



Message from the President

Last fall I explained what AACT Executive Board planned to implement to better serve the needs of our members and to support the community of Chinese toxicologists. Our discussions were guided by the results from the AACT membership survey, which indicated that enhancing career development opportunities, networking, and supporting the Chinese toxicologist community are important issues for our members.

One of the initiatives the Board undertook this term was to nominate outstanding toxicologists of Chinese origin for the major SOT Awards, with the goal of enhancing the recognition of toxicologists of Chinese origin within the Society of Toxicology. This initiative was enthusiastically supported by our members, as evidenced by the number of nominations we received, as well as the number of volunteers to serve on the AACT Award Nomination Committee. Committee members worked with three candidates to



prepare nomination packages. This year AACT nominated strong candidates for the *Distinguished Toxicology Scholar Award*, the *Achievement Award*, and the *Leading Edge in Basic Science Award*. One of our candidates, **Dr. Shuk-Mei Ho**, Vice Chancellor for Research at University of Arkansas for Medical Science (UAMS) won the *Distinguished Toxicology Scholar Award*! Heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Ho for winning such a prestigious SOT award. Please see an introduction of Dr. Ho in this newsletter. Dr. Ho will receive the award at the SOT Award Ceremony on March 15th (Sunday) in Anaheim, CA. Her award lecture on “Endocrine Disruption, Epigenetics, and Developmental Basis of Disease-Looking Back as We Look Forward” will be held on March 17th at 11:00 am-12:00 pm in the Convention Center Ballroom E. Please attend both events to congratulate Dr. Ho, and to listen to her lecture. Many thanks to the committee members: Drs. **Xuefei Cao, Zhenquan Jia, Xiaoqing Guo, Wei Wu, Xuegeng Wang, Yongbin Zhang and Sophie Jia**. Moving forward, the Board would like to encourage all toxicologists of Chinese origin to be more diligent and proactive in recognizing your or your colleagues’ excellent accomplishments!

To enhance career development opportunities: Based on the AACT survey and job-seeking experiences shared by our Student Representative, Dr. **Yuwei Chang**, the Board examined how to strengthen network opportunities and promote career development beyond our once a year career workshop during the SOT meeting. The Board decided to facilitate a long-term mentor-mentee relationship within AACT. The first step is to create a “mentor pool”. The second step is to facilitate mentee matches. Once a mentor and a mentee are matched, it will be up to the mentors and mentees to maintain communications and mentoring relationships. We hope this activity will help AACT students,

postdocs and junior scientists with their professional growth. After a “call for AACT mentors” was distributed, thirteen AACT members from academia, industry and government have signed up as mentors: **Zemin Wang, Lu Cai, Zhoumeng Lin, Sheung P Ng, Charlene Chen, Tao Wang, Weimin Chen, Zhibin Wang, Lei Yin, Yuzhao Zhou and Yong Pu, Hanna Hongchin Ng and Frances K Hsia**. This information is being shared with postdocs and students for mentee matching. We always need good mentors. If you would like to sign up to be a mentor, here is the link: <https://toxchange.toxicology.org/p/su/rd/survey=3c51f5de-4f48-11ea-9fef-bc764e101892>

To increase networking opportunities among AACT members: The AACT membership survey indicated that our members most value the networking opportunities provided by our special interest group. The Board considered several approaches to enhance the member networking activities outside the SOT annual meeting, and one of the networking approaches we developed was to facilitate regional get-together events with the goal to expand opportunities for increased local contacts among AACT members. SOT headquarters created Regional Membership Forums in ToXchange for AACT members in the following areas based on the number of AACT members in the regions:

- AACT Members - Shanghai, China
- AACT Members - Jefferson, AR
- AACT Members - San Francisco, CA Bay Area
- AACT Members - DC Metro Area
- AACT Members - Research Triangle Park, NC
- AACT Members – New York City
- AACT Members – New Jersey

To subscribe to one or more of these groups in ToXchange: Complete the following steps (you will be able to see how many members in your regions have signed up, and you can message them for a “get-together” event once you have completed the sign-up):

- Select the “My Options” drop down from the top right-hand side of your screen.
- Select “My Subscriptions”
- Select the plus sign on the left-hand side of your screen
- Select “Special Interest Groups” from the “Category” drop down menu
- Select which group you would like to subscribe to from the “Select Topic” drop down menu

Scientific webinars: The Board is also planning two webinars this spring. The first webinar already occurred and was entitled “Immunotoxicology: History and Current Advancements”. We were lucky to have Dr. **Kenneth L. Hastings**, PhD, DABT, ATS as our guest speaker. The webinar was well received by AACT members and other SOT members with 329 attendees. This webinar was recorded and will be posted on AACT website. Our second webinar will focus on safety of food from genetically modified plants. This webinar will be held in April 2020, and our guest speaker is Dr. **Jian-Mei Zhu** from the US FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Again, we are lucky to have identified a great speaker for this webinar.

