

**ALLEGHENY-ERIE REGIONAL CHAPTER
SOCIETY OF TOXICOLOGY
ANNUAL REPORT 2006-2007**

I. INTRODUCTION

	<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>2006-2007</u>
President	Maureen Gwinn	Annabelle Javier
President-Elect	Dan Arrieta/Annabelle Javier	Jeff Smith
Vice President	Mark Weisberg	Aaron Barchowsky
Secretary	Robin Gandley	Robin Gandley
Treasurer	William Mackay	William Mackay
Councilors	Aaron Barchowsky	Mark Weisberg
	Lori Batelli	Lori Batelli
	James Scabilloni	James Scabilloni
	Melanie Flint (Past President)	Melanie Flint (Past President)
Student Representative	Adam Straub	Adam Straub
Post-Doctoral Representative	Pallavi Limaye	Pallavi Limaye

Committees

Awards – Lori Battelli
Communications – Jim Scabilloni
Education – Aaron Barchowsky
Finance – Mark Weisberg
Membership – Robin Gandley
Newsletter - Mike Savides
Nominations – Melanie Flint
Program – Dan Arrieta/Annabelle Javier

Committee Reports:

Membership

The membership in the Allegheny-Erie Regional Chapter consisted of 61 members in good standing including 10 student members.

Finance

Letters soliciting a renewal or initiation of corporate sponsorship were sent to 42 individuals at 39 companies. Three companies submitted donations: \$250 from Harlan Sprague Dawley, \$250 from Bayer Material Science (Bayer Corporation), and \$250.00 from Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc.

Awards Committee

A Travel Award of \$500 is given to defray expenses for a student presenting a poster or talk at the Annual Meeting of the National Society of Toxicology Meeting. Kelly Brant received the 2007 Travel Award. Kelly is a post-doctoral fellow for Dr. James Fabisiak in the Department of

Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Pittsburgh. Kelly presented gave a talk on the “Potential role of cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) in Ni-dependent alterations in release of immune-modulators from human lung fibroblasts (HLF) by TLR-2 agonist, MALP-2” at the National Meeting in Charlotte, NC this past March.

The Awards Committee also presents a Research Award of \$1,000 to support a student's thesis/dissertation/summer research project in toxicology. The intent of this award is to encourage students to gain experience in grant writing, formulate and conduct meaningful research in the field of toxicology, and assist in the support of that research. Research proposals are judged primarily on the quality of the study design with consideration given to the clarity of the proposal.

Due to the lack of applications from graduate students, the 2006 Maryanne Stock Research Award was given to Harina Vin, a high school student. Harina is very motivated student with an impressive CV. She worked on a project “Arsenic stimulation of oxidants in liver sinusoidal cells promotes defenestration and capillarization by increasing the expression of laminin binding integrins and a basement membrane containing laminin” with Dr. Aaron Barchowsky in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Pittsburgh.

The winner of the 2007 Spring Meeting Poster Award for Best Methodology was Robin Gandley, et al, from the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, University of Pittsburgh and Magee-Womens Research Institute for “Impact of high fat diet and injury on carotid artery reactivity”.

The winner of the 2007 Spring Meeting Poster Award for Best Overall Poster was Udayan Apte, et al, from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine for “ β -catenin is essential for liver regeneration following acetaminophen-induced acute liver failure”.

Communications

The website is updated at least 4 times a year with an email being sent to notify all members of the update. Updates are also made when new information becomes available. The site now includes Membership application forms, Meeting Registration Forms, Student Travel and Research Award Applications, the A-E SOT by-laws, Past Meeting Presentations, the most current and past newsletters, and winners of the Graduate Travel Award and Maryanne Stock Research Award.

Education Committee

The second Toxicology Scholar visit was incorporated into the fall meeting A-E SOT at Duquesne University. Undergraduates from Duquesne, University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon, and other Pittsburgh universities and colleges were invited to attend a morning session that preceded the full meeting. A poster session was set up with a number of student and full A-E SOT members present to answer questions on the science presented and on general questions regarding career options in toxicology. The students were also invited to attend lunch and the meeting to interact with members and hear the presentations on environmental oncology. While

the undergraduate attendance was again low, those who did attend indicated that the experience was quite positive. Suggestions were made to increase attendance by coordinating the Toxicology Scholar visits with career days at the local universities and colleges. In addition, the Education Committee will be increasing participation with the national SOT Education Committee and the member institutions that have toxicology-training programs to develop portable recruitment tools.

