



## President's Message

Dear OTSS Members,

Greetings and welcome to the Summer 2023 OTSS newsletter! I am thrilled and honored to serve as President this year, and to be able to serve with such a fantastic and motivated Executive Board: Vlad Bantseev, Bill Cook, Ling Huang, Chris Schuetz, Hiromi Hosako, Zhechu Peng, and Yu-Quan Wen. It's been an exciting year with so many changes to our industry such as animal shortages, updated policies, and new approvals for blinding diseases. It's great to have colleagues that understand the challenges and can help to navigate our new normal.

I'd first like to thank everyone who joined us in person at the 2023 OTSS reception in Nashville. We had an excellent turnout and it was a great opportunity to network with our colleagues. Very special thanks to our outgoing Past President, Qihong Huang. Her experience was invaluable and she will remain a special member of our specialty section. A warm welcome to our newly-elected councilor, Qu-Yuan Wen. We look forward to his great ideas and contributions to our Board. A lot of Board positions will be up for election at the end of 2023. If you or someone you know may be interested in joining our Board, we'll be soliciting nominations before the end of the year.

Congratulations to all our 2023 award recipients who were announced at the SOT Annual Meeting. We continue to have sponsors who are willing to financially support our members who have performed outstanding work with several awards. Most of our sponsors are committed to awarding the next generation of ocular toxicology scientists and drug developers. On that note, please follow our LinkedIn page, [SOT OTSS Student/Postdoc Outreach Group](#). While this page was developed to recruit more members-in-training to our specialty section, we often share news about events, webinars of interest, or even job postings.

We are thankful to our stellar Program Committee. This year two of our members, Ken Schafer and Helen Booler, championed the Symposium session "*Opening our Eyes: Ocular Gene Therapy from Theory to Practice*" presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting. At the 2024 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, the OTSS Program Committee anticipates the opportunity to present another symposium focused on Biocompatibility of Ocular Medical Devices. We're already soliciting ideas for a symposium in 2025. If you'd like to join the Program Committee and contribute to future sessions and webinars, contact our Program Committee Chair, Bill Cook.

[OTSS Website](#)

### Officers

#### **President**

Andrea Rodrigues

#### **Vice President**

William (Bill) Cook

#### **Vice President-Elect**

Ling Huang

#### **Treasurer**

Hiromi Hosako

#### **Communications Officer**

Chris Schuetz

#### **Past President**

Vlad Bantseev

#### **Councilors**

Zhechu Peng

Yu-Quan Wen

#### **Postdoctoral Representative**

Open

#### **Student Representative**

Jonathan Lin

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On behalf of the entire OTSS Executive Committee, thank you for your continued support.

Best Regards,  
Andrea Rodrigues, PhD, DABT  
OTSS President

## ***2023 OTSS Reception Highlights***

### Supporters

The Ocular Toxicology Specialty Section was once again able to meet in person at the SOT Annual Meeting in Nashville, holding their reception on the evening of March 21<sup>st</sup>. It began by acknowledging the supporters of the OTSS, which include Biomere, Charles River, Greenfield Pathology Services, Labcorp, and Ocular Services On Demand (OSOD).







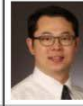





Photos in order: 1) Passing on a mallet to Andrea Rodrigues from outgoing president Vlad Bantseev; 2) Andrea Rodrigues and SOT ocular members and 3) Bill Cook presenting Membership report

### Officer Transitions

Introductions of the Current Officers of the OTSS and New Officers for the 2023-2024 term were announced by Vlad Bantseev. New officers include: Andrea Rodrigues (President), William Cook (Vice President), Ling Huang (Vice President-Elect), and Yu-Quan Wen (Councilor) and Vlad Bantseev (Past President). Hosako (Treasurer), Chris Schuetz (Communications), Zhechu Peng (Councilor), and Jonathan Lin (Student Representative) continued in their roles. The Postdoctoral Representative position remains open, and it was encouraged that those who are qualified nominate for that position. Officers completing their terms on the OTSS Executive Committee include: Vlad Bantseev (President) and Ling Huang (Councilor). After the introduction, the chairpersons of various OTSS committees presented updates.