Lastly, it has truly been an honor and a pleasure to serve as the AACT President for 2019-2020. It has been especially rewarding to work with a group of such energetic and talented Board officers. Please join me in heart-felt recognizing these exceptional individuals: Drs. **Sherwin Yan** (Immediate Past President, led AACT election, advices to the Board), **Yongbin Zhang** (President-Elect, worked on AACT award nominations, fundraising, building regional networks, etc.), **Li Zhan** (Secretary, led AACT Award Committee, logistics for AACT business meeting/reception, and AACT Career Workshop), **Cleo Leung**

(Councilor/Treasurer, led fundraising, worked on building mentor-mentee pool), **Weimin Chen** (Councilor, led building long-term mentorship, implemented webinars, fundraising), **Sophie Jia** (Treasurer/Councilor, led AACT delegation to attend Chinese SOT conference and workshop at ShanXi Medical University, AACT webinar, fundraising), **Zhen Ren** (Postdoctoral Rep, AACT newsletter, worked on building regional network) and **Yu-Wei Chang** (Student Rep, AACT poster, building mentor-mentee pool). And let me please thank and recognize to all the amazing volunteers our great AACT has! As you can see, the success of all these activities were the result of collaborative efforts among all the Board officers and our volunteers.

Tao Wang, MD, PhD, DABT

AACT President, 2019-2020



Yongbin Zhang Sherwin Yan Cleo Leung Li Zhan Weimin Chen Sophie Jia Zhen Ren Yu-Wei Chang



Mark Your Calendar for AACT Events at the Annual SOT Meeting

- **AACT Distinguished Chinese Toxicologist Lecture, Business Meeting and Reception**

Date: Monday, March 16

Time: 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Location: Anaheim Marriott, Marquis Ballroom South

- **AACT Career Development Workshop**

Date: Tuesday, March 17

Time: 12:15 PM – 2:00 PM

Location: Anaheim Marriott, Orange County Ballroom 3-4



DISTINGUISHED TOXICOLOGY SCHOLAR AWARD

Shuk-mei Ho, PhD

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Little Rock, AR

AACT is pleased to announce that Dr. Ho has won 2020 SOT Distinguished Toxicology Scholar Award for her pivotal work elucidating the role of endocrine disruptors in disease and on the developmental origins of adult disease. Dr. Ho will receive the award at the SOT Award Ceremony on March 15th in Anaheim, CA. Her award lecture on “*Endocrine Disruption, Epigenetics, and Developmental Basis of Disease-Looking Back as We Look Forward*” will be held on March 17th at 11am in the Convention Center Ballroom E. Please attend both events to congratulate Dr. Ho, and to listen to her lecture.



Dr. Ho received her PhD in zoology from the University of Hong Kong in 1978. Her illustrious career in academia began as a Research Associate and later Visiting Assistant Professor at Boston University, after which she spent nearly two decades at Tufts University, where she eventually became Associate Dean for Research of the School of Graduate Studies and Continued Education. During her next appointment, at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and Memorial Health Care System, she published 50 papers in seven years, completing her tenure as Vice-Chair for Research within the Department of Surgery. Dr. Ho then held positions at the University of Cincinnati, including Director of the Cincinnati Cancer Center, Director of the Center for Environmental Genetics, and Associate Dean for Basic Research in the University of Cincinnati Medical Center.

In her current position as Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Dr. Ho oversees strategic planning and administration of research portfolios in six colleges and seven institutes at the main campus in Little Rock, Arkansas; the Northwestern Arkansas campus; and across eight regional medical campuses in Arkansas.

Dr. Ho is a leader in developmental and reproductive toxicology. Her research relating early exposure to bisphenol A to increased cancer risk later in life bolstered the ban against the use of bisphenol A in products for babies and children. Dr. Ho demonstrated that epigenetics plays a major role in gene-environment interactions and disease etiology, and she contributed significantly to the idea that there were windows of susceptibility in toxicant-induced diseases. Dr. Ho's findings opened the possibility of using biomarkers of early-life exposure to predict and prevent environmental diseases later in life.

Dr. Ho's massive publication record is a testament to her distinction in the field. Her more than 240 articles have been cited 17,500 times, resulting in an h-index of 69 and contributing to the furtherance of environmental epigenetics and the understanding of developmental origins of adult health and disease. Further, through her commitment to instruction and training, Dr. Ho has garnered over \$50 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and her work has been continuously supported by the NIH for more than 30 years. She has trained more than 80 pre- and postdoctoral fellows, clinical researchers, junior faculty, and international visiting scholars in her laboratory. Dr. Ho has been a SOT member since 2008.

Congratulations to 2020 AACT Award Recipients!



