Out Toxicologists and Allies Special Interest Group

ANNUAL REPORT: 2021-2022
May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022

I. Officers/Committees:

Officers 2021-2022  2022-2023
President: Daniella Pizzurro  Samantha Snow
Vice President: Samantha Snow  Troy Roepke
Vice President-Elect: Troy Roepke  Jessica Plavicki
Secretary-Treasurer: Sarah Lacher  Sarah Lacher
Past President: Martin Phillips  Daniella Pizzurro
Councilors: Tyler Nicholas  Phillip Wages
Phillip Wages  Tom Lewandowski
Postdoctoral Representative: Not filled  Elvis Ticiani
Graduate Student Representative: Megumi Matsushita  Joanna Woo

Committees:

- Programming
- Nominating

II. 2021 Membership total: 87

III. Key Outcomes in 2021-2022:

- Held 10 virtual meetings among the OTA SIG officers.
- Planned and held OTA’s first in-person member reception during the 2022 Annual Meeting in San Diego.
  - Approximately 80-90 people attended this event.
- Created and awarded a Postdoctoral Achievement Award to a postdoctoral OTA member (Dr. Lauren Walker, Rutgers University).
  - The Nominating committee solicited and reviewed 4 applications for this award.
- Established a template and process for generating and disseminating a bi-annual newsletter to membership, led by the Programming Committee.
  - Two issues of the newsletter (Fall 2021 and Spring 2022) were sent to OTA membership.
- Defined and outlined roles & responsibilities for each officer as well as responsibilities of the Programming and Nominating Committees with respect to leading activities and efforts throughout the year.
IV. Activities:

A. 2022 SOT Annual Meeting Reception (First in-person event) – Sunday, March 27, 2022

B. 2022 Awards Information: Postdoctoral Achievement Award awarded to Dr. Lauren Walker (Rutgers University)

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

D. Communication Activities:
   1. Newsletter publication frequency: Spring and Fall (Bi-annual)
   2. Key Announcements/blogs: Awards solicitation (Summer/Fall) and announcement of upcoming events/reception (prior to SOT Annual meeting)
   3. Website highlights: Added photos from the Annual Meeting Reception

E. Mentoring activities:
   ● No formal mentoring activities in 2021-2022. However, several OTA Council members noted that one-on-one mentor conversations originated at the 2022 Annual Meeting as a direct result of the in-person reception and OTA’s presence as a new SIG within the SOT.
   ● Future plans regarding mentoring are to a) create a Mentoring Award to acknowledge those that actively mentor and foster development of LGBT+ toxicologists and b) consider and plan mentoring events for the annual SOT meeting and/or throughout the year outside of the meeting.

V. Feedback and Ideas:

   ○ A. 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?):
     Note: If funding is listed, please provide detail on the membership need that the funding would support.

     ● In 2020, OTA submitted recommendations for updated language pertaining to gender identity and inclusiveness for incorporation in all SOT materials, including SOT bylaws, website, SOT membership, and annual meeting registration materials. OTA recognizes that SOT accepted this proposal and incorporated gender neutral language into their bylaws. OTA would like SOT to continue to implement our recommendations into other SOT materials, including SOT membership and annual meeting registration forms. The OTA Council would be happy to disseminate again the accepted proposal and/or have a meeting to discuss this with the SOT Council as needed.

     ● Specifically for the upcoming 2023 Annual Meeting, OTA strongly would like to include the option to select pronouns during registration for the Annual Meeting name badges for all future meetings. A list of pronoun options was provided in the original proposal and can be re-issued to SOT Council.
B. What is one thing that the Society is currently doing that impacts your component group that should be changed (e.g., stopped, modified, etc.)?

- OTA appreciates the recent SOT President’s message acknowledging the challenges associated with the Annual Meeting host cities. OTA implores SOT to continue to scrutinize their choices for host cities, especially with regard to the current climate of abject danger to LGBT+ (and specifically to transgender) members in many States. To be clear, this goes beyond ‘bathroom bills’ and into the territory of laws passed that allow for the demonization and terrorization of trans, nonbinary, and queer individuals, dictating everything from participation in sports to stringent restrictions on health care and attacks on parents caring for their trans children. Hateful rhetoric around LGBT+ people presenting a danger to others and to children have resurfaced in full force at a national level, and certain States/communities are more encouraging of these behaviors than others and put the lives and safety of LGBT+ people at risk.

In efforts to keep ALL SOT members able to safely attend the Annual Meeting, we encourage more efforts to find host cities that are located in places with laws in place that protect LGBT+ individuals, especially women and people of color. In addition, having resources on hand regarding where LGBT+ attendees can turn to in the event of harassment, discrimination, or feeling unsafe would be beneficial.

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

- OTA is aiming to build on the momentum it generated in the 2021-2022 year by being more involved in sponsoring sessions and continuing to create new (or collaborate on existing) mentoring opportunities within the SOT.
- One of the OTA representatives (Daniella Pizzurro) on the SIG-Collaboration Group (SIG-CG) is spearheading and chairing a session at the 2023 SOT Annual Meeting on bystander training and how to be an ally in the field of toxicology. One panelist on the panel for this session will be from OTA membership, and OTA was a primary endorser of this session.