



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

***ANNUAL REPORT: 2016-2017***  
May 1, 2016-April 30, 2017

**I. Officers:**

<u>Office</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>
President:	Jim Antonini	Todd Stueckle
President-Elect:	Todd Stueckle	Aaron Barchowsky
Vice President:	Vince Castranova	Aaron Erdely
Secretary:	Robin E. Gandley	Robin E. Gandley
Treasurer:	William J. Mackay	William J. Mackay
Past President	Patti C. Erdely	Jim Antonini
Councilors:	Mark Weisberg	Mark Weisberg
	Jim Scabilloni	Kristen Russ
	James P. Fabisiak	James P. Fabisiak
	Tim Nurkiewicz	Tim Nurkiewicz
	Open	William J. Mackay
	Elaine Freeman	Elaine Freeman
PDA Representative:	Vamsi Kodali	Vamsi Kodali
GSLC Representative:	Katie Roach	Katie Roach
K-12 Outreach:	William J. Mackay	William J. Mackay
RC4 Liaison	Todd Stueckle	Aaron Barchowsky

**President's comment:** *The past year was very successful for A-E SOT. This is directly attributable to the energy and commitment of current leadership. A-E SOT has been successful in providing the region with an annual high impact scientific meeting that highlights toxicology research in academia, industry, and government and in the training and development of young scientists in the field of toxicology.*



## II. Committees:

Awards:	Jim Fabisiak
Communications:	Mark Weisberg
Education:	Aaron Barchowsky
Finance:	William Mackay
Membership:	Tim Nurkiewicz
Nominating:	Phoebe Stapleton
Program:	Todd Stueckle, Jim Antonini, Phoebe Stapleton
Web:	Jim Scabilloni
RC4 Representative:	Todd Stueckle

## III. Activities:

### a) 2017 A-E SOT Annual Meeting

*Location / Date:* Erickson Alumni Center, Morgantown, West Virginia. May 18-19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

*Pre-Registered Attendees:* 90

### Highlights:

- 1) The three symposia during the 2-day conference on '*Toxicology in Public Health*' were headlined by the invited speakers: Drs. Jason Richardson, Michael Madden, and Jamie Bonner who each presented in one of the scientific sessions followed by lively Q&A sessions from attendees.





- 2) West Virginia University Health Science Center Director of Core Resources, Dr. Chris Cuff, generously provided attendees with a welcome address, highlighting WVU's enthusiasm for hosting the A-E SOT conference for the past few years, and indicated the ongoing support from WVU for A-E SOT endeavors to help facilitate academic, government, and industry collaborations in the toxicological sciences. Dr. Tim Nurkiewicz also gave attendees a brief update on the status of the new inhalation facility at West Virginia University due to begin operation in Fall 2017.



- 3) In addition to our keynote speakers, the symposia continued our Chapter's focus on education and scientific access. As such, many of our postdoctoral fellow and graduate student trainees were able to present platform presentations in this year's symposia. We were also able to expand and broaden our invitation and hosting abilities for area HS and undergraduate students and their mentors to participate in the conference and our Lunch with an Expert program (please see below)



- 4) Following our first day and two scientific sessions, we held a poster session over refreshments. Overall, there were more than 32 poster presentations. Please see the supplemental program for the scientific abstracts. Posters and presentations were judged by Dr. Michael Madden (invited speaker) and Dr. Eric Kelley (West Virginia University; A-E SOT attendee).



- 5) To fall in line with SOT's focus on undergraduate recruitment, the Executive Committee made a large effort in early 2017 to identify, contact, and invite undergraduate mentors and their students who conduct toxicological science to the meeting (see attachments and Meeting Program). We had 10 undergraduates, 5 mentors, and 7 high school students from both PA and WV. Kurt Jones, a high school teacher from Greene County, was highly appreciative of A-E SOT's efforts to support high school student involvement in the meeting (see attached letter).
- 6) "Lunch with an Expert" continued to be a highlight for student attendees and was highly successful. This year's event at the annual meeting was well received with participation from 6 undergraduates, 9 graduate students, 3 post-docs, and 10 experts. Undergraduate students were matched with post-docs who were able to discuss the process of committing to, progressing through, and transitioning out of graduate school in preparation for a toxicology-based career. Similarly, graduate students were matched with toxicological experts working in the sectors of government, academia, and industry, based on the students' research interests and future career plans. Overall, feedback



from the event was enormously positive, and provided a significant professional development opportunity for the next generation of toxicologists. We consider this to be one of our most successful endeavors. We were grateful for the generous support from SOT to make this luncheon for our trainees possible.



