President’s Message

We are pleased to welcome several new members to the RASS leadership group. Gary D. Minsavage is now Vice President-Elect. Nathan R. Pechacek is the new Councilor, Kan Shao is our new Secretary/Treasurer and Cissy Li is our Postdoctoral Representative. Paige Bommarito, a graduate student at University of North Carolina will serve as our new Student Representative. Paige is filling out the unexpired term of our previous Student Representative, Sloane Kathryn Tilley. We thank Sloane for her service and welcome Paige to RASS. We are looking forward to another active year working with our membership to advance the science and application of risk assessment.

RASS, together with the Biological Modeling Specialty Section, is pleased to have the opportunity to award trainee travel funding through a newly established endowment fund, the Andersen-Clewell Endowment Award.

A big thanks goes out to Sean Hays and 15 other volunteers who reviewed and approved session proposals at the 2018 SOT Annual Meeting. Thirty-eight proposals were submitted to SOT requesting endorsement by RASS including 4 CE courses, 5 roundtables, 11 symposia, 13 workshops and four other session types. Thanks to our volunteers for participating in an interesting, intensive, and highly time-sensitive review process during April and May of this year!

Elaina M. Kenyon, RASS President

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Officers

President
Elaina M. Kenyon
Vice President
George M. Woodall
Vice President-Elect
Gary D. Minsavage
Secretary/Treasurer
Kan Shao
Past President
Sean Hays
Councilors
Betina J. Lew
Nathan R. Pechacek
Postdoctoral Representative
Cissy Li
Student Representative
Paige A. Bommarito
Sloane Kathryn Tilley, Retired from the board in October 2017
Newsletter Editor
Betina J. Lew
Betina.lew@rb.com
President’s Message, cont. from page 1

Annie Jarabek has done her usual great job recruiting an excellent slate of speakers on diverse topics for the RASS webinar series over the past year. Monthly announcements are emailed to RASS members and recordings of the webinars are available on the RASS website.

The RASS officers are planning the 2018 Annual Meeting RASS reception. For the past two years, we’ve kept the reception focused on social time, with a short program announcing the winners of the student awards, best abstract awards and best paper awards. We are currently planning to keep the same format and keep the reception mostly social. We welcome any feedback from members as to whether you have enjoyed this format or prefer something more structured, with a speaker or a panel discussion. Please send feedback to Elaina Kenyon.

As always, we have to thank the many volunteers for all the hard work they provide to help the RASS leadership team get through our various duties. We especially want to thank our Endowment Fund Steward committee (Laura Plunkett, Anne Loccisano, David Szabo) for the innovation and energy they have brought to the goal of increasing and maintaining the endowment funds that support student and postdoctoral travel and presentation at the annual SOT meeting.

We always welcome new volunteers and particularly need volunteers to help with best paper and abstract awards and student awards. If you would like to enter your name into the RASS Volunteer Pool, please email Alea Goodmanson and let us know your area of volunteer interest.

Kindest regards,
Elaina M. Kenyon

RASS Webinar Series

RASS welcomes our membership to a new year of RASS Webinar Series. RASS webinars are held every 2nd Wednesday. If you cannot participate in any of the live RAS webinars, links to the past webinar slides and recordings may be found on the RASS website. http://www.toxicology.org/groups/ss/RASS/downloads.asp

Fall 2017 RASS Webinars

September 13
Mixing Hazardous Agents in a Mouse Model: Noise with Lead and Cadmium
Krystin Carlson
PhD Candidate
University of Michigan
October 11

A Source to Outcome Approach for Inhalation Risk Assessment
Paul M. Hinderliter, PhD
Senior Research Scientist, Product Metabolism ADME
Syngenta Crop Protection Inc.

November 8

Systematic Review: Concept and tool development with application in the Integrate Risk Information System (IRIS) assessment process
Vickie Walker, PhD
National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences
Michele M. Taylor, PhD
Integrated Risk Information System
National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA)

December 13

Co-sponsored with the Biological Modeling Specialty Section (BMSS)

A Liver-Centric Multiscale Modeling Framework for Xenobiotics
James Sluka, PhD
Biocomplexity Institute
Indiana University

RASS Awards

The deadline for application is on December 31st!!

Nominate yourself or a well deserving Toxicologist for the awards:

Details for the applications can be found at:
http://www.toxicology.org/groups/ss/RASS/awards.asp

Please Contact: Gary Minsavage to apply for one of the following awards:

- Andersen-Clewel Trainee Endowment Award
- Best Overall Abstract Award
- Perry J. Gehring Best Graduate Student Abstract Risk Assessment Endowment Award
- Perry J. Gehring Best Postdoctoral Fellow Abstract Risk Assessment Endowment Award
Robert J. Rubin Student Risk Assessment SS Travel Award
John Doull Risk Assessment Endowment Award

Please Contact: George Woodall to apply for one of the following awards:
- Best Published Paper Advancing the Science of Risk Assessment Award
- Best Published Paper Demonstrating an Application of Risk Assessment Award

The deadline for application is on December 31st!!

