



EDITORS: MAMTA BEHL, SHIRISHA CHITTIBOYINA, SARYU GOEL, & SHEETAL THAKUR

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear ASIO members:

Time flies when we are busy having fun! The next Annual SOT National Meeting at San Francisco is coming up soon (March 11-15). We are working hard as an organization in planning our evening reception. Like last year, we will be awarding and recognizing several students, post-docs as well our prominent senior scientists and sponsors. The reception will be on Monday, March 12 from 7:00 -9:00 pm at the Golden Gate Ballroom Salon C3 (Marriott Marquis) and will include a light meal. On behalf of ASIO, I would like to take this opportunity to personally invite you to the reception. Please go through this newsletter for detailed information regarding the reception as well as the Student/Post-Doc Mentoring Program popularly known as Lunch n Learn which will be held on Tuesday, March 13 from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM at the Foothills G conference room in the Marriott Marquis.

I am proud to highlight some of our key achievements this year. We finalized the ASIO by-laws which allowed us to incorporate the provision whereby anyone can join ASIO without becoming an SOT member by paying just a \$ 15 annual membership fee. So please encourage everyone you know, both SOT and non-SOT members, to renew or join

ASIO. We have been actively reaching out to our current and new ASIO SOT members to re-new or join ASIO. We have also revised a list of all of our awards and included a new award, named "ASIO Young Investigator Award" to recognize a scientist of Indian origin engaged in competitive research. Don't forget to visit our updated webpage for details on all our activities. On the collaborative front, we have now formed a task force with STOX (Society of Toxicology in India) and had preliminary discussions regarding areas where we can develop this collaboration to mutually benefit scientists of both organizations in India as well as USA. A special mention to our sponsors and a big thank you for their invaluable support—**IIBAT, Advinus, Vanta, Syngene, Vivo Bio, INTOX and CiTox**

Finally, I would like to thank all our dynamic and hard working volunteers within ASIO. The committees are – Membership, Newsletter, Annual Reception, Sponsorship, Awards, Website, STOX Collaboration and Mentoring Program. Again, I encourage all of you to become ASIO members or renew your membership right away and volunteer in the committees. Please contact anyone on the current board of directors listed in this newsletter for more information.

While we try to do the best we can, we

# ASIO NEWSLETTER

February 2012



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know there is always room for improvement. Please send us your feedback and constructive suggestions to me at [vsrinivasan@rd.us.lore.com](mailto:vsrinivasan@rd.us.lore.com) or to any of the BODs you know. Looking forward to seeing all of you in San Francisco.



Best regards,  
Vinayak Srinivasan, President

## ASIO OFFICERS 2011-2012

**President: Vinayak Srinivasan**  
[vsrinivasan@rd.us.loreale.com](mailto:vsrinivasan@rd.us.loreale.com)

**President-Elect: Saryu Goel**  
[saryu.goel@gmail.com](mailto:saryu.goel@gmail.com)

**Vice President-Elect: Sateesh S. Anand**  
[Satheesh.S.Anand@usa.dupont.com](mailto:Satheesh.S.Anand@usa.dupont.com)

**Past President: Binu K. Philip**  
[binu.philip@bms.com](mailto:binu.philip@bms.com)

**Secretary/Treasurer: Sachin S. Devi**  
[sdevi@lecom.edu](mailto:sdevi@lecom.edu)

**Chair, Newsletter Committee: Mamta Behl**  
[mamta.behl@gmail.com](mailto:mamta.behl@gmail.com)

### Councilors

**Anumantha Kanthaswamy**  
[akanthas@iastate.edu](mailto:akanthas@iastate.edu)

**Vikrant Vijay**  
[vikrantvijay.tox@gmail.com](mailto:vikrantvijay.tox@gmail.com)

**Sudheer Beedanagari**  
[sbeedangari@lexpharma.com](mailto:sbeedangari@lexpharma.com)

**Beby Jayaram**  
[jayaram1@niehs.nih.gov](mailto:jayaram1@niehs.nih.gov)

**Postdoctoral Representative**  
**Sheetal A. Thakur**  
[thakursa@mail.nih.gov](mailto:thakursa@mail.nih.gov)

**Graduate Student Representative**  
**Sandeep Sreevalsan**  
[ssreevalsan@cvm.tamu](mailto:ssreevalsan@cvm.tamu)

## ASIO ACTIVITIES AT SOT 2012

### ASIO ANNUAL RECEPTION

**When:** March 12, 2012 7:00PM to 9:00PM

**Where:** Golden Gate Ballroom Salon C3 (Marriott Marquis)

Join us for an evening filled with announcements of numerous ASIO sponsored awards, networking, entertainment and sponsor recognition.