- 7) **2016-17 A-E SOT Awards:** Based on our healthy budget and the large increase in attendance, the A-E SOT Executive Committee saw it fit to increase the number of awards and the dollar value given out to a large and diverse pool of student presenters. In addition, we began two new awards, namely **Best Undergraduate Poster** and **Mentor of Best Undergraduate Poster** (inset) to acknowledge a hard working student and their mentor; and to serve as a Spring Meeting recruitment tool for future undergraduate student researchers.

#### **2017 Maryanne Stock Student Research Award**

To be announced in August 2017

#### **2017 Graduate Student Travel Award**

No applicants.

#### **2017 Postdoctoral Fellow Travel Award**

No applicants.

#### **2017 Best Undergraduate Poster**

Brittany Benjamin

Edinboro University

Mentor: Dr. William Mackay

#### **2017 Best Graduate Student Poster Presentation**

Kyle Mandler

West Virginia University

Mentor: Dr. Mark Olfert



**2017 Best Graduate Student Oral Presentation**

Alixandra Wagner  
West Virginia University  
Mentor: Dr. Cerasela Zoica Dinu

**2017 Best Postdoctoral Fellow Poster Presentation**

Dr. Matthew Neal  
Northeast Ohio Medical University  
Mentor: Dr. Jason Richardson

**Best Young Investigator Poster**

Dr. Jie Dong  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

**2017 Best Postdoctoral Fellow Oral Presentation**

Dr. Carol Starkey  
ORISE Fellow, Environmental Protection Agency

**2017 Best Young Investigator Platform**

Dr. Tina Sager  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

**2017 Best Methodology**

Andrew White  
West Virginia University  
Mentor: Dr. Cerasela Dinu

**2017 Best Overall Presentation**

Breanne Farris  
West Virginia University – CDC-NIOSH  
Mentor: Dr. Jenny Roberts



- 8) This past year A-E SOT was able to acquire 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 (Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and Indiana University of Pennsylvania) 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 used Chapter funds to cover the cost of attendance for high school students from Morgantown HS, Greene County PA HS, and the PA Virtual HS.
- 9) Following our poster session on Day 1, our Chapter was able to host a small informal reception for all attendees. This was held to further increase interaction between our invited speakers and meeting attendees.
- 10) Lastly, the 2017 Mary Anne Stock Student Research Award is being determined, but not yet officially announced. Traditionally, this occurs after the deadline for our annual report.



\*\*\* **For complete 2017 meeting details: see Attachment 1, Final Program. Additional photographs are available. We are happy to provide a CD with all photographs from our annual activities if Council is interested.**

**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.

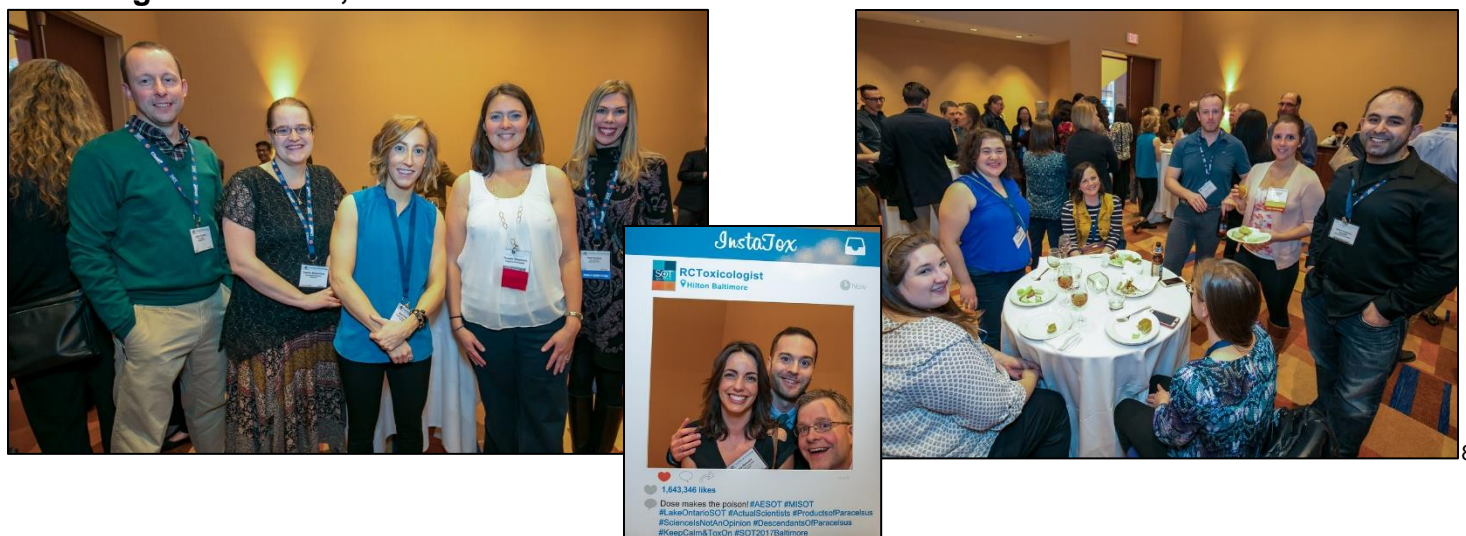
**V. Website:** With the support of SOT, we overhauled our website in October 2012, and this is now an ongoing process (or living document). We are currently planning a major update to several sections of the website including Award Winners and Educational Outreach focusing on undergraduate training and experience opportunities and maintaining K-12 outreach.

