



Fall Newsletter

November 2009

In This Issue

[President's Letter](#)

[Report on the Annual Meeting](#)

[Translating Epidemiology into Action: Towards a Research-to-Policy Framework](#)

[Incoming Associate Director, Alberto Caban-Martinez](#)

[Minority Affairs Committee Report](#)

[Admissions Committee Report](#)

[Awards Committee Report](#)

Calendar of Events

Renew ACE Dues
Membership ends 12/31/2009

ACE Annual Meeting
San Francisco, CA
September 11-14

Fellows Corner

Newly Appointed
Fellows - Fall '09
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M. Louise Lawson
Elmer Villanueva
John Hough
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President's Letter

Lorann Stallones



Welcome to fall and the shortened days that accompany the move toward winter. We have had our first frost here in Colorado, but I know many of you live in temperate climates without the pleasure of the frosty mornings. Personally I dream of the beach as the cold

begins to settle.

It is an honor to take on the role of President in this vibrant organization. Roberta Ness devoted her Presidency to policy issues and ensuring that the American College of Epidemiology provided significant input into discussions of policy. She set a very high standard for future Presidents. We look forward to her continuing contributions to ACE and to our profession.

The ACE Annual Meeting was extremely successful and you can read details in this newsletter (see [Diana Bensyl report](#)). The Policy Committee contributed a great deal to the meeting as well as to expanding the discussion of the role of epidemiology in policy making, you can find more details in the newsletter (see [Ross Brownson story](#)). The Minority Affairs Committee once again delivered a well attended workshop (see [Jorge Ibara report](#)). The Admissions Committee continues to stay busy admitting new Associate Members, Members, and Fellows and reviewing requests for promotion to Fellow (see [Sandy Sulsky report](#)). The Awards Committee honored epidemiologists who were recognized at the Annual ACE Awards Luncheon (see [Craig Newschaffer report](#)). The Associate Members continue to provide a unique perspective to support and improve the ACE (see [Alberto Cabán-Martinez report](#)).

The opportunity for epidemiologists to discuss the growth and development of the profession is not available in other organizations and my hope for the future of ACE is to expand our membership to include more international colleagues so we can discuss issues that we face on a global basis including global warming, food security, exporting hazardous work to developing countries, and training of epidemiologists for the future.

A number of committees are seeking new members and I encourage you to become more involved by volunteering to serve on one of the committees of the college.

Top Stories

Report on the Annual Meeting

Diana Bensyl, 2009 Program Chair

ACE had another very successful Annual Meeting in September with approximately 250 attendees. Participants came from 28 states, the District of Columbia, and six countries. Many of the presentations are available on the ACE [website](#).

The conference began with a talk by Dr. James Marks from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on the inherently political nature of public health. Dr. Marks discussed how policymakers and epidemiologists must work together to ensure the right research is done and that it leads to action to achieve social justice.

Presentations by esteemed epidemiologists Dr. Joel Schwartz and Dr. Lawrence Altman followed that further demonstrated epidemiologists' influence politically and with public perception of health issues.

Other sessions at the meeting used a panel format to present several points-of-view. We heard about the human papillomavirus and cervical cancer; epidemiology and causation at the Veterans Health Administration; and translating epidemiology into action. There were also luncheon roundtables on Monday and breakfast roundtables on Tuesday that allowed more casual interactions and permitted question and answer sessions on multiple topics.

We wound up the 2009 meeting with an awards luncheon honoring several epidemiologists. Please see the section of the newsletter by the Awards committee for more information on the honorees. As Program Chair, I would like to thank the 2009 Program Committee for helping plan the meeting. The Program Committee is a subcommittee of the Education Committee. The subcommittee members that helped with meeting planning are: Michael Alavanja, Olivia Carter-Pokras, Jan Eberth, Melissa Ford, David Goldsmith, Jorge Ibarra, Roberta Ness, Jonathan Samet, Sharon Saydah, Dan Strickland, David Sugerman, Thomas Weiser, and Deborah Winn. Their input in planning sessions and support in identifying and confirming speakers was invaluable. I also need to thank our host university, George Washington University, and especially our main liaison, Dr. David Goldsmith. Dr. Goldsmith not only had great ideas for ACE sessions, he also helped ensure financial support from the school for the host reception, contacted potential speakers, and gave a presentation at the annual meeting. Without his participation, the meeting would not have gone so smoothly.

Please save-the-date and plan to join us for the next Annual Meeting at the Grand Hyatt, San Francisco, California, September 11-14, 2010. Å



Translating Epidemiology into Action: Towards a Research-to-Policy Framework

Report on the Policy Committee and recent workshop, Ross Brownson

A major area of emphasis for the ACE is the intersection of epidemiology and policymaking. Although the development of policies and regulations in public health relies on epidemiologic evidence, the methods for evaluating and incorporating such evidence into policymaking are not well established. Ad hoc, time consuming, and occasionally vexing, the process of synthesizing epidemiologic and other evidence into a rational basis for policy may lend itself to a more general framework and crosscutting lessons learned. Policy decisions themselves must remain a matter of case-by-case consideration, but ACE can help discern the successful elements of a more general framework. To better understand the intersection of epidemiology and policy, the ACE Policy Committee hosted a workshop in March 2009 at Washington University in St. Louis. The meeting was co-chaired by Jon Samet and Ross Brownson. The invited panelists included experts from diverse disciplines with extensive policy experience. The workshop participants considered four case studies on the following topics: smoke-free environments (led by Rachel Widome), alcohol drinking age (led by Shawna Mercer), physical inactivity and obesity (led by Ross Brownson), and veteran's compensation (led by Jon Samet). Simultaneously, the participants referred to various general frameworks proposed. The participants analyzed the processes by which the data were synthesized, policy recommendations reached, and lessons learned. The findings from the workshop were presented at the annual meeting of the ACE in September (chaired by Patricia Hartge) and will also be published in 2010 in the *Annals of Epidemiology*.

