



**ALLEGHENY-ERIE REGIONAL CHAPTER
of the
SOCIETY OF TOXICOLOGY**

ANNUAL REPORT: 2018-2019

June 1, 2018-May 31, 2019

I. Officers:

Office	2018-2019	2019-2020
President	Aaron Barchowsky	Marisa Kreider
President-Elect	Marisa Kreider	Vamsi Kodali
Vice President	Stephen Leonard	Vanessa Fitsanakis
Secretary	Robin E. Gandley	Robin E. Gandley
Treasurer	William J. Mackay	William J. Mackay
Past President	Todd Stueckle	Aaron Barchowsky
Councillors	Mark Weisberg Vamsi Kodali James P. Fabisiak Tim Nurkiewicz Alexander Ufelle Nicole Olgun	James P. Fabisiak Timothy Nurkiewicz Nicole Olgun Alexander Ufelle Mark Weisberg
Postdoctoral Representative	Elizabeth Bowbridge	Briana De Miranda
Postdoctoral Representative Elect	Briana De Miranda	William Mandler
Graduate Student Representatives	Katie Roach Shelbie Burchfield	Shelbie Burchfield Rachel Baur
K-12 Outreach	William J. Mackay	Anne E. Simmons
RC4 Liaison	Aaron Barchowsky	Vanessa Fitsanakis

II. Committees

Awards:	Jim Fabisiak
Communications:	Mark Weisberg
Education:	Aaron Barchowsky
Finance:	Mark Weisberg
K12 Outreach Liaison:	Anne E. Simmons
Membership:	TBD
Nominating:	Kelly A. Brant
Program:	Aaron Erdely
Web:	Jim Scabilloni
RC4 Representative:	Vanessa Fitsanakis

III. Activities**a) The 2019 A-E SOT Annual Meeting**

Location: University Club, University of Pittsburgh

Date: May 1-2, 2019

Registered Attendees: 78

Highlights

- Across the two-day conference focused on “Modernizing Toxicity Testing and Risk Assessment”, there were three symposia each addressing a separate topic: Novel identification of hazards; exposure modeling; and toxicity testing in the 21st century. These symposia were each headlined by an invited keynote speaker, including Dr. Martyn Smith from the University of California at Berkeley (Novel identification of hazards), Dr. Carla Ng from the University of Pittsburgh (Exposure modeling), and Dr. Thomas Hartung from Johns Hopkins University (Toxicity testing in the 21st century).



- On behalf of the University of Pittsburgh, Donald S. Burke, Dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health welcomed all attendees to the meeting. In addition, Dr. Aaron Barchowsky, outgoing President of the A-E SOT chapter and faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of what to expect in the meeting, including acknowledgement of the diverse representation from undergraduate students and mentors and sponsorship from the local sponsors.
- In addition to our keynote speakers, the symposia also included presentation from trainees at all levels within the Chapter, reinforcing the Chapter's continued focus on education and scientific accessibility. The meeting planners strove to include one speaker in each symposium representing young investigators, postdoctoral students, and graduate students, in an effort to bring speaking opportunities to oft overlooked groups. Represented in these groups were individuals from academia, government, and industry, allowing us to showcase opportunities for toxicologists across careers, as well. The complete program, including speaker identification, platform presentation abstracts, and poster abstracts can be found in the meeting program which is available upon request.



- Meeting attendance spanned all sectors as well, and included undergraduate and high school students along with graduate students, postdocs, academicians, and industry professionals. We further increased participation by undergraduate students adding representation from the University of Pittsburgh to the previously participating six undergraduate programs (Edinboro University, Frostburg State University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Northeast Ohio Medical University, Slippery Rock University, and West Virginia University). In total, 10 undergraduates or high school students attended, with seven presenting posters during the evening poster session. We hope to continue our engagement with local undergraduate programs, and continue to expand our local participation, particularly through outreach activities, such as the ToxScholar program.
- All students were invited to participate in our Lunch with an Expert program, which fostered opportunities for students to learn about career options from participants across a variety of paths, including academia, consulting, and industry. The seventh year for this program, the feedback from the students and the mentors remains very positive; students appreciated the opportunity to ask questions of and engage with professionals in the field of toxicology, allowing them to better understand the array of options for career development. We will definitely continue to provide this opportunity at our annual Chapter meeting and are grateful for the generous support from SOT to make this luncheon for our trainees possible.
- At the conclusion of the first day, we held a poster session over refreshments. In total, we had 35 posters, including seven from undergraduates or high school students, 19 from graduate students, four from postdoctoral trainees, and five from junior or principal investigators. Abstracts can be found in the meeting program which is available upon request. Poster presentations were judged by invited speakers and a panel of A-E SOT leadership.