**VI. 2018 Annual Meeting:** We have tentatively selected May 2018 for next year's meeting. This meeting is currently reserved at the WVU Erikson Alumni Center (<http://alumni.wvu.edu/eac>); however, given the costs we are investigating alternative locations. Given the welcome from Dr. Cuff this past year, in addition to the financial and administrative support already committed by WVU Department of Physiology & Pharmacology for 2018. Similar to our well-sponsored meetings in 2014 and 2015, we plan to secure necessary funding to continue providing a high level meeting, and interactions with relevant sponsors. To improve active participation by Pittsburgh-based SOT members, we are tentatively planning to hold our Spring Meeting in the Pittsburgh area in 2019. Furthermore, our goal is to increase both attendance and sponsorship funding with the ultimate goal of increasing the presence/impact of A-E SOT in our region, and adjacent regions.

#### VII. New Meetings/Activities:

- At the National SOT meeting in Baltimore, A-E SOT again combined with the Michigan Chapter and Lake Ontario Chapter to host a joint reception. Virtually all A-E SOT members in attendance at SOT attended the joint reception and the event was considered a success by all chapters, even better than last year's three-chapter reception. With nearly 100 attendees, ideas were shared to potentially collaborate on putting together joint chapter webinars on topics such as risk assessment and the future of toxicology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is the 5th joint meeting for the A-E and MI chapters, and second year for Lake Ontario's involvement. We had plenty of food on hand despite the large turnout, mostly attributed to the excellent planning and budgeting a few months ahead of time by members of each Chapter's executive committees. A few images from the reception are below with all EC attendees from both chapters on the next page.

#### Photos from the Alleghany-Erie, Lake Ontario, & Michigan Chapter Joint Reception at 2017 SOT Meeting in Baltimore, MD





