

NAME OF REGIONAL CHAPTER \_Allegheny- Erie

**ANNUAL REPORT: 2009-2010**

May 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

**I. Officers/Committees:**

<b>Officers:</b>	<u>2008-2009</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>
President:	Jeffrey Smith	Nicolas Stewart
President-elect:	Nicolas Stewart	Kelly Brant
Vice President:	Aaron Barchowsky	Aaron Barchowsky
Secretary:	Robin Gandle	Robin Gandle
Treasurer:	William J Mackay	William J Mackay
Councilors:	Mark Weisberg	Mark Weisberg
	Jeff Haskins	James Fabisiak
	Jim Scabilloni	Jim Scabilloni
Newsletter:	Mike Savides	Mike Savides
<i>Past-President</i>	Annabelle Javier	Jeffrey Smith
SAC Representative:	Antonia Nemec	Open
PDA Representative:	Kelly Brant	Fujun Liu

**Committees:**

Awards – Jim Fabisiak  
Communications/Website – Jim Scabilloni  
Education – Aaron Barchowsky  
Finance – Mark Weisberg  
Membership – Robin Gandle  
Newsletter - Mike Savides  
Nominations – Jeffery Smith  
Program – Kelly Brant

**II. Activities**

Meetings:

The 23rd Annual AESOT Fall Meeting was held at the ThermoFisher Scientific building in Pittsburgh, PA on Friday, October 30, 2009. The topic of the meeting was Reproductive Toxicology. The meeting kicked off with a poster session and several scientists from academia, industry and consulting firms in the AESOT area presented their latest research findings. Nicole T. Myers from the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, Pittsburgh, PA and R. Brigg Turner from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Pharmacy, Erie, PA were the winners of the Best Methodology and Best Overall Poster Prizes.

AESOT was pleased to highlight the success of postdoctoral fellows at the Fall Meeting by inviting Dr. Kembra Howdeshell, a senior Postdoctoral fellow from the Reproductive Toxicology Branch, MD-72, Toxicology Assessment Division, USEPA as our outside speaker. Dr. Howdeshell was one of the SOT 2009 Recipients of the Best Postdoctoral Publication Award for her manuscript entitled "A Mixture of Five Phthalate Esters Inhibits Fetal Testicular Testosterone Production in the Sprague-Dawley Rat in a Cumulative,

Dose-Additive Manner” Toxicological Science 2008, 105:153-165. Dr. Howdeshell highlighted these and other research findings in her seminar entitled “Potent cocktails: Effects of phthalates mixtures on reproductive development”. Our second speaker was AESOT’s own secretary, Dr. Robin Gandley, Assistant Investigator at Magee-Women’s Research Institute and Assistant Professor in the Environmental and Occupational Health Department at the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Gandley presented her research on vascular adaptation to pregnancy as a sensitive window for reproductive toxicology. We received great feedback regarding our speakers and overall meeting was a great success.

AESOT also held a Spring Meeting on April 30, 2010 at the ThermoFisher Scientific Building in Pittsburgh, PA. The focus of the Spring Meeting was on “Nanotoxicology” and we were very fortunate to have two experts in the field give a seminar. Our first speaker was Dr. Timothy Nurkiewicz, Associate Professor of Physiology & Pharmacology, Center for Cardiovascular and Respiratory Sciences, Robert C. Byrd Health Science Center at West Virginia University. His seminar, entitled “Microvascular Consequences of Nanoparticle Inhalation” highlighted some of the mechanisms contributing to the systemic microvascular dysfunction triggered by pulmonary exposure to nanoparticles and ambient particulate matter. We were also very fortunate to have Dr. Martin Philbert, Professor of Toxicology at the University Of Michigan School Of Public Health as our second speaker. Dr. Philbert gave a seminar entitled “Toxicology as the Basis for Smart Design of Nanoimaging and Nanotherapeutic Agents” that spoke to his expertise in the development of Nano-Optical Systems for in vivo physiology, and nanostructure-based imaging and treatment of tumors of malignant gliomas.