- This past year A-E SOT acquired funding from SOT to aid in student travel and lodging for our annual meeting attendance. The funding was beneficial and provided financial assistance to several students from area universities to attend both days of the annual meeting. In the past these students were unable to attend both days due to lack of funds for overnight lodging. We also obtained funding from the SOT Undergraduate Subcommittee to support the undergraduate poster session at the annual meeting. Undergraduate programming funds also allow waiving registration fees for undergraduate students. Chapter funds provided free registration to high school students.
- As with past years, based on our health budget and the attendance at the meeting, the Executive Committee awarded several presenters from the meeting with awards based on their presentations and/or posters. These awards acknowledged hard work of the students, their mentors, and those who contributed to the overall scientific program. The awardees from the meeting, along with A-E SOT awardees across 2018-2019 year are found below:

2018-19 A-E SOT Awards:

2019 Maryanne Stock Student Research Award

Alaeddin Bashir Abukabda West Virginia University
Project: *"Maternal Pulmonary Exposure to Titanium Dioxide Nanoparticles Alters Placental Hemodynamics.*

2019 Graduate Student Travel Awards

Meghan Bucher University of Pittsburgh
Kelly Smith Fraser
West Virginia University/NIOSH

2019 Postdoctoral Fellow Travel Award

Dr. Bharat Bhushan University of Pittsburgh

2019 Best High School Student

Samuel Zlotnikov, Taylor Allderdice High School



2019 Best Undergraduate Poster

Stephanie A Thornton,
Cardno ChemRisk /
University of Pittsburgh
Mentor: Cardno ChemRisk

2019 Best Undergraduate Poster

Mentor
Cardno ChemRisk



2019 Best Graduate Student Poster Presentation

Kelly Frazer, West Virginia University/NIOSH
Mentor: Dr. Aaron Erdely



2019 Best Graduate Student Oral Presentation

Brandy M. Byrwa-Hil,
University of Pittsburgh
Mentor: Dr James P.
Fabisiak

2019 Best Postdoctoral Fellow Oral Presentation

Dr. Gregory Boyce, CDC/NIOSH



2019 Best Postdoctoral Fellow Poster Presentation

Dr. Tabatha Barber, CDC/NIOSH

2019 Best Young Investigator Poster
Dr. Alicia Richards, Cardno ChemRisk



- Following our poster session on Day 1, the Chapter hosted a small informal reception for all of the attendees and the keynote speakers. This was held to further increase interaction between the invited speakers and the attendees. Support for this reception came from our sponsors.

IV. Newsletter: In 2013, we discontinued our newsletter and associated committee. All “news-worthy” communications and announcements are posted on our website, and distributed via ToXchange. This has worked well thus far, although can be difficult during registration for our non-SOT member guests.

V. Website: Our website is regularly updated with information about awards, the annual meeting, and changes in the officers.

VI. 2020 Annual Meeting: Our next meeting, to be held spring 2020 (date TBD) will be held in Pittsburgh, in hopes to continue to bolster our relationship with Pittsburgh-based SOT members and industry partnerships. The date for the meeting is yet to be determined, and discussions regarding changing the timing to accommodate more students (particularly undergraduates that were out of session during our 2019 meeting) are on-going. Specific dates and location are to be confirmed in the coming month with the A-E SOT leadership team.

VII. New Meetings/Activities: On March 11, 2019, we joined with the Lake Ontario and Michigan Regional Chapter for a joint reception at Luna Del Sea Steak and Seafood Bistro during the annual SOT meeting in Baltimore. This is our seventh consecutive year for co-hosting this event. Nearly all members of the chapter present at the annual meeting attended the event, and it was considered a success by all chapters. This reception, like the ones before, served as a great networking opportunity for members of both chapters.

VIII. Budget and Bank Statement: Generous donations from sponsors (RJ Lee Group, LLC, APTIM, Cardno ChemRisk, Covestro, and AAzer) and an increase in meeting attendance resulted in ~\$18,890 (June financial statement) in the A-E SOT account at the time of this report. We are operating in the black for seven consecutive years while simultaneously increasing the size and impact of our annual meeting, and introducing new Chapter activities and public outreach. We are actively pursuing additional sponsors and increased engagement from our existing sponsors, and offered opportunities for advertising booths and a presentation at our annual meeting to meeting sponsors. In addition to sponsorship, we will continue to pursue SOT support next year for our annual meeting as well. The purpose of this will be four-fold: 1) maintain our awards for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, young investigators, and undergraduate students 2) continue to develop/increase our local annual meeting, 3) continue our joint reception with the Michigan and Lake Ontario Regional Chapters at the national meeting and 4) increase our outreach impacts primarily targeting undergraduate students and their mentors partially via the ToxScholar Program.

IX. Outreach: Outreach to local students and their mentors remains a goal of our Chapter, and past success in this area was demonstrated through our participation and presentation by undergraduates at our annual meeting (see above for details). Over the past year, Dr. Todd Stueckle visited two local universities as part of the ToxScholar program, Slippery Rock University (PA) and Alderson-Broaddus University (WV). Dr. Greg Boyce, a postdoctoral fellow at NIOSH, joined him at Alderson-Broaddus (see photos below). The visit to Slippery Rock continued to reinforce the relationship developed last year through a ToxScholar visit by Dr. Aaron Barchowsky. A Slippery Rock undergraduate student, Molly Schreiner, was the chapter's winner of the 2019-2020 MaryAnne Stock award. Dr. Vanessa Fitsanakis also visited Washington College (MD) as part of the ToxScholar program, where she reached about 35 students and has had follow-ups with two regarding career options in toxicology.

