

American College of Epidemiology

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President's Letter



ACE is a small organization with big ideas. It's wonderful that we have so many members involved in bringing these ideas to fruition. As you will see from the articles in this issue, ACE has many ongoing projects. There are also some initiatives, such as the Task Force on Mentorship and activities for associate members. I know many of you would like to participate on <u>committees</u>. I have been reviewing the participation forms and placing as many folks as possible on

committees as openings become available. I apologize if you submitted a form and weren't contacted. That means you requested a committee that filled its quota for new members this year. But each year we need more

Calendar of Events

June 21-24, 2006 2006 Congress of Epidemiology Westin Seattle Hotel Seattle, WA

worker bees: we always need good people willing to work!! Please feel free to catch me at the ACE reception at the 2006 Congress and I will introduce you to a Committee Chair.

Please mark your calendars for the 2006 Congress of Epidemiology: **June 21-24** at the Seattle Westin Hotel. This Congress is sponsored, co-sponsored or supported by 18 different epidemiology societies. ACE is a key player: not only is ACE one of the sponsors of the meeting, ACE is also sponsoring several special events. For example, ACE is sponsoring two events geared toward students and junior faculty: a 'Meet the Editor' session on Thursday and 'Career Forum' on Saturday. These events are free to all, but are by ticket only as ACE is buying lunch. You can sign up as you register. The ACE Policy Committee is organizing a session to discuss the peer review process. We are also fortunate to be able to present some of the program that was planned for the 2005 ACE meeting in New Orleans. The four plenaries will be presented as symposia, and many of the posters and some of the breakfast round tables are included in the Congress program. And, as always, the Education Committee has put together an exciting set of pre-meeting workshops. Registration is now open www.epicongress2006.org. ACE will hold a reception on Friday evening in lieu of our business meeting. I hope to have a chance to meet with you all there.

Top Stories – 2006 Congress Highlights

Award Ceremony and Wine Reception for Outstanding Epidemiologists ACE Enjoy and Learn Reception: June 23, 5-7 pm Roger Bernier, Awards Committee Chair

Prevented by Hurricane Katrina from meeting in New Orleans last year, the American College of Epidemiology was challenged but not defeated. In response, the College has worked to honor the many outstanding epidemiologists who were slated to receive ACE awards in 2005. The meeting in New Orleans was to be a landmark event for the College because it was inaugurating a new award for Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology as well as making several awards for distinguished service to the College and a first time award for Outstanding Mentorship. The ACE's most prestigious Lilienfeld award for lifetime contributions to epidemiologic research, teaching, and service was also scheduled for New Orleans and will now be given in Seattle as will its award for the student prize paper.



The awardees will be honored in Seattle at a special "Enjoy and Learn" wine reception to be held Friday evening June 23 at the Seattle Westin Hotel from 5-7 pm. All of the Congress attendees will be invited to attend and as a special attraction the reception will feature local wines from Washington State free of charge to attendees. They will have a chance to learn about the different wine regions and types of wine in the State while hearing about the outstanding achievements of fellow epidemiologists.

The winners of the ACE awards to be honored in Seattle are:

- Robert Hoover, the Abraham Lilienfeld Award.
- Godfrey Oakley, the Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology Award
- Marlene Goldman, ACE Distinguished Service Award
- Jess Kraus, ACE Distinguished Service Award
- Pauline Mendola, the Excellence in Student Mentoring Award
- Suzanne Gilboa, Student Prize Paper Award.

What Constitutes A Good Reviewer?

Seminar: June 24 De-Kun Li



When you are asked to review grant applications, have you ever wondered whether you have met the expectations of the funding agency or done a good service to the applicants? As an applicant, have you ever wondered how (the heck) the reviewers arrived at their conclusions and scores? Reviewers play a crucial role in determining the types of research projects to be funded; thereby to a significant degree, determining the direction of medical research. However, systems for educating and training future reviewers and evaluating existing reviewers are largely absent. Beginning with the 2006 Congress, ACE will organize a series of seminars on improving the quality of reviews, including how to identify promising innovative applications and avoid common mistakes (e.g., obsession with methodological

details and perfection while ignoring the big picture). The first such seminar will be held on June 24 from 12-1:30 pm. We encourage those who have aspirations to be either good reviewers or successful applicants or both to consider attending this exciting and useful seminar.

If you have given this topic much thought and would like to be one of the speakers, please contact Dr. De-Kun Li, at <u>dkl@dor.kaiser.org.</u>

Career Mentoring Forum Luncheon: June 24 Martha Linet

A few years ago, the College created a new membership category, Associate Members, for students enrolled in doctoral programs in epidemiology. To assist these new ACE members in their professional development, the Membership Committee (chaired by Lorann Stallones) created a subcommittee to address scientific and career mentoring needs of doctoral students. The subcommittee produced a mentoring plan, which was further modified and presented to the ACE Board of Directors in September 2004. The Board recommended that the Membership Committee work closely with the Planning Committee responsible for the 2005 ACE Meeting to organize activities directed at Associate Members. With the cancellation of the New Orleans Meeting, several Board members established an ACE Task Force on Mentoring. The Task Force includes Martha Linet (ACE Past-President), Lorann Stallones (Past Chair of the Membership Committee), John Acquavella (ACE President-Elect), and David Lilienfeld (ACE Board Member).