### LUNCH N LEARN (LNL)

**When:** Tuesday, March 13, 2012 12:00PM TO 1:30PM

**Where:** Foothills G conference room in the Marriott Marquis.

**Experts:** Dr. Harihara Mehendale ; Others: TBD

For our registered guests ASIO-LNL 2012 program committee invites students and post-docs of Indian origin at different stages of their careers to attend this program and bring along a diverse and challenging set of questions to our highly qualified and carefully selected speakers from different areas of Toxicology. We are sure that this unique opportunity to interact on a personal level with experts in the field will be an exciting and enriching experience and good networking opportunity for all the participants.

Due to an overwhelming response, RSVPs are closed at this time.

If you would like to learn more about the LNL program, please feel free to drop an e-mail to Vikrant Vijay at

[vikrantvijay.tox@gmail.com](mailto:vikrantvijay.tox@gmail.com).

**COFFEE HOUR:** Don't miss ASIO –SOT2012 exclusive event of coffee hour with an expert. **Stay tuned for details at the ASIO 2012 Annual reception**

**Go ahead and sign up for coffee hour as a mentor or mentee at SOT by sending an email to our coffee hour coordinator Roshni Rao. Email: [roshialive@gmail.com](mailto:roshialive@gmail.com)"**



**\*\*RSVP by February 27, 2012 5pm EST\*\***

## POSTDOCTORAL REPRESENTATIVE



**Sheetal Thakur, Ph.D.**  
 Division of National Toxicology  
 Program, National Institute of Health  
 Sciences, NIH

### Student/Postdoctoral Corner

I am pleased and honored to begin my term as the postdoctoral representative of our special interest group. Over the past few months in interaction with our board of directors, I have been constantly amazed and inspired by the dedication and commitment of our peers. Everyone brings their best to the table and is always willing to provide guidance and encouragement to beginners in toxicology.

The SOT 2012 annual meeting is fast approaching and I hope you all can attend and reconnect with all your ASIO peers, mentors and colleagues. We have some truly exciting things happening. For example the **Student/Postdoc Mentoring program(LNL), Coffee with an expert and the Annual ASIO reception** (details on Page 2). All these events provide a great platform for connecting, and networking with toxicology experts who have faced similar challenges and whom we can learn from as we advance in our own careers. Also, stay tuned for the new section we have just added to our newsletter on **short interviews of accomplished toxicologists..**

I am excited to represent all of you and look forward to the inputs and suggestions on how to make the SOT meeting and ASIO gatherings more valuable for all of us!

## WORDS OF WISDOM FROM BINU PHILIP

by Sheetal Thakur

**As an Indian having your degree from India and moving to the US, what is one of the major challenges you faced in your early career and how did you overcome them.**

It was as if I was back to square one. The learning curve was steep. Luckily I had a good mentor who walked me through those initial struggling days.

**What do you believe are the three most important attributes, which may help Indian students, especially as immigrants get an edge over their peers?**

Motivation, focus and patience. All three are interconnected. You will be wasting your time and energy without motivation. Focus is important in helping you maintain your motivation. Always be focused and work with a target every year. If you are properly motivated, then patience is not hard to come by. I would say that the one thing most Indian students lack is patience. They often get frustrated with the lack of support and success. But if you have good perseverance then things would happen. Rome was not built in a day.

**List some activities, which helped you transition from a post-doc to your current position**

I was actively involved in various committees right from my graduation days. This helped me to develop management and people skills. I looked at national meetings as an opportunity to network. Before each meeting, I made a list of people I wanted to meet and made sure that I found time to connect with them thereby improving my network. Also, I worked on my communication and writing skills which are very critical for an industrial job.



