President’s Message

Welcome to the RASS Newsletter! It is summer in New England as I’m writing this following a tough winter, so it’s great to see sun, new leaves, and flowers. SOT in San Diego was a wonderful break from winter, filled with more activities than any single person could possibly attend. As always it was a good time to meet up with old friends, hear current activities, and learn about new science. The RASS reception strove to provide such opportunities and we hope everyone enjoyed the chance to talk with colleagues and look at posters from the outstanding student and post-doctoral fellow award winners. Every year the awards for best risk assessment abstracts at the meeting, best publications advancing risk assessment science and applications, and recognizing trainees early in their careers are an important activity for the specialty section. This year’s efforts, facilitated by RASS officers, relied on the participation of over 30 RASS members. Hearty thanks are due to all those who assisted with the awards selections. As always, if you are interested in volunteering to participate in any RASS activities, contact any officer or our contact for the volunteer pool (see elsewhere in the newsletter).

RASS remains one of the largest specialty sections of the SOT with over 700 members and a highly active program throughout the year. The monthly webinars, organized by Annie Jarabek, generate substantial interest and participation among RASS members. Just of few of the timely topics over the past year were adverse outcome pathways (AOPs), systematic reviews for environmental chemicals, improving reproducibility in toxicology, and toxicology in breast cancer prevention.

Hugh A. Barton, RASS President

Table of Contents

Page 1: President’s Message
Page 2: New RASS Website
Page 3: RASS Reception at the 2016 Annual Meeting
Page 3: First Annual RASS/CRAD Mentor Luncheon
Page 3: 2015 RASS Award Winners
Page 5: RASS Webinar Series
Page 6: Member News
Page 7: RASS Financials
Page 7: Resources for RASS Members

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Newsletter Editor
Michael H. Lumpkin
mlumpkin@cteh.com
We look forward to another exciting year of webinars and your participation. The RASS webpage was recently updated. As always, if you have suggestions for how it can be of even greater utility for you, let us know.

One of the greatest strengths of RASS is the breadth of its membership reflecting the wide range of scientific disciplines within toxicology and the variety of career opportunities that exist in different industries, consulting, academia, non-governmental organizations, and local, state, and Federal Agencies. A RASS mentoring lunch was held at SOT to provide trainees with the opportunity to take advantage of interacting with RASS members engaged in this broad range of risk assessment activities. I am particularly aware of this variety having worked in the pharmaceutical industry for the past seven years following 20 years working in the environmental area in consulting and contract research organizations, academia (as adjunct faculty), and government. When I left US EPA, the acronym AOP barely existed, though there were MOA and BBDR among others. My favorite example of how miscommunications can occur just due to differences in background is the word, exposure. SOT as an organization is appropriately focused on the toxicological consequences of exposure where other societies address all the complexities of characterizing exposure. But, even that simple statement may mean two very different things to those working with pharmaceuticals, for whom exposure is internal concentrations, most commonly characterized by plasma concentrations and the science of pharmacokinetics, as compared to those working with chemicals in the environment for whom exposure refers to concentrations in environmental media and the myriad of pathways by which receptors may come into contact with them. Receptors? Here meaning organisms, humans in human health risk assessments, but to those trained in classical pharmacology not at all the macromolecule, usually protein, characterized by saturable specific binding to ligands. But receptors (i.e., potentially exposed organisms) and receptors (e.g., the Ah receptor, steroid hormone receptors) are hugely important to the fields of risk assessment and toxicology, so our challenge is to understand each other’s perspectives and even language to at least insure we are arguing about the same issue or better yet identifying a common path that moves us all forward.

Hugh A. Barton
President, Risk Assessment Specialty Section

New RASS Website

This year the RASS website was completely redesigned and is easier than ever to navigate. The website is an excellent resource for RASS members and toxicologists interested in joining RASS. The updated website provides greater access to the RASS officers and on-going activities; information on upcoming webinars will be posted and are also archived on the RASS webpage. If you have any suggestions or comments, please contact John Norman (john.p.norman@exxonmobil.com).

Check out the new RASS Website at: http://www.toxicology.org/groups/ss/RASS/index.asp
**RASS Reception at the 2015 SOT Annual Meeting**

Once again, the RASS reception at the annual meeting of SOT drew a terrific crowd. The 2015 reception at the San Diego Convention Center saw scientists in the risk assessment community coming together for a time of reunion of friends and colleagues, as well as introduction of new faces to the RASS. The RASS reception continues to be one of the best opportunities for networking at SOT’s annual meeting. New to this year’s reception was a running slide show of the results of a RASS member survey, designed to spark discussion among the attendees. As always, the RASS officers are looking for ways to make the next reception more engaging than the last. If you have an idea that you believe would improve future RASS receptions, please share it with any of the section’s officers.

