

Minutes from Neurotoxicology Specialty Section Officer's Meeting Monday March 10, 2003

The annual business meeting was called to order at 7:00am on Monday, March 10, 2003 by the Neurotoxicology Specialty Section (NTSS) President, Kevin Crofton. In attendance were President Kevin Crofton, Past President Merle Paule, President-Elect Stephanie Padilla, Vice President Carey Pope, Councilors Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni and Susan Schantz, Secretary-Treasurer Mary Gilbert, and newly elected officers Lisa Opanashuk (Councilor) and Richard Seegal (Vice President Elect).

President Report - Crofton

The President welcomed the new officers, Lisa Opanashuk and Richard Seegal and thanked Councilor Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni for her service as her two year term will end in April. Evelyn's contribution to updating the Bylaws was recognized by the President.

The American Chemical Council (ACC) New Investigator Award has cycled back to the NTSS this year. An official announcement will be made at by Judy Graham at the NTSS Business Meeting/Reception on Tuesday, March 11 and instructions for qualification/application will be forthcoming. This award is worth **\$100,000 for 3 years**, NTSS sends three names forward and to the Award Committee of SOT. More information will be distributed to the membership as it is received.

The Distinguished Investigator Award for this year will be bestowed on Dr. Bernie Weiss for his long-standing contributions to the field of Neurotoxicology. It was suggested that a President's Ad Hoc committee be formed that may include, but not be limited to the NTSS officers, to identify potential nominees for this award.

Past President Report - Student Awards Poster Competition - Paule

The primary responsibility of the past president is to organize the Student/Post Doctoral Fellow Poster Presentation Competition. Merle Paule did a fabulous job in orchestrating this year's competition, from identifying judges, developing a format, arranging for checks and plaques, circulating abstracts in advance, and clearly articulating the role of candidates and judges. A letter was distributed to each candidate and judge and will likely be used as a template for future competitions. There are 15 student and 7 post-doctoral posters to be judged and the competition was scheduled for Tuesday, March 12.

A discussion ensued regarding first place winners in the Student Awards Competition. In the past, one individual has received first place two consecutive years. It was agreed by the officers that in the future an individual will be eligible for first place only once in their career as student or postdoctoral fellow. A person may compete as a student, and if they win first place they may not compete again in the student category. Likewise, having received first place in the postdoctoral category eliminates them from further competition in future years. Having won first place as a student, however, does not eliminate an individual from competing as a post doc.

A question arose as to whether we should limit the number of competitors for the Student Awards to members of the NTSS, or to students whose mentors are members of NTSS. It was decided that the competition should remain open to all attendees of the SOT meeting, but that students

be encouraged to join the NTSS. Mentors whose students routinely participate in this competition will also be encouraged to join the NTSS by the Past President. However, if the submitted posters increases above a manageable limit (and we are approaching that now), one way to limit is to require membership. This could in turn serve to increase NTSS membership.

Secretary-Treasurer Report - Gilbert

A copy of the Secretary-Treasurer's Report was circulated to the Officers by Mary Gilbert and is attached to the Minutes. The NTSS has a projected balance of \$5534.00. A significant portion of our budget funds the Student Awards at an annual cost of \$1900.00 plus the cost of the plaques. A few years ago, Monsanto, through Abbey Li, made a one-time contribution \$5000.00 to fund the first place 'Monsanto Award' winners (\$500.00 each for 1st place student and post doc) and we are currently in our third year of spending that money. Similar contributions would be welcomed by the Specialty Section and Officers are encouraged to identify/approach potential contributors. This year, there will also be additional income from meeting dividends in which the NTSS receives a percentage of every members registration fee who is in attendance at the meeting to compensate for the reduction in Specialty Section dues from \$25.00 to \$15.00.

A report on membership was delivered by the Secretary. We currently have 199 members, up from 180 last year. There is still considerable difficulty in obtaining a current membership list from SOT Headquarters and several members have experienced difficulty having their Specialty Section membership affiliation recognized by Headquarters and forwarded to the NTSS Secretary. It was suggested by Mary Gilbert that with online application for membership, a copy should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Specialty Section as the application/dues go forward to SOT Headquarters. The President will bring this suggestion forward to SOT Council at the President's Business Meeting.

Ad Hoc Membership Committee Report- Schantz, Tiffany-Castiglioni, Gilbert

Susan Schantz and Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni were charged last year with recovering lost NTSS members and recruiting new ones. A number of membership lists from prior years were compared and past members were identified. A list of benefits for membership was drafted that was to be circulated to the past members to encourage them to rejoin. It was also suggested at today's meeting that related societies such as INA, SFN, NBTS, and BTS be pulsed for potential members. Carey Pope suggested that an active process of inviting student and mentors from the Poster Competition participant list to join NTSS be considered a route of recruitment. This responsibility should fall to the Past-President. The President encouraged continued effort on this front and requested Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni continue as a member of this ad hoc committee despite completion of her term as Councilor. Evelyn agreed. The newest Council member, Lisa Opanashuk and Secretary-Treasurer, Mary Gilbert, also agreed to participate in this membership drive.

Election Results Report - Gilbert

The President thanks the members of the nominating committee for this year's election, Steve Gilbert, Nic Filopov and Bill Mundy for their selection of candidates. The President Elect, Stephanie Padilla is reminded to form a new nominating committee in early summer to elect a new Councilor, Secretary-Treasurer, and VP Elect.

Of 169 distributed ballots, a 42% return was received in the past election. It was suggested that

return rates be tracked over the years, as an official record currently does not exist. The Secretary polled the officers for input on ways to increase participation. None were identified at the meeting, but the Secretary agreed to encourage election participation at the NTSS Business Meeting on Tuesday, March 11.

Other Business

The President reminds the VP Elect, Stephanie Padilla, that her first duty as President is to encourage and collect Workshop, Symposia, and Continuing Education Proposals for next year's meeting. The deadline for submission of these proposals is April 30, 2003.

Merle Paule recognizes the Neurotoxicology Program Highlights prepared by the Secretary, Mary Gilbert, and distributed to the membership prior to the meeting and recommends that this practice continue.

Richard Seegal suggests that the NTSS consider a "Best NT Poster" at the meeting. Some discussion ensued on the merits and pragmatics of such an award. It was suggested that the Risk Assessment SS be consulted as they have incorporated such a practice which focuses primarily on submitted abstracts. Mary Gilbert agreed to query the Risk Assessment SS and report back to the officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20am.

Updates Since the Meeting

SOT Headquarters forwarded the current membership list on during the meeting. It appears that the Membership currently stands at 150 not the 199 listed on the Website. This observation only strengthens the need to pursue some of the suggestions outlined above in our Officer's meeting regarding membership tracking and recruitment.