October meeting revised ARVO's purpose statement:

ARVO's purpose is to facilitate the advancement of vision research and the prevention and cure of disorders of the visual system worldwide.

The planners also developed a revised two-part vision statement. The first statement describes the impact ARVO aims to make on prevention and cure; the second is a vision of the role ARVO — both the organization and its members — seeks to fulfill.

ARVO's vision

- To advance [basic and clinical] knowledge and prevent and cure disorders of the visual system
- To demonstrate by its programs and actions that ARVO is the leading interna-

tional forum for vision research and the primary advocate for vision science worldwide

The group agreed that ARVO's purpose and vision rest on five core values:

1. Striving for scientific excellence and a demand for integrity and ethics in research
2. Open exchange and dissemination of information
3. Inclusiveness and diversity of people and ideas
4. Collegiality
5. Member responsiveness/customer service

Goals

The Strategic Planning Group created five new goals for ARVO. The Goal Panel chairs will identify objectives to help ARVO achieve these goals and recruit volunteers to develop strategies for meeting the objectives between January and the 2008 Annual Meeting.

Goal 1: Leading international forum

ARVO will demonstrate by its programs and actions that it is the leading international forum for vision research.

Goal 2: Primary advocate for vision research worldwide

ARVO will expand its international advocacy efforts.

Goal 3: Support for young investigators

Young investigators will be an important part of the vitality of ARVO.

Goal 4: Membership value and growth

Vision scientists will choose ARVO as their primary research membership organization.

Goal 5: Infrastructure and governance

ARVO will be organizationally and financially strong to fulfill its purpose and achieve its vision and goals.

Tell ARVO what you think

The Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan in November 2007. Members are encouraged to provide feedback on the plan at any time. Submit your comments to Long Range Planning Committee Chair Rick Ferris, MD, through ARVO's Director of Governance and Strategic Initiatives, Lori Methia (lmethia@arvo.org). ■



ARVO Vice President-Elect Barry Winkler, PhD, at the ARVO Strategic Planning Meeting

AAO recognizes former ARVO president

The American Academy of Ophthalmology recently recognized ARVO past president Gary Abrams, MD (Kresge Eye Institute, Wayne State University) for his contributions to the AAO Council's Subspecialty Specialized Interest Section. He served on Council 2002-2007.



New process

Annual Meeting Program Committee nominations and election

Elections for the Annual Meeting Program Committee (AMPC) will now take place ahead of the Sections' Business Meetings in Fort Lauderdale, FL, at the ARVO Annual Meeting. Each Section will vote online to elect a representative to the AMPC.

Nominations

Watch your e-mail and the ARVO Web site for a Call for Nomination notice with requirements and instructions. The nomination deadline is February 20.

Election

Voting opens March 17. In early March, candidate bios and voting instructions will be posted on the ARVO Web site.

Please contact Lori Methia (lmethia@arvo.org) if you have any questions about the new procedures. ■

IM, RC and VI: Get ready to choose your Trustee candidates for 2009

At the 2008 Section Business Meetings which takes place at the Annual Meeting, voting members of the Immunology/Microbiology (IM), Retinal Cell Biology (RC) and Visual Psychophysics/Physiological Optics (VI) Sections will nominate candidates to stand in the 2009 Board of Trustees elections.

Please think about who would best represent your Section in this important role and nominate members in good standing who are willing to serve.

ARVO will accept nominations before and during the Section Business Meetings. Watch your e-mail and www.arvo.org for more information about nomination requirements and deadlines. ■

NEI DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Charting new territory: Indo-US Joint Working Group on Vision Research



Paul A. Sieving,
MD, PhD
National Eye
Institute Director

Significant, collaborative vision research between US and Indian scientists is becoming a reality, as the Indo-US Joint Working Group (JWG) moves into the grant application and funding stage. An October meeting at the Lawton Chiles International

(Stone) House on the NIH campus in Maryland, US, entitled "Global Partnerships: Expansion of Collaborative Vision Research," helped move the project further toward implementation.

The JWG — along with a formal Statement of Intent — were the results of a series of workshops that ARVO organized in 2005. Our recognition that vision research is now a global enterprise spurred those workshops. In fact, almost half of ARVO's members today are based

outside the US, representing 71 countries. All of us will benefit from international collaboration, which presents an opportunity to increase scientific talent and resources.

Later, Indian and US scientists identified five core research areas:

1. Clinical aspects of eye disease
2. Molecular genetics of eye disease
3. Standardization of clinical measurement



4. Translational physiology: bedside-to-bench-to-bedside applications
 5. Identification, development, and exchange of research resources
- The partners have now turned their energies to implementation: coordinat-

ing grant application and review between the US and India to give these unique, bilateral research projects proper, rigorous consideration in a highly competitive funding arena.

I want to acknowledge the groundbreaking work of my former colleague at NEI, Dr. Leon Ellwein, who recognized the need and value of fostering global research early on. Leon worked for many years with Dr. Balasubramanian of India's L.V. Prasad Eye Institute to bring this idea to fruition. Although Leon recently retired, he continues to participate in the process as a volunteer. I am also grateful to ARVO Executive Director Joanne Angle and ARVO's leadership for facilitating discussions at the ARVO Annual Meeting (for details, see *ARVONews* Summer 2007, page 5).

With this unique collaboration, NEI is charting largely unfamiliar territory at NIH. But through hard work, determination and innovative thinking, this opportunity is becoming a reality. ■

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