**What was the most challenging part of your interview for the industry position and how did you overcome it?**

Industrial interviews are different from academics in that the questions are more behavioral. My first job interview did not go well as expected. So I came back and did an introspective analysis to find out what went wrong. I needed to come up with real answers and not the readymade ones that I got from books and the internet. Regardless of what the question was, the answer was simple. "Select me" because I am your best choice. Before the next interview I read the job description at least 20 times. I came up with real life incidents that demonstrated the qualities needed for the job I was interviewing. I talked to all my friends working in industry and got different perspectives. I researched a lot about the company. I browsed through LinkedIn and got information about all the people in my interview panel. The most challenging part was to stay focused and active during a daylong interview. So, I prepared myself mentally for that challenge.

**If you were to go back in time, is there anything you would do differently as a graduate student or a postdoctoral fellow that would help better adjust to the corporate culture.**

I would be more organized and make quick decisions. I would talk less, listen more, and ask more questions. I would meet challenges with more enthusiasm and will try to think outside the box.

## BUDDING STARS

**What is the nature of the project for which you won the travel award? How do the findings contribute to the field of toxicology?**

With obesity in the United States exceeding 30%, it remains to be seen whether the underlying low inflammatory condition potentiates the development of liver toxicity of disinfection byproducts of drinking water (DBP). My work that is funded by the NIH pathway to independence award (K99/R00) (PI: Saurabh Chatterjee) focuses on bromodichloromethane a DBP, that is non toxic at lower doses to normal lean mice, but exacerbates the development of nonalcoholic steatohepatitis in obese mice. The mechanism involves free radical metabolism of the DBPs and its role in triggering the innate immune mediators.

**Please describe one of the challenges in your career as an immigrant and how you overcame/are working on overcoming it...**

Having done my Ph.D. from India, it is always a challenge to do future research in world class institutes in the United States. I relied heavily on my peer reviewed publications from my Ph.D. thesis especially (6 first author papers) to compete for postdoctoral positions. Finally I applied the same parameters for my success in the postdoctoral research and together with innovative ideas and putting my work in print mattered a lot.



**Please provide a brief advice to fellow ASIO toxicologists based on your experiences.**

I believe quality and quantity of first authored papers, following your peers in ASIO, establishing working collaborations within the field of research and presenting your research in scientific forums helped me establish myself as a successful (if you call it) postdoctoral scientist.

### SAURABH CHATTERJEE, PH.D.

Postdoctoral Visiting Fellow  
Laboratory of Toxicology &  
Pharmacology

National Institute of Environmental  
Health Sciences, NIH, RTP, NC

**What is the nature of the project for which you won the travel award? How do the findings contribute to the field of toxicology? (2-3 lines)**

I am working on a organochlorine pesticide methoxychlor and its effects on the mouse ovary. Methoxychlor has diverse effects on reproductive tissues, which ultimately leads to decreased fertility in animal models. My study will increase our understanding of the mechanisms by which endocrine disruption adversely affects ovarian function through multiple pathways. This improved understanding may lead to the development of novel ligands for different receptors which may be used

to treat infertility or may be used as contraceptive agents.

**Please describe one of the challenges in your career as an immigrant and how you overcame/are working on overcoming it...**

It was very challenging to adjust to the new culture when arrived in the US for the first time. It almost took 1-2 years to understand it. There are many positives and negatives. I always preferred to focus on the positives in the culture. It definitely improved my planning and



time management, inter personnel skills, and language skills.

**Briefly, what are the lessons learned from the challenges you faced? Or a brief advice to fellow ASIO toxicologists based on your experiences.**

I suggest that my fellow friends look at any culture with the right attitude and assimilate the good things.

### BASVARAJAPPA MALLIKARJUNA, PH.D.

Postdoctoral Research Associate  
Comparative Biosciences

University of Illinois at Urbana-  
Champaign, IL

## ASIO CONTRIBUTION AT SOT 2012

### CHAIRPERSONS AND PRESENTERS - SOT 2012

#### Session: Continuing Education

Date	Time	Location	Title	Chair persons
Sunday, March 11, 2012	8:15am - 12:00pm	CE room(Moscone Convention center)	Applications of Biomarkers in the Assessment of Health and Disease	Vishal S. Vaidya
Sunday, March 11, 2012	8:15am - 12:00pm	CE room(Moscone Convention center)	Frontiers and Applications in Predictive Toxicology: In Silico Methods for Risk Assessment, Toxicology, and Metabolism	Sneha Bhatia
Sunday, March 11, 2012	1:15pm- 5:00pm	Room 104 (Convention center)	MicroRNAs in Biology and Toxicology	Neelakanteswar Aluru