Newsletter Chair

Two issues of the newsletter were issued in the last year. Electronic versions of the newsletter were submitted for posting to the Web Site. Electronic versions were also sent to members. Thanks to Ricerca, LLC for allowing the time of Mike Savides and other employees for putting together the newsletter, and for covering the postage for the issues.

Nominations Chair

The newly elected and appointed officers include Annabelle Javier as President and Jeffery Smith as President-Elect. Aaron Barchowsky was elected as Vice-President, Robin Gandley as Secretary, William Mackay as Treasurer, and Mark Weisberg as Councilor for two-year terms.

II. ACTIVITIES

Annual Fall Meeting:

The 18th Annual Fall A-E SOT meeting topic was Environmental Oncology. The meeting was held at Duquesne University in the Fisher Conference Center in downtown Pittsburgh. The meeting followed a morning student outreach event. Local members, including graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and professionals, were present to discuss careers in toxicology. In addition, several students and postdoctoral fellows presented posters summarizing their research. Attendance was increased over our previous student outreach events, and we hope to continue this trend at future meetings. At the meeting, Dr. Vicki Davis, Assistant Professor of Pharmacology at Duquesne University, discussed her research on the effects of low level DDT exposure on breast cancer risk. The other speakers were from the Center of Environmental Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. Dr. Devra Davis, the Center's Director, highlighted some of the groundbreaking questions being addressed by the Center in regards to environmental exposures and cancer. Dr. Davis also talked about the role of cell signalling in environmental oncology, using breast cancer as a specific example. The next speaker was Dr. Stephen Grant, who discussed his research on the effects of maternal cigarette smoke exposure on fetal biomarkers. Dr. Jean Latimer spoke next on her work in developing a novel human mammary tissue system for use in *in vitro* toxicology studies. The final speaker of the meeting was Dr. Talal El-Hefnawy, who discussed his research on mixtures of environmental estrogens on *in vitro* test systems. The meeting concluded with a panel discussion with the invited speakers. There were approximately forty members and non-members in attendance, and the closing panel provided people with a good format for scientific discussion. A-E SOT would like to thank speakers and individuals who volunteered for the student outreach event for their time and effort in support of the Fall Meeting. Thanks also to all of the attendees..

Annual Spring Meeting:

The 19th Annual Spring AE-SOT meeting focused on risk and exposure assessment. The meeting was held at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association in Pittsburgh, PA on May 11, 2007. Our first speaker, Dr. Cliff Davidson of Carnegie Mellon University talked about air quality in western Pennsylvania, presenting findings of the Pittsburgh Particulate Matter (PM) Supersite Program: A Multidisciplinary Consortium for Atmospheric Aerosol Research. In conjunction with computer modeling systems, the airborne particulate composition data collected through the Pittsburgh PM Supersite Program has helped identify major sources and types of airborne particulate matter in the greater Pittsburgh area. These data have provided much needed information to elucidate the potential links between PM composition and adverse health effects. Our second speaker, Dr. Michael Dourson of Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment (TERA) provided some real-life examples of instances in which laboratory data have been used to refine human health risk assessments. The Spring meeting was also a showcase for ten exceptional posters presented from scientists from the Magee Women's Research Institute, University of Pittsburgh, ChemRisk, and NIOSH. From this group, we would like to congratulate Robin Gandley (Magee Womens Research Institute) for Best Methodology and Udayan Apte (University of Pittsburgh) for Best Overall Poster. AE-SOT would like to thank both speakers and poster presenters for their time and effort in support of our Spring meeting. We would also like to thank the over thirty attendees, members and non-members, who attended the meeting and added to the scientific discussion.

Projected Meetings:

The Fall 2007 annual meeting on "Metabolomics and Toxicogenomics" will be held on September 14, 2007 at Waterfront Place Hotel in Morgantown, West Virginia.

A student outreach luncheon is being planned in conjunction with one of the undergraduate scientific societies at University of Pittsburgh sometime later this year.

SOT Regional Chapter Funding Received and Used to Support:

National SOT supported student outreach events held in conjunction with both of our regional chapter meetings. In addition, we were given \$1,325.00 for the Spring 2007 meeting to cover airfare, ground transportation, meals, and hotel for an out-of-town speaker, Dr. Michael Dourson. For the student outreach events, we received reimbursement for travel and refreshments from the National SOT Education committee to fund student outreach events held at Duquesne University in October 2006.

Annabelle Javier

Annabelle Javier 8/5/2007
2007-2008 President

Robin Gandley

Robin Gandley 8/5/2007
Secretary