**First Annual RASS/CRAD Mentor Luncheon**

The first ever RASS/CRAD Mentor Luncheon was held at the SOT annual meeting, and was a success! A group of risk assessment experts representing four different sectors of risk assessment (academia, industry, consulting, and government) were invited to participate in an open question and answer session with RASS graduate students and post docs. The event sparked good discussion between the mentees and the mentors on programs, academic courses, and assistantships that are available with a focus in risk assessment. Plenty of positive feedback was received from attendees and the participating experts. RASS and CRAD are planning to hold this event at the 2016 SOT annual meeting in New Orleans. If you have any ideas for this event, please e-mail the graduate student representative Allison Lowe (aftranzen@environcorp.com).

**2015 RASS Award Winners**

**Best Published Paper in 2014 Demonstrating an Application of Risk Assessment**

Best Published Papers in 2014
Advancing the Science of Risk Assessment


Best Overall Abstract (Tie)


John Doull Award

Perry Gehring Postdoc Award

Marjory Moreau and Andy Nong. Health Canada, Ottawa, ON. Comparison of phthalate biomonitoring and high throughput screening data using pharmacokinetic modeling. Advisor: Andy Nong

Perry Gehring Student Award

Mylène Ratelle, J. Cote, M. Bouchard. Université de Montréal, Montreal, Canada. Time course and variability of biomarkers of exposure to pyrethroids in a group of agricultural workers. Advisor: Michelle Bouchard

Robert J. Rubin Student Travel Award

Mary Francis, M Mandal, C. Sun, H Choi, JD Laskin, DL Laskin. Rutgers University and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Piscataway, NJ. Tracking inflammatory macrophage accumulation in the lung during ozone-induced lung injury in mice.

RASS Webinar Series

On June 10, 2015, Ingrid L. Druwe and Erin E. Yost presented the webinar entitled Quantitative Evidence Integration to Facilitate the Use of Tox21 Data for Rapid Risk Screening. Links to the webinar slides and recording may be found on the RASS website. http://www.toxicology.org/groups/ss/RASS/downloads.asp
Member News

The RASS newsletter is a great place to find current information of interest to our membership. However, it is only interesting and relevant if the membership contributes to it. If you have been involved recently in the world of risk assessment AND that activity has been captured to a website (no product or service advertising, please), just send your name and a link to the site to Mike Lumpkin (mlumpkin@cteh.com). From job changes to congressional testimony, we’d like to know about it. The more links we get, the richer your newsletter will be. We look forward to getting your links.


Kausar Begam Riaz Ahmed was selected as new RASS Postdoctoral Representative by the officers at their June 2015 meeting to fill an unexpected vacancy. Recently, SOT staff informed our previously elected representative, Jaime Mirowsky, that she could not serve in that role for two groups and she chose to remain as representative for Women in Toxicology. RASS members were asked to volunteer for the position. Three excellent candidates indicated interest, making for a difficult decision. The officers appreciate the interest from the RASS postdoctoral members and welcome our new representative.

RASS Volunteer Pool

Alea Goodmanson, Co-ordinator
agoodmanson@toxstrategies.com
RASS Financial Status
(as of March 31, 2015)

Dues-paying members: 812

RASS General Fund
Net assets as of March 31, 2015: $7,989

RASS Endowment Funds
(Status as of March 31, 2015)

John Doull Endowment Fund
Net Assets: $38,977

Perry J Gehring Endowment Fund
Net Assets: $45,900

Robert J Ruben Endowment Fund
(in cooperation with the Mechanisms Specialty Section)
Net Assets: $42,182

Attention Members:
We encourage our members to contribute to our endowment funds. In particular, we are hoping to grow the Perry J Gehring Endowment Fund. Established in July 2008, this Fund was created to honor the legacy of Perry J. Gehring and to encourage students to pursue careers that utilize modern toxicological science in risk assessment. The Fund was created with initial generous gifts from Barbara Gehring and children and Joe and Teri LeBeau to memorialize Perry J. Gehring’s contributions to toxicology. Proceeds from the Fund are used to provide stipends to graduate student and post doc as awards for excellence in Risk Assessment.

Contributing is easy:
http://www.toxicology.org/endowment/contribute/donate.asp

Visit the SOT Endowment website to see current contributors and learn more about the endowments.

Risk Assessment Links and Resources

Below are some links to Government programs, reviews, and upcoming events that may be of interest to those in the risk assessment community:

- EPA IRIS program, What’s New:
  http://www.epa.gov/iris/recent.htm
- EPA OPPT TSCA Work Plan Chemicals:
  http://www.epa.gov/oppt/existingchemicals/pubs/workplan.html
- EPA Environmental Justice:
  http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/
- NIEHS/NTP/OHAT Systematic Review:
- ATSDR Toxicological Profiles:
- NIOSH What’s New:
  http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/whatsnew/default.html
• National Academies, Review of EPA’s draft paper State of the Science on Non-monotonic Dose Response:

• National Academies, Review of the IRIS Process:

• SOT Calendar of events:
  http://www.toxicology.org/events/