The Mentoring Task Force is organizing a Career Mentoring Forum to be held during an ACE-sponsored luncheon on **Saturday June 24** at the 2006 Congress. The Forum will feature epidemiologists working in academia, the private sector, federal government and state epidemiology positions as well as a second year Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer and a current post-doctoral fellow. Working with a subcommittee of the Student Organizing Committee for the Congress, the Mentoring Task Force members will finalize representatives of the various career paths and the agenda for the Forum. Among the epidemiologists who have agreed to participate as representatives of specific career paths are John Acquavella (Head of Global Epidemiology at AMGEN) and Jim Guadino (State Epidemiologist in Oregon, graduate of CDC's EIS Program, and President-Elect of APHA's Section on Epidemiology). In addition to the Career Mentoring Forum, the Task Force has identified other initiatives to be pursued following the 2006 Congress.

Poster Judges Needed Robert McKeown



The 2nd North American Congress of Epidemiology is fast approaching. In addition to the pre-conference workshops, plenary sessions, and 36 symposia reflecting, we expect to exhibit over 800 research posters on a broad range of topics. We want to recognize the three best posters in each of the three poster sessions, but to do that we need poster judges and lots of them. If you would be willing to evaluate 10 - 20 posters at one or more of the poster sessions and then work with other judges to select the top three, please contact Robert McKeown (rmckeown@gwm.sc.edu) and let him know of your willingness to help. Indicate your preferred topic areas, and if you have a preference for which session(s) you judge. The schedule for poster sessions is: Session 1: June 21, 7:30-8:30 PM; Session 2: June 22, 5:00-6:00 PM; Session 3: June 23, 5:00-6:00 PM. Thanks for your help in recognizing outstanding

presentations of research in posters.

Student Events Melinda Aldrich

A number of student events and opportunities are happening during the conference. Prior to the meeting, ACE, IGES and SER are hosting pre-meeting workshops. Good news for Associate Members as they will be able to attend the ACE workshops for 20% of the listed price! The Congress will officially open Wednesday evening (June 21) with a reception for students, a terrific time to mingle with your student peers. During the reception, academic books and journal subscriptions will be raffled. Throughout the Congress will be a wide selection of workshops, forums, and breakfast roundtables. These are excellent informal opportunities for students to get some sage advice from senior-level epidemiologists. If you're looking for helpful tips for submitting a successful manuscript, check out the 'Meet the Editors' luncheon on **Thursday, June 22**. A 'Career



Mentoring Forum' on **Saturday, June 24** will be your opportunity to ask experts from several career fields questions you've always wanted to ask. Other highlights of the Congress include a Student Awards luncheon, held on **Friday June 23** where students will receive awards for the best abstract, and information booths with recruiting employers. Consider attending the ACE reception on Friday evening and networking with senior epidemiologists.

Details regarding the student events and sign-ups for volunteer opportunities can be found on the Congress website (<u>http://www.epicongress2006.org/students.html</u>). I encourage you to take advantage of these many opportunities and register early to reserve your lunch ticket.

In the News

University of Michigan Epidemiology Professor Sandro Galea is featured in *Time* Magazine's March 20 Issue. The article is entitled "*The Disease Detectives*."

Jennifer Fergenbaum, an Associate member from the University of Toronto, was the co-recipient of the David Hewitt Award for 2005, which is given to a student in Public Health Sciences who has contributed substantially to the intellectual and social life of the Public Health Sciences body. The other recipient was Kate Rossiter, of the Social Science and Health Program.

From the Board of Directors

Opportunities for Associate Members! Jennifer Fergenbaum, *Associate Member Representative*

The process of identifying and nominating individuals to be elected as the next Associate Member student representative to the ACE Board of Directors will soon begin!

As the first student representative, I was given the unique opportunity to help define the role. I have focused on action items that would facilitate continuity for the role and outlined opportunities for Associate Members to communicate with each other, become more involved with ACE activities, and benefit from ACE membership. Recently, I attended the mid-year Board meeting held in Atlanta, GA. At this meeting, the Board agreed upon some initiatives to directly benefit Associate Members. Specifically, Associate Members will be able to attend pre-



meeting workshops for a 20% discount. Also, the by-laws are being modified to include Associate Member representation on most standing committees. Further, with the guidance of the Board, I am helping to establish a listserv to be able to disseminate educational and professional activities to you and develop the idea of student chapters.

Part of the role of the next Associate Member student representative would be to help