

Midwest Regional Chapter

ANNUAL REPORT: 2020-2021
May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021

I. Officers/Committees:

<u>Officers</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
President:	Charles Mattis	Smita Salian-Mehta
President-Elect:	Smita Salian-Mehta	Ashley Brinkman
Secretary:	Ashley Brinkman	Matthew Wolter
Treasurer:	Huanyu (Joe) Qiao	Huanyu (Joe) Qiao
Past President:	Chad Vezina	Charles Mattis
Councilors:	Brian Chanas	David Belair
	Ali Chesney	Brian Chanas
	Daniel Kougias	Daniel Kougias
	Tami Swenson	Kimberly Stietz
PDA Representative:	Genoa Warner	Tami Swenson
Student Representative:	Anne Elise Turco	Genoa Warner

Committees: None.

II. 2020 Membership total: 159

III. Key Outcomes in 2020-2021:

- A. Hosted two virtual annual meetings that reflected continuous participation of chapter members in regional chapter activities.
- B. Fostered student participation by holding career outreach talks and introduced flash talk sessions in annual meetings

IV. Activities:

- A. 2021 SOT Virtual Annual Meeting Activities (e.g., courses, scientific sessions, or virtual receptions): Virtually presented chapter poster at SOT annual meeting and hosted a networking reception on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 from 4:00 – 5:00 PM to provide an update to members about the year's activities and encourage networking.
- B. 2021 Awards Information:
 - i. Andressa Varella Gonsioroski won the MRC/SOT Travel award for her SOT abstract “Iodoacetic Acid Affects Estrous Cyclicity, Ovarian Gene Expression, and Hormone Levels in Mice.” Ms. Gonsioroski’s meeting registration costs were reimbursed by the MRC/SOT.
 - ii. Joe (Huanyu) Qiao, University of Illinois, won the Early Career Toxicologist Award. An honorarium of \$500 was provided.
 - iii. There were no applicants for the Young Investigator awards and no nominees for the DuBois Award (Outstanding Midwest Toxicologist).

- iv. Three students that provided flash talks were awarded \$50 each for their participation in the activity, which was well-received.
- v. Posters were not presented because annual meeting was hosted on virtual platform, hence no poster awards were issued.

C. Other Educational Activities Conducted (e.g., webinars, in person meetings):

- i. Hosted a fall meeting virtually on October 16, 2020, from 10:00 AM–1:00 PM
 - a. There were 85 registrants, 26 of whom were postdocs, graduate students, or undergraduate students.
 - b. Topic: Application of Toxicology in Product Development and Health Policy (*with a “Careers in Toxicology” Workshop for Trainees*)
- ii. Presentations:
 - a. Robert V. House, PhD, Fellow ATS (Ology Consulting Services), “Vaccine Safety Testing in the Time of COVID”
 - b. Jahan Marcu, PhD (Editor in Chief at American Journal of Endocannabinoid Medicine, Partner, Marcu & Arora), “*Cannabidiol (CBD) Tales: A Saga of Pharmacology, Safety, and Regulatory Reviews*”
 - c. Terry Leyden (The Leyden Group), “Overview of Toxicology Career Opportunities, Skills Requirements, and Job Search Strategies”
 - d. Laura Andrews PhD, DABT, Fellow ATS (AbbVie, Inc.), “Managing Your Career; The Who, What, Where and How of Finding Success in Toxicology”
 - e. Career outreach events associated with this meeting included a panel discussion about toxicology employment opportunities in industry, academia, and government.
- iii. Hosted annual spring Meeting virtually on May 14, 2021, from 9:00 AM–12:00 PM
 - a. There were 40 attendees who participated.
 - b. Topic: Contemporary Topics in Toxicology
- iv. Presentations:
 - a. Morgan Walcheck, BS (University of Wisconsin-Madison), “The Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor as a Putative Tumor Suppressor in Pancreatic Cancer Development” [2019 MRC/SOT Young Investigator Award Presentation]
 - b. Andressa Gonsioroski, DVM, MS (University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign), “*Iodoacetic Acid Affects Estrous Cycling, Ovarian Gene Expression, and Hormone Levels in Mice*” [2021 MRC/SOT Travel Award Presentation]
 - c. Kimberly A. Hoppe Parr, PhD (GZA Geo Environmental, Inc), “PFAS Toxicity Update – Congeners, Mixtures and Regulations”
 - d. Deepak Modi, PhD, FNASC (National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health (ICMR), India), “Placenta, Pregnancy and COVID-19: Risk of Mother-to-Child Transmission”
 - e. Career outreach events associated with this meeting included flash talks (3 students talk lasting no longer than 3 minutes).

D. Communication Activities:

1. Newsletter publication frequency: twice annually (coincides with MRC/SOT Fall and Spring meetings)
2. New or Significant Announcements/blogs: Ad hoc emails are sent to membership to remind of upcoming meeting dates, solicit nominations and applications for Chapter awards, and to encourage participation by the membership in chapter activities (e.g., running for vacant executive committee offices).
3. Highlight of Website enhancements: the MRC/SOT website is updated as necessary

E. Mentoring activities:

- a. Career outreach events: see Fall and Spring meeting description as examples.
- b. Trainee participation in Fall and Spring meeting presentation activities was emphasized as described above.

F. Activities supporting undergraduate students:

- a. Career outreach events: see Fall and Spring meeting description as examples.
- b. The MRC/SOT submitted one nomination for the 2021 SOT RC4 Undergraduate Merit Award: Kathy De La Torre (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), however our candidate was not selected for the award. She received the SOT Undergraduate Research Award.

V. Feedback and Ideas:

A. In what ways is your group fostering and maintaining an inclusive environment?

We plan to foster more student participation for MRC/SOT by proposing to waive their membership dues. We also plan to host a career building workshop where we will be organizing talks on diversity and inclusion along with talks about opportunities for underrepresented population.

B. How might SOT better support your group's activities (perhaps something the Society should be doing that we currently do not do, or do not do effectively, that would be of importance/benefit to the members of your component group?):

Recommend improving the accessibility of the membership directory to facilitate networking. It would be advantageous to be able to network with other Midwest area toxicologists who may be National SOT members but have chosen not to join the MRC/SOT.

C. What is one thing that the Society is currently doing that impacts your component group that should be changed (e.g., stopped, modified, etc.)?

No changes suggested.

D. What changes do your component group anticipate making in the way in which it operates in the coming year?

We are aspiring to include more student participation in Chapter meetings by modifying their format. The MRC/SOT is considering inclusion of 5-10 minute "flash talks" by students to showcase their research efforts and how they relate to contemporary toxicology issues. The student flash talks would supplement traditional, formal presentations by subject matter experts in areas related to the students' research projects.