## Incoming Executive Committee Officers (2023-2024)

President	Vice President	Vice President-Elect	Treasurer	Communication	Councillor	Councillor	Past - President
							
Andrea Rodriguez Abbvie	William Cook Merck	Ling Huang Johnson & Johnson	Hiromi Hosako Sunovion	Chris Schuetz Genentech	Zhechu Peng Boehringer-Ingelheim	Yu-Quan Wen Abbvie	Vlad Bantseev Genentech
				Post-Doc Rep	Student Rep		
							
				Open	Jonathan Lin University of Texas		

### Program Committee Update

The OTSS Program Committee has been active in planning and sponsoring ocular toxicology symposiums. The Program Committee for 2023 is currently composed of 18 OTSS members: Napoleon Alejandro, Vladimir Bantseev, Helen Booler, Ewa Budzynski, William Cook, Anh Diep, Swati Gupta, Ling Huang, Qihong Huang, Patrick Kerstein, Jonathan Lin, Jonathan Luisi, Andrea Rodrigues, Ken Schafer, Chris Schuetz, Mercedes Salvador-Silva, Neera Tewari-Singh, and Yu-Quan Wen. Anyone interested in joining the Committee can contact the Chairperson, William Cook, at [william\\_o\\_cook@merck.com](mailto:william_o_cook@merck.com).

At the recent 2023 SOT Annual Meeting in Nashville, OTSS sponsored an exciting symposium on *“Opening Our Eyes: Ocular Gene Therapies from Theory to Practice”* with Ken Schafer (Greenfield Pathology Services) and Hellen Booler (Novartis) serving as Co-Chairs, from the Program Committee. The symposium was well-attended, and the speakers and topics from this program were:

- Nonclinical Considerations in the Development of Ocular Gene Therapies, Jacqueline Brassard, Brassard Toxicologic Regulatory Consulting
- Preclinical Development Strategies for Ocular Gene Therapies, Eva Andres-Mateos, Atsena Therapeutics
- Regulatory Aspects and Opportunities in the Development of Ocular Gene Therapies, Rondine Allen, US FDA
- Clinical Aspects of Ocular Gene Therapy Development: Maximizing Benefit/Risk, Aaron Osborn, Nanoscope Therapeutics



Photo of SOT Ocular Symposium at the 2023 SOT Annual Meeting

The Committee has also been actively preparing an ocular toxicology symposium for the 2024 SOT Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah with a proposal to SOT titled *"Taking a Closer Look at Biological Evaluations for Ocular Medical Devices and Combination Products."* The OTSS Chair and Co-Chairperson for this program are Andrea Rodrigues (AbbVie) and William Cook (Merck), respectively, and the purpose of the symposium is to explore biological safety testing for ocular medical devices with a panel of expert speakers from the pharmaceutical industry and US FDA.

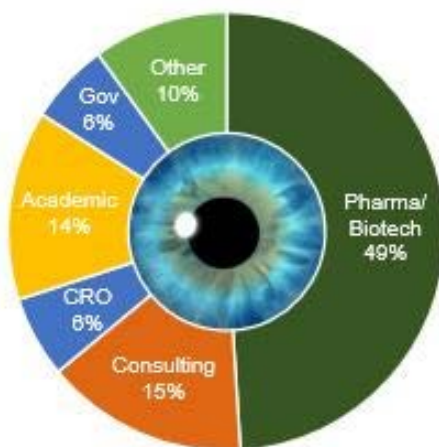
### Communications, Membership, and Treasurer Update

The OTSS Executive Committee would like to encourage our members to join the LinkedIn group page (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13829631/>) that supports students/post-docs who are in the ocular toxicology field. And remember, OTSS will waive membership fees in 2023 for current students and postdocs who are already members of SOT. To obtain a request form and for more information, please send an email to [Ocular.SOT@gmail.com](mailto:Ocular.SOT@gmail.com).