Spotlighting the Trainees

RASS is creating a new newsletter session in which the trainee in Risk Assessment will be able to describe the current state of their career, and their aspirations for the next steps.

In this issue we are spotlighting two of the 2017 Annual Meeting RASS award winners. If you would like to be the next trainee in the spotlight, please send Betina Lew an email. We will be analyzing the candidates and two will in this session in the next issue.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Spotlighting the Trainee, continuing from pg. 3

Joe Cichocki, PhD
was awarded the 2017 RASS trainee award for his research “Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease as a Modifier of Perchloroethylene-Induced Toxicity”. Here is his story:
I am currently a Toxicologist at Alnylam Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge, MA, where I am providing non-clinical support to multiple programs by assisting project team reps. I earned a BS in Biology and PhD in Pharmacology and Toxicology from the University of Connecticut. I did my graduate work in the lab of former SOT President Dr. John Morris, where I studied the response of the airways to inhaled electrophilic air pollutants. After my training in inhalation toxicology, I switched gears and investigated inter-individual variability in susceptibility to chemical-induced liver and kidney injury in the laboratory of Dr. Ivan Rusyn at Texas A&M University, where I was fortunate to have received funding from a Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award through NIEHS.

SOT has been a critical part of my academic and professional development. I have been involved in the Society since my first year of graduate school, as Dr. Morris made it a point that his trainees be involved in the Society. The science that is presented, the collaborations that are formed, and the network that is built at the annual (and regional) meetings were a necessary part of my career projection (it has helped me land job interviews!), and I am extremely fortunate that Dr. Morris was so encouraging of my participation at these meetings. I actually did not get involved with RASS until I was a postdoc. In the Rusyn lab, I was investigating how genetics and underlying disease state could influence the delivered dose-response relationship of environmental chemicals. I was particularly interested in how these data could be of use for human health assessment, and therefore decided to get more involved with RASS. As a member of RASS, I discovered that they were offering travel awards for trainees, and was encouraged by Dr. Rusyn to apply for the Trainee Travel Award, which I was fortunate to have received at the 2017 Annual Meeting. RASS has been a great resource for me, especially their webinars and the networking activities at the Annual Meeting. I am really hoping to get more involved with RASS as I transition into a career in the pharmaceutical industry!

As a word of advice to other trainees out there, definitely get involved in your Specialty Sections, and make sure to apply for travel awards and for Student or Postdoctoral Representative positions! It is a great way to get your name out there and to get to work with some of the smartest individuals in the field! I am very thankful that Drs. Morris and Rusyn encouraged me to get involved with SOT, as it has helped me develop personally.
and professionally, and I have made a lot of new colleagues, some of who are now dear friends. See you all in San Antonio!

**Spotlighting the Trainee, continuing from pg. 3**

**Fabian Grimm, PhD**

was awarded the 2017 RASS Perry Gehring Postdoc Award for his research “Diversity in a dish: A population-based organotypic human in vitro model for cardiotoxicity testing.”. Here is his story:

Dr. Fabian Grimm is a postdoctoral research associate in Dr. Ivan Rusyn’s group at Texas A&M University. Prior to joining Texas A&M, he earned his PhD in Toxicology at the University of Iowa, where he completed his dissertation as an NIH/NIEHS Superfund Research Program trainee under the guidance of Dr. Michael Duffel. His doctoral research focused on the role of metabolism in the disposition and bioactivation of polychlorinated biphenyls using in vivo toxicokinetics in combination with in vitro in silico modeling. His postdoctoral work at Texas A&M University aims to improve human health safety assessments through the development and implementation of novel in vitro and computational technologies.

One key application of such technologies addresses biological data-based solutions for the regulatory challenge that is presented by highly complex substances. In addition to being unattainable to detailed chemical characterization, many of these chemicals are insufficiently tested and lack comprehensive in vivo toxicity evaluations, which remain the gold standard for regulatory purposes. To address this issue, Dr. Grimm and his colleagues

George Woodall, Fabian Grimm, Ivan Rusyn
have established an in vitro screening approach that comprises a variety of human tissue types for functional and mechanistic toxicity profiling. In collaboration with various industry partners, the group has generated bioactivity profiles for large numbers of commodity chemicals, including high-production volume petroleum substances. The measured bioactivities are used to establish categories of biologically similar chemicals. Such data-derived groupings can subsequently inform the prediction of toxicological properties for certain data-poor chemicals in each category and thus waive or reduce the requirement for additional animal testing, a concept that is defined as “read-across”.

Another target application of novel in vitro and computational technologies addresses the characterization of inter-individual susceptibilities to adverse chemical effects in chemical risk assessments. Despite the fact that inter-individual variability is a chemical-specific characteristic, current risk assessments still predominantly rely on standardized adjustment factors for population-level responses. Dr. Grimm’s work in the US EPA funded “Cardiotoxicity Adverse Outcome Pathways STAR Center”, directed by Dr. Rusyn, focuses on the development of an in vitro screening platform that utilizes stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes engineered from genetically diverse individuals. The goal is to provide a rapid and cost-effective approach for the acquisition of donor-specific toxicity data for large quantities of drugs and environmental chemicals to enable the generation of data-derived, chemical-specific adjustment factors.

Dr. Grimm has received the Society of Toxicology “Colgate-Palmolive Postdoctoral Fellowship in In Vitro Toxicology” (2015) and the 2017 “Syngenta Fellowship Award in Human Health Applications of New Technologies”. The SOT Risk Assessment Specialty Section has recognized his work with the 2017 Perry J. Gehring Postdoctoral Risk Assessment Award. When asked about his training experience, Dr. Grimm replies that he is thankful for the excellent mentorship he has received by his graduate and postdoctoral advisors, as well as outstanding research and networking opportunities. Frequent interactions and collaborations with regulators and industry toxicologists have been invaluable in shaping his own career trajectories. Following the completion of his postdoctoral training, Dr. Grimm is looking forward to a career as a toxicologist in industry and has recently accepted a position at ExxonMobil Biomedical Sciences Inc.

**Endowment Funds Stewards**

The RASS officers would like to introduce the Endowment Fund Steward committee: Laura Plunkett (chair), Anne Loccisano, and David Szabo. This committee is developing a strategy to meet the goal of raising all RASS’s endowment funds to the $50,000 level desired by SOT for recognition as permanent funds. RASS has four endowment funds supporting awards to students and postdocs - John Doull Endowment Fund, Perry J Gehring Endowment Fund, Robert J Ruben Endowment Fund, and the Andersen-Clewell Endowment Fund. See further information below in the report on the RASS financial status.
RASS Officer Nominations 2018

RASS is one of the largest of the SOT Specialty Sections. Our members have a broad spectrum of scientific influence, and participate in many of the most important decisions for applying toxicology for the greater good. This standing is and will continue to be only as strong as the RASS leadership. If you or someone you know would be interested in helping direct RASS’s continuing presence in the field, then there are officer opportunities for which you may be a terrific fit. There are four upcoming RASS officer vacancies for which nominations are being received: Vice President-Elect, Councilor, Postdoctoral Representative, and Graduate Student Representative. This year’s RASS officer nominations committee is headed by Sean Hays. Please submit your nomination of yourself or a colleague to Sean Hays by November 15, 2017.

RASS Financial Status; as of June 30, 2017)

Dues-paying members: 783
Student: 46 (12 international members) Postdoc: 40 (10 international members)

RASS General Fund:
Net assets: $31,391

John Doull Endowment Fund:
Net Assets: $45,835

Perry J Gehring Endowment Fund:
Net Assets: $48,723

Robert J Ruben Endowment Fund:
Net Assets: $45,570

Andersen-Clewell Endowment Fund (Newly established):
Net Assets: $52,429

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.

Contribution 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](http://www.epa.gov/iris/recent.htm)
- EPA OPPT TSCA Work Plan Chemicals: [http://www.epa.gov/oppt/existingchemicals/pubs/workplan.html](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/existingchemicals/pubs/workplan.html)
- EPA Environmental Justice: [http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/](http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/)
- NIOSH What’s New: [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/whatsnew/default.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/whatsnew/default.html)
- SOT Calendar of events: [https://www.toxicology.org/ms/events.asp](https://www.toxicology.org/ms/events.asp)

Volunteer Pool

There are a number of opportunities for RASS members to get involved with RASS-related activities. The Fall and Winter are all busy times of the RASS year, as the canvassing and judging of best papers are moving into full swing. Your help is greatly needed! If you would like to enter your name into the RASS Volunteer Pool, please email Alea Goodmanson.
Meet the officers:

Past President: Sean M. Hays

President: Elaina M. Kenyon

Vice President: George M. Woodall Jr.

Vice President-Elect: Gary D. Minsavage

Councilor: Nathan R. Pechacek

Councilor: Betina J. Lew

Secretary/Treasurer: Kan Shao

Postdoctoral Rep.: Cissy Li