

THE ASSOCIATION FOR MOLECULAR PATHOLOGY

www.amp.org

Report to the Intersociety Pathology Council

January 2010

Submitted by Mary Steele Williams, MNA, MT(ASCP)SM, Chief Operating Officer & Director of Scientific Programs

Leadership: AMP's current President is Dr. Karen Mann and its President-Elect is Dr. Timothy O'Leary. Dr. Mark Sobel is the Executive Officer.

Membership: AMP's membership increased again in 2009 and now exceeds 1,800.

Annual Meeting: The 2009 Annual Meeting was held in Kissimmee (Orlando), Florida, November 19-22, and had an attendance of just over 1,200 scientific registrants. The number of exhibitors continues to grow; 113 entities exhibited in 159 booth spaces. AMP again held a Pathology Outreach Program (course) the day before the annual meeting, which had an attendance of approximately 75. AMP celebrated its 15th annual meeting with a social event that was very well received by attendees. This year, AMP will hold its 16th annual meeting in San Jose, California, November 17 - 20. The Pathology Outreach Program will be held on November 17.

Awards: Dr. Kay Davies was the keynote speaker at the 2009 annual meeting and the recipient of the AMP Award for Excellence in Molecular Diagnostics. Previous recipients include Francis Collins, Edwin Southern, Henry Erlich, Bert Vogelstein, Craig Venter, Sir Alec Jeffreys, Leroy Hood, Mary-Clare King, Janet Rowley, and Carl Wittwer. The AMP Leadership Award, which honors a member who has contributed significant leadership to benefit the mission and goals of the society, was presented to Dr. Debra Leonard in 2009. Previous recipients include Jeffrey Kant, Mark Sobel, Daniel Farkas, and Karen Kaul. AMP also provides Young Investigator Awards and Technologist Awards based on abstract submissions and poster presentations at the annual meeting. In addition, several awards to support travel to the annual meeting are provided, one of which was sponsored by ICPI, which was given to five recipients in 2009.

Publications: AMP's official journal, *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics*, is now in its 12th year. It is co-published with ASIP is published bimonthly. In 2009, AMP published four manuscripts: Competency-Based Education for the Molecular Genetic Pathology Fellow (Talbert, *et al.*), CpG Methylation Analysis - Current Status of Clinical Assays and Potential Applications in Molecular Diagnostics (Sepulveda, *et al.*), a CMV Sample Exchange (Wolff, *et al.*), and Laboratory Practice Guidelines for Detecting and Reporting BCR-ABL Drug Resistance Mutations in CML an ALL (Jones, *et al.*). The CME program, in which readers can earn 50 credit hours in category 1 credit towards the AMA Physician's Recognition Award, is growing. *JMDexpress* is the journal's online prepublication vehicle. Dr. Karen Kaul completed 10 years as Editor-in-Chief at the end of 2009. Dr. Timothy O'Leary was appointed as Dr. Kaul's successor.

Clinical Practice: AMP's active Clinical Practice Committee continues to work on numerous clinical practice issues. Three of the AMP manuscripts published in JMD in 2009 were produced by working groups of the Clinical Practice Committee.

Economic Affairs Committee: AMP's committee responsible for reimbursement, coding, and economic policy issues is very active. AMP is a member of the CAP Pathology Coding Caucus (PCC) and recently presented a new model for coding molecular pathology tests, which will be used as a framework for ongoing discussions. The EAC continues to make significant progress in educating and influencing third party payers. In April 2009, AMP became aware of a special interest bill that would eliminate the 14-day rule for a small number of specialty laboratories. Over the course of the year, a significant coalition grew

to oppose this legislation. Progress was made in achieving language changes; the final outcome is still to be determined.

Membership & Professional Development: AMP's MPDC manages effective volunteer and liaison management systems. In 2009, the committee launched new initiatives to include scientific interest groups, an international membership grant program, and a technologist travel grant to the annual meeting.

Professional Relations: AMP's active Professional Relations Committee continues to work on licensing and regulatory issues for molecular tests. AMP continues to advocate for full implementation of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), has participated in the many policy discussions regarding comparative effectiveness research (CER), and published principles for health care reform. AMP has presented to the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Genetics, Health & Society at each of their meetings on topics that include gene patents, direct-to-consumer marketing of genetic tests and genetic nondiscrimination. In March 2009, AMP began a limited federal lobbying effort. Aside from the 14-day rule bill discussed above, AMP has been in communication with legislators regarding bills that involve a mandatory registry of genetic tests and gene patents. AMP participates with the National Pathology Organizations group organized by the CAP.

ACLU lawsuit, *AMP et al. v the USPTO, et al.*: The ACLU approached AMP in the fall of 2009 with a request to join several individual patients and scientists in a lawsuit that challenges gene patents. After a great deal of discussion and deliberation, AMP became the first professional association to join as a plaintiff. ACMG, ASCP, and CAP soon joined as well.

Training & Education: AMP's education initiatives continue to grow. The T&E Committee presents webinars, online case studies, and the Outreach Program course at the annual meeting. The second Molecular Genetic Pathology Review course was held in 2009, with record attendance of approximately 70 individuals, several from outside of the U.S. This course is not endorsed by the American Board of Pathology or the American Board of Medical Genetics. An online self-study version of the course was created by recorded lectures of the live course and will remain available through December 2010. A course co-produced by the American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC) was held in Copenhagen.

AMP Test Directory (www.amptestdirectory.org): The online Directory is organized into sections for Hematopathology, Solid Tumors, and Infectious Diseases. Only Laboratory Directors who are AMP members can list tests; however, the Directory is available to the public without restriction. An extensive redesign of the database is ongoing that includes a specimen source field, a streamlined list of infectious agents, a Google-style search function, and a function that will allow the easy identification of labs who have not updated their listing in the past year so they can be inactivated.