From the Board of Directors

Incoming Associate Director

Alberto Caban-Martinez

Epidemiology Rocks! That's my motto and how I feel about our profession. Hello! My name is Alberto and I have the distinct honor and privilege of serving as the incoming associate member representative to the ACE Board of Directors. I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself (albeit by newsletter, but hopefully in person in the near future) and share with you some of the exciting plans your associate membership leadership is rolling out. As you may know, the ACE associate membership is generally a heterogeneous group of individuals in vast stages of training and engaged in distinct professional epidemiology positions. A large percentage of



our membership is comprised of graduate level students pursuing advanced training in epidemiology. This amazing cadre of budding epidemiologists benefit from ACE membership and annual meetings in that networking with senior epidemiologist allows for greater personal and professional growth that may be more arduous to find among other professional organizations. This year we hope to share all the benefits of ACE associate membership with other students in training by developing an associate member liaison program with the schools and graduate programs of public health in North America. Through this liaison program we hope to develop longstanding relationships we each of the training programs and identify key contacts that would enhance ACE membership for associate members year after year. If you know of an academic program that would be interested in fostering such a relationship, please let me know. This year we also hope to provide additional year-round programming that addresses the training needs and garners professional opportunities for associate members. As we progress in the year I want to bring your attention to our periodic associate member survey that informs the leadership of crucial information that is formative to the professional development of the associate membership. There is also multiple leadership opportunities at all levels within the college that I hope you will explore through your active participation in the college's committees. I am really excited to be able to serve the college and you in the capacity and please don't hesitate to drop me an email throughout the year to let me know how you are doing. Looking forward to meeting you all soon. My best, Alberto

Committees

Minority Affairs Committee

Jorge Ibarra, MAC Chair

The 2009 Annual Meeting started with the Minority Affairs Committee Workshop followed by the College's Job Fair and Exhibits, on Saturday, September 12. The goals of the workshop were to learn about the causes of the under-representation of racial and ethnic minorities in the



epidemiologic profession, to discuss ways to reduce this inequity, including the social

context that hinders the entrance of members of racial/ethnic minorities into higher education in science and health related professions, barriers to advancement of racial/ethnic minority epidemiologists in the profession, to bring examples of practices and achievements that attract minorities into the epidemiology profession, to highlight obstacles and solutions to increasing diversity in the epidemiology profession, and to offer recommendations for next steps within the epidemiology profession and among policy makers. The Minority Affairs and the Associate Members Committees held a reception to mark the start of the College's Job Fair and exhibits. More than 100 job openings were offered and 4 exhibitors participated in the Fair.

Admissions Committee

Sandy Sulsky

The Admissions Committee is responsible for reviewing applicants for eligibility for membership and promotion within ACE. Between September 1, 2008 and August 30, 2009, the Admissions Committee reviewed 114 applications for admission or promotion. The Committee recommended that the Board of Directors (BOD) admit the vast majority of applicants, reflecting the appropriate targeting of outreach to potential new members by the Membership Committee.

In accord with the BOD, Admissions Committee policy is to admit applicants to the highest suitable level within the College (Associate, Member, Fellow and Emeritus). Among the 84 applicants for admission, 18 were recommended for Associate, 51 for Member, and 14 for Fellow. Reflecting recently broadened eligibility guidelines and successful outreach by the Membership Committee, 5 applicants were epidemiologists with training to the Master's level (4 recommended for Associate, and 1 recommended for Member status).

Together with staff at FirstPoint, the Admissions Committee has been working to streamline the process of receiving and reviewing applications to ACE. The mean duration of the entire review process, from receipt of the application at First Point to notification of the applicant of the BOD decision, was just 50 days for September 2008-September 2009.

Awards Committee

Craig Newschaffer

Work of the Awards Committee for 2009 culminated in an inspirational awards luncheon at the ACE Annual Meeting. Dr. Louise Brinton, a world leader in the epidemiology of reproductive and hormonally-related cancers, received the 2009 Lilienfeld Award. She spoke on the challenges of implementing large population-based risk factor studies domestically and internationally and emphasized the ongoing importance of good field practice as research epidemiology looks to investigate complex causal mechanisms. This year the Committee was also pleased to bestow a Special Recognition Award on James (Jim) Steele for his pioneering work on zoonoses. Dr. Steele helped found the Veterinary Public Health Division of CDC and worked to develop the first formal rabies control program in the United States. The Committee also wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Michael Alavanja, who chaired our work this year and who has rotated off the committee.

Commentary

With influenza rates increasing this month, please take care of yourself. We want to see you next year at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

Carol Burns, Editor

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