Our Spring Meeting also featured a poster session and we were pleased to award two prizes for Best Overall and Best Methodology to Dr. Jason Cannon, a postdoc at the University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Travis Knuckles, a Research Assistant Professor at WVU. The meeting was well attended by AESOT members and non-members, with a large representation (>30%) of students and postdocs.

#### Newsletters:

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 to put together the newsletter.

Endowment Fund Details, Teleseminars, White Papers and Contributions to SOT Web site:

No activity for 2009-2010

Other Regional Chapter 2009-2010 Activities:

#### **Committee Reports:**

#### Education:

*2010 Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Sciences (PJAS) Awards of Excellence:* The AESOT has continued support of K-12 scientific educational programs by providing two awards of excellence for science presentations at the annual PJAS Region 7 meeting.

The PJAS is a statewide organization of Junior and Senior high school students and teachers designed to stimulate and promote interest in science through the development of research investigations. Several hundred middle and high school students compete annually by presenting results of independent scientific investigations conducted at area schools and universities. They are judged both on the quality of a submitted written report and on oral discussion of the project with panels of judges. Competition is school grade and scientific discipline based. Students with the highest scores in a number of different scientific categories advance to statewide competition and potentially national competitions with support from PJAS. AESOT provides two additional merit certificates with a \$100 stipend to exceptional middle school and high school student. The criteria for the AESOT awards were scientific focus on toxicology, high scores from the judges, and special recommendations from individual judges. The 2010 awardees, Amber Palmer (seventh grade) and Daniel Schapira (eleventh grade) received perfect merit scores from the judges. Ms. Palmer, who attends Keystone Oaks Middle school, captured the essence of toxicology with dose response studies of the effect of cadmium on cricket larvae development (Elizabeth Fadgen, sponsor). The judges were extremely impressed by Mr. Schapira, who attends Pittsburgh Central Catholic High School, with his presentation of his studies of caffeine affects on human vision (Marck Krotec, sponsor). AESOT is proud to support the efforts of the PJAS to encourage the next generation of scientists, as well as these two exceptional rising stars in science with hopes that they retain their interest in toxicology.

#### Membership:

The membership in the Allegheny-Erie Regional Chapter consisted of 63 members in good standing including 9 student members and 3 post-doctoral fellows.

#### Finance:

No news to report for 2009-2010

#### 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. The Student Travel Award for 2010 has gone to Katrina L. Porter, a Ph.D. candidate in the laboratory of Dr. Tim Nurkiewicz, Associate Professor of Physiology & Pharmacology, Center for Cardiovascular and Respiratory Sciences, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV. Katrina presented her work entitled "Diesel exhaust particle exposure augments arteriolar mechanotransduction" at the National Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah 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.

The AESOT Awards Committee is pleased to announce this year's MaryAnne Stock Research Award and Student Travel Award winners. Kevin Beezhold is the recipient of the 2009 MaryAnne Research Award for his project entitled "Arsenic Regulation of microRNAs

in Human Carcinogenesis.” Mr. Beezhold is a graduate student Ph.D. candidate enrolled in the Cancer Cell Biology Program at West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV and Drs. Fei Chen and Vince Castranova are serving as his mentors on this project.

The work is a collaborative project between WVU and National Institute Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH). A grant of \$1,000 is awarded to support the direct costs of this research.

#### 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 AESOT by-laws, Past Meeting Presentations, the most current and past newsletters, and winners of the Graduate Travel Award and Maryanne Stock Research Award.

#### Nominations Chair:

The newly elected and appointed officers include Kelly Brant as President and Sachin Devi as President-Elect. Aaron Barchowsky was elected as Vice-President, Robin Gandle as Secretary, William Mackay as Treasurer, and Jim Fabisiak as Councilor for two-year terms. Arpit Mehta was appointed as the SAC representative in March 2010 and Fujun Liu will continue as the PDA representative.

#### Education Committee:

#### **Projected Meetings:**

The Fall 2010 annual meeting on “EcoToxicology” is tentatively scheduled for October 29, 2010 in Erie, PA.

#### **SOT Regional Chapter Funding Received and Used to Support:**

Funds from the National SOT Speakers Bureau supported travel costs for out-of-town speakers for our 2009 Fall Meeting (Kembra Howdeshell) and 2010 Spring Meeting (Martin Philbert).