#### Session: Workshop

Date	Time	Location	Title	Chair persons
Monday, March 12, 2012	9:15 AM - 12:00 PM	Room 305 (Convention Center)	Alternative Approaches to the Safety Assessment of Natural Ingredients and Extracts in Cosmetics	Vinayak Srinivasan
Tuesday, March 13, 2012	9:00 AM - 11:45 AM	Room 307 (Convention Center)	State of the Science and the Future for the Predictive Power of In Vitro and In Vivo Models for Nanomaterials Toxicity Testing	Srikanth Nadadur
Tuesday, March 13, 2012	1:30 PM - 4:15 PM	Room 305 (Convention Center)	Novel Topics in Environmental Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon Metabolism Leading to Carcinogenesis	Bhagavatula Moorthy
Thursday, March 15, 2012	9:00 AM - 11:45 AM	Room 307 (Convention Center)	Chemical Standardization of Botanical Medicines for Safe and Effective Use as Therapeutic Agents	Brinda Mahadevan & Madhu Soni

## MEMBERSHIP ENCOURAGEMENT

Become an ASIO member.

**Why? :** Member Benefits

- First SIG membership is free for Students and Postdocs. Also, you need not be an SOT member to be an ASIO member.
- Networking and mentoring opportunities with individuals who have had successful careers in the field of toxicology across academia, industry and government.
- Great opportunity to become aware of the accomplishments of fellow scientists of Indian origin and share your achievements.
- Volunteer and help in promoting the visibility of toxicologists of Indian origin.

**How? :** Online through the ASIO website

- <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/sig/asio/membership.asp>

**When? :** Today!!!

For further information, contact any of the committee members or visit our website

<http://www.toxicology.org/isot/sig/asio/index.asp>

**\*\*\*Members are eligible and encouraged to apply for all ASIO awards\*\*\***

## ASIO 2011 DIPLOMATES OF AMERICAN BOARD OF TOXICOLOGY

**Congratulations!!!** to Diplomates for their hard work and tremendous achievement.

Overall, 132 candidates passed DABT exam worldwide in 2011.

Of this 29 (22%) were of Indian origin.

We are also proud of the high number (14) of certifications from India.

Name of the Diplomate	Country	Company/Institute
Varun Ahuja	India	Lupin Ltd,Pune
Nandita S. Batra	_____	_____
Sowmya Bharath	India	Astra Zeneca India Pvt. Ltd
Madhavi Billam	USA	Coty
Santhosh K. Bommegowda	USA	Xenometrics
Rajesh Eswarappa	India	Rodent Tox
Vinod Kumar Goyal	India	Suven Life Sciences India Ltd
Mausumee Guha	USA	Bristol-Meyers Squibb
Avinash Jadhav	India	Syngene International Ltd.
Pramod S. Joshi	USA	Covance Laboratories
P. Kamalavenkatesh	India	Biocon Bristol-Meyers Squibb R&D Center
R. Madheswaran	India	Incozen Therapeutics Pvt. Ltd.
Vijay Kumar Matham		
Mayurranjan S. Mitra	USA	Bristol-Meyers Squibb
Sandeep Mukhi	USA	FMC Corporation
Sasikumar Muthusamy	India	Syngene International Ltd.
Prashant Nambiar	USA	Genzyme
Kalaiselvan P	India	Syngene International Ltd.
Santosh Kumar Pandey	India	Suven Life Sciences India Ltd
Niti N. Patel	USA	GlaxoSmithKline
Vishal Nanasahab Pavitrakar	India	Lupin Ltd,Pune
Binu K. Philip	USA	Bristol-Meyers Squibb
Ravisankar Rajarethinam	India	Syngene International Ltd.
S. Ramesh	India	Advinus Therapeutics
Asis K. Sarkar	USA	Human Genome Sciences
Raja S. Settivari	USA	Dow Chemical
Rohit Singhal	USA	Michigan State University
Asheesh K. Tiwary	USA	University of California, Davis
Sebastian V.J.	India	Aurigene Discovery Technologies

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**Become a sponsor:** Contact ASIO team to learn more about how your sponsorship can help strengthen and contribute to the continued growth and success of ASIO.

<http://www.toxicology.org/isot/sig/asio/index.asp>