Distinguished Chinese Toxicologist

Lu Cai, MD, PhD

*Professor, Director of Pediatric Research Institute,
University of Louisville School of Medicine*

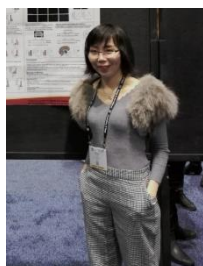


Jean Lu Student Scholarship Award

Liang Chi

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

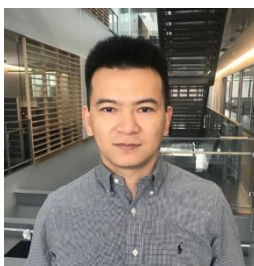
AACT-InnoStar Best Abstracts Award Winners



1st Place

Minhong Huang

Iowa State University



2nd Place

Yong Pu, PhD

Michigan State University



3rd Place

Zunwei Chen

Texas A&M University

Many thanks to AACT Award Committee members: Li Zhan (AACT Secretary and Committee Chair), Gao Dong, PhD, DABT, Pfizer, Tong Zhou, PhD, DABT, FDA, Huaizhong Hu, MD, PhD, DABT, Konruns Pharmaceutical, Yongbin (Robin) Zhang, DVM, PhD, FDA, Weimin Chen, PhD, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Yi Tan, PhD, University of Louisville

Immunotoxicology: History and Current Advancements

Webinar by **Kenneth L. Hastings, DrPH, DABT, ATS,**

Hastings Toxicology Consulting LLC

AACT hosted its first webinar in 2020 on February 25th at 2:00 PM EST with guest speaker Kenneth L. Hastings, PhD, DABT, ATS. The webinar was very well received with over 320 attendees.

Dr. Hastings' talk gave us a broad picture of the development and current understanding of immunotoxicology. Immunotoxicology research and testing have evolved from early studies of anaphylaxis to the robust and diverse field of immunotoxicology as we know it today. Early studies connecting immune dysfunction with exposure to exogenous agents focused on adverse reactions to vaccines, industrial chemicals, and ionizing radiation. Over time, immunologists described the fundamental mechanisms of immunogenic agents as well as understanding the concept of immunosuppression. In his talk, Dr. Hastings gave in-depth review of examples, testing methods, and mechanisms for each type of adverse immunological response, including immunosuppression, immunogenicity, drug allergy, xenobiotic-induced immunopathy, and adverse immunostimulation. Dr. Hastings finished his talk with a brief discussion of US FDA's new guidance on nonclinical safety evaluation of the immunotoxic potential of drugs and biologics.



Speaker Biography: Dr. Hastings is a well-achieved toxicologist. He worked at the FDA in various positions: pharmacology/toxicology reviewer in the Division of Anti-viral Drug Products (1991–1997), pharmacology/toxicology supervisor in the Division of Special Pathogen and Immunologic Drug Products (1997–2003), and as an Associate Director in the Office of New Drugs (2003–2007). While at the FDA Dr. Hastings served on numerous committees and working groups, including lead representative for CDER/FDA on the ICCVAM validation of the murine local lymph node assay and as lead negotiator on ICH S8 (Immunotoxicity Studies for Human Pharmaceuticals). From 2007–2014 Dr. Hastings was Associate Vice President for Regulatory Policy, Sanofi US. Dr. Hastings has served in many professional societies (President, SOT-Immunotoxicology SS; President, SOT Regulatory and Safety Evaluation SS; President, American College of Toxicology). Dr. Hastings also served as President of the American Board of Toxicology. Dr. Hastings is currently an independent consultant specializing in toxicology studies in drug development.

Stay tuned for the next webinar:

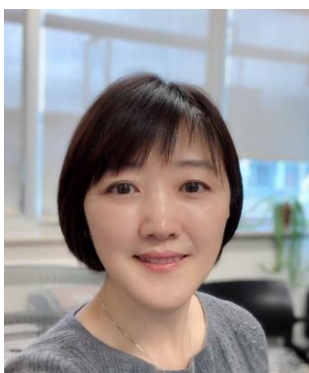
Safety of Food from Genetically Modified Food by Dr. Jian-Mei Zhu, FDA/CFSAN, April 2020.



2020 AACT New Officers



President-Elect
Nan Mei, FDA



Councilor
Xiaoqing Guo, FDA



Councilor
Quanshun Zhang, IIVS



Postdoc Representative
Hao Chen, EPA



Student Representative
Zunwei Chen, Texas A&M

Appreciation to Our Leaving AACT Board Members

Past President: Sherwin Yan

Treasurer: Sophie Jia

Secretary: Li Zhan

Postdoc Representative: Zhen Ren

Student Representative: Yu-wei Chang

Thanks to AACT Sponsors



AACT newsletter is currently maintained by Dr. Zhen Ren and Dr. Yu-wei Chang. If you have materials or information to share with us, please contact with either of them via zhen929@gmail.com or yuweiywc@gmail.com

