



Society for Pediatric Pathology



As of the last Spring meeting, the Society for Pediatric Pathology (SPP) had 683 members, 40 of whom are junior members at various stages of training and 93 of whom are affiliate members from outside of the United States and Canada. The mission of the Society is

- To promote expertise, effective teaching, and productive research in the practice of pediatric pathology.
- To assist and promote the development and recognition of resident and fellow training programs in pediatric pathology and, through the American Board of Pathology, establish and maintain means by which pathologists may be certified as having special competency in pediatric pathology.
- To sponsor and promote the education of physicians and others in health care related to pediatric pathology.
- To establish and maintain relationships with other societies and groups of physicians and other scientists who share professional interests with the SPP.

To accomplish this mission the SPP holds two scientific meetings each year, a Spring Meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology and a Fall Meeting hosted by a member of the SPP. The SPP also offers an annual slide survey in which the clinical history and glass and digital slides for 15 challenging cases are provided to subscribers as unknowns; and sponsors a biennial three-day course in perinatal pathology. The SPP publishes a periodic monograph of topical reviews, *Perspectives in Pediatric Pathology*, now in its 28th volume, and co-sponsors with the European Paediatric Pathology Society a journal, *Pediatric and Developmental Pathology*. The SPP is fully accredited by the Accreditation Commission on Continuing Medical Education, and has been approved by the American Board of Pathology to offer Self Assessment Modules (SAMs) to pathologists who are seeking Maintenance of Certification (MOC).

Recruitment: A major component of the Society's mission is to recruit new talent to the field. To this end the SPP again provided discounted registration and activity fees to trainees for both the Spring and Fall meetings, and sponsored an essay contest through which three trainees won expense-paid trips to the Fall Meeting. The Gordon F. Vawter Pathologist-in-Training award provides a certificate and cash prize for the best presentation by a trainee at the both the Spring and Fall meetings. The A. James McAdams Short-Term Study Stipend which provides up to \$5000 for expenses related to receiving training in an area of Pediatric Pathology outside one's own institution was divided between two residents. The Young Investigator Research Grant provides seed money of \$10,000 for the establishment of research in pediatric pathology. In order to begin integration of new pathologists into our Society, we have appointed fellows in approved Pediatric Pathology programs to SPP committees. Most recently, we have established a new award, the Enid Gilbert-Barness prize, which recognizes excellence in clinically-related publications in the field of pediatric pathology.

Education:

Another major thrust of the SPP mission is to provide educational programs to meet the needs of pediatric pathologists and pathologists whose practice includes pediatric material. In addition to poster and platform presentations of new studies, a major symposium is presented at both the Spring and Fall meetings. The Farber-Landing lecture, six workshops and an evening slide seminar are given at the Spring Meeting; and a Perinatal

Pathology Symposium, Children's Oncology Group update, and lecture by the winner of the Lotte Strauss Prize for the outstanding publication in Pediatric Pathology by a young (<40 years old) pathologist occur at the Fall Meeting.

Fifty abstracts were accepted for the 2008 Spring Meeting. The Spring Symposium on Disorders of Intersex Pathology included lectures on normal and abnormal sexual development, surgical treatments of intersex disease, and associated ethical issues as well as lectures on histopathology of the lesions and associated neoplasms. The Farber-Landing Lecture was delivered by Dr. Richard van Praagh, and workshops were offered on the topics of pediatric transplantation pathology, the use of tandem mass spectroscopy in metabolic disorders, pediatric neoplastic hematopathology, non-tumoral testicular pathology, bone pathology, and renal Tumors.

Eighty-two abstracts were accepted for the Fall Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which was an international meeting jointly sponsored by the Society for Pediatric Pathology and the Paediatric Pathology Society. Twenty-nine abstracts were eligible for the Vawter Award, 34 were eligible for the Perinatal Award, and 12 were eligible for the Neustein Award. Clinicians (R. Vomer, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia), tumor biologists (John Anderson, London, England and Fred Barr, Philadelphia, PA) and a review pathologist (Louis Guillou, Lausanne, Switzerland) provided an update on soft tissue sarcomas at the Fall Symposium; and the Perinatal Symposium featured experts in the pathology of infantile neoplasms.

Outreach:

The SPP practices international outreach with a variety of groups, including but not limited to the Latin American Society of Pediatric Pathology (SLAPPE), the aforementioned the Europe-based Paediatric Pathology Society (PPS), and the International Pediatric Pathology Association. As part of this outreach mission, we have worked with the Friends of Africa by donating issues of our journal and by sponsoring lectureships and field trips to Africa.

Current challenges:

Like most medical organizations of our size, we have struggled to assimilate the new requirements for the CME accreditation process. This has necessitated increased involvement of our Education Committee, more attention to detail and increased paperwork from meeting sponsors and lecturers, and a gradual shift from a volunteer-based program to a paid professional one. It has stretched the meager personnel resources of of volunteer members, and it has necessitated increased expenditures and ultimately higher dues payments.

Another challenge similar to other specialty groups, particularly in pediatrics, is a gradual decrease in our workforce, which will ultimately shift some responsibility for pediatric diagnosis to general pathologists. As a result, we search for opportunities to share knowledge with and update the diagnostic skills of pathologists not based in pediatric hospitals. We also search for ways to interest residents in our fellowship programs, which have steadily declined because of decreases in enrollment. To this end, we have made contacts with USCAP and the CAP to explore ways of improving childhood care.

Communication: Since 1994, pediatric pathologists worldwide have participated in a lively listserve <https://mailman2.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/pedpath> that now has over 500 subscribers.

For further information about the SPP, please visit our website at <http://www.spponline.org/>

Respectfully submitted,

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Past President, Society for Pediatric Pathology