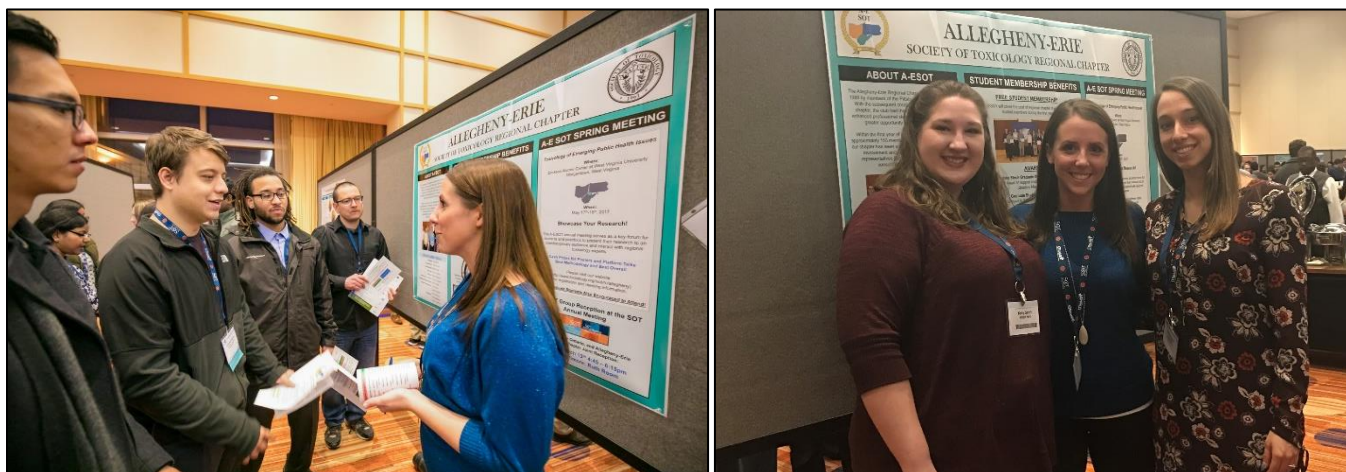


**VII. Budget/Bank Statement:** Generous donations from sponsors (The WVU Department of Physiology & Pharmacology, Myriad / RBM) and an increase in meeting attendance resulted in ~\$28,442.13 (June financial statement) in the A-E SOT account at the time of this report, a nearly \$1015 increase from last year at this time. When all sponsors are accounted for and balances have been paid, the chapter will have increased their account by ~\$4600 compared to 2013. Furthermore, we are now operating in the black for five consecutive years while simultaneously increasing the size and impact of our annual meeting, and introducing new Chapter activities and public outreach. Two sponsors have been secured and several others are already being pursued for the coming fiscal year. Also, we will pursue SOT support next year for our annual meeting as well. The purpose of this will be three-fold: 1) maintain our awards for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, young investigators, and undergraduate students 2) continue to develop/increase our annual meeting towards a "Current Concepts in Toxicology" meeting, 3) continue our joint reception with the Michigan and Lake Ontario Regional Chapters at the Annual meeting and 4) increase our outreach impacts primarily targeting undergraduate students and their mentors partially via the ToxScholar Program.

**VIII. Outreach:** A-E SOT has long-standing support for the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) and continued this support with several \$100 awards for presenting students (see Attachment). In addition, our Graduate Student representative, Katie Roach, traveled to Trinity Christian School to assist with judging their high school STEM Fair. A-E SOT gladly handed out several \$50 awards to deserving students along with vouchers for themselves and a parent to attend the A-E SOT Spring Meeting (see attached letter).

For 2017-2018, William Mackay will lead our K-12 outreach, despite the loss of funds from National SOT. Several new avenues have been discussed and are being implemented. These ideas include connecting with the past President of the West Virginia statewide science teachers association to develop contacts for outreach in West Virginia and continue to develop plans with both WV and PA Science Bowl competitions to supply A-E SOT members as volunteers and small financial support.

Outreach to undergraduates and their mentors is a priority goal of our Chapter for the 2017-2018 year. This last year Dr. Stueckle identified several faculty at regional undergraduate universities with known activities in toxicology research. Targeted letters were sent out to faculty to introduce them to A-E SOT and invite them to the Spring Meeting. This effort was moderately successful as it attracted several faculty without their students to the Spring Meeting. In face-to-face chats at the Meeting, these faculty were very pleased with the overall theme and openness to student involvement. These faculty plan to bring several undergraduates to next year's meeting. To keep this effort going, A-E SOT will pursue avenues to reach out to undergraduates via ToxScholar Program funding this coming Fall.



**VIV. Other:** We are planning administrative changes in the 2017-2018 year to amend the bylaws to add an additional graduate student and postdoctoral representative. With the growth of the chapter and the growth of our Lunch with and Expert and Joint Regional Chapter (both organized in part by these representatives) the burden and expectation on these individuals is great, largely due to the geographic make-up and unique professional opportunities in our Region. For example, during a recent A-E SOT meeting, the students were able to tour the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, an opportunity set up by a student primarily working in Morgantown. This was a greatly enjoyed tour for our Pittsburgh colleagues, who would not have been able to coordinate on their own, without the local contact. Therefore, we will be looking to add additional representation in these positions, one in Pittsburgh and one in Morgantown. With this addition will come an added cost of travel support for these trainees to attend the national meeting, increasing our financial need as we support travel for four representatives.