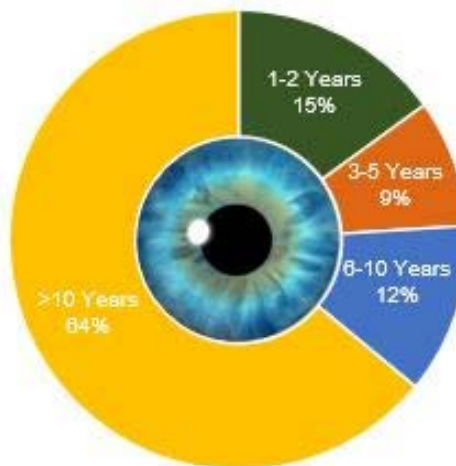
As of February 2023, OTSS has assets of \$86,484.

OTSS membership currently consists of approximately 80-90 members.





Demographics by Sector



Demographics by Year

### Update from Japanese Society of Comparative and Veterinary Ophthalmology

The JSCVO shared their updates and activities at the reception. Their 2022 45th Fundamental Seminar took place in Nagoya on December 17th, 2022, and 2023 Fundamental Training Course took place in Tokyo on March 17-18, 2023 (the same time as the SOT Annual Meeting and thus no representatives from JSCVO were at the SOT/OTSS reception).

### Award Announcements

The OTSS Awards Committee was proud to announce our 2022-2023 OTSS award recipients at the reception. They also wanted to extend their appreciation to Taylor & Francis, Biomere, Labcorp, and OSOD for their award sponsorship. It was a very competitive year and the committee extends its congratulations to all who participated.

#### **2023 OTSS Career Achievement Award**

Dr. Ken Schafer, Greenfield  
Pathology Services, Inc.



Helen Booter (center) and Jacqueline Brassard (right) presenting the 2023 OTSS Career Achievement Award to Ken Schafer (left).

#### **Annual "Paper of the Year" Award by Taylor & Francis**

**Paper Title:** *Particulate matter 2.5 promotes inflammation and cellular dysfunction via reactive oxygen species/p38 MAPK pathway in primary rat corneal epithelial cells*

**Lead Author:** Da Hye Kim

Volume 41(4): 273–284. 2022



Dr. Wallace Hayes (Editor) presenting the results of the Taylor and Francis Ocular Toxicology Paper of the Year Competition

***I<sup>2</sup> (Innovation and Impact) Award by Biomere***

**Paper Title:** *Concentration-associated pathology of alkali burn in a mouse model using anterior segment optical coherence tomography with angiography*

**Lead Author:** Jonathan Lin  
Exp Eye Res. 2022;223:109210

***Graduate Student/Postdoctoral Fellow Research Award by Labcorp-OSOD***

Jonathan Lin, Graduate Student,  
University of Texas



Biomere presenting the I<sup>2</sup> Award to Jon Lin

***Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Trainee Support Award***

Ebenazar Okoyeocha, Michigan State University

***OTSS Best Poster Award***

**Poster Title:** *Progression of chloropicrin induced ocular injury: clinical and biological effects*

**Lead Author:** Ebenazar Okoyeocha



Ling Huang presenting Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Trainee Support Award to Ebenazar Okoyeocha

## ***Call for 2024 Award Nominations***

**Deadline: December 31, 2023**

Submit all nominations to: Zhechu Peng and Yu-Quan Wen ([Ocular.SOT@gmail.com](mailto:Ocular.SOT@gmail.com))

Link to award details: <https://www.toxicology.org/groups/ss/otss/awards.asp>

- 1. I<sup>2</sup> Award (Innovation and Impact) Sponsored by Biomere**
- 2. Labcorp-OSOD Graduate Student/Postdoctoral Fellow Research Award**
- 3. Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Trainee Travel Award Sponsored by Biomere**

#### 4. Ocular Toxicology Best Poster Award

#### 5. Annual “Paper of the Year” Award

### *OTSS Member Suggestions*

Please feel free to contact OTSS ([Ocular.SOT@gmail.com](mailto:Ocular.SOT@gmail.com)) for any suggestions, ideas, or needs at any time!

### *Supporters*

We sincerely thank you for your generous support!!

2022-2023 Supporters



Support the OTSS mission and activities by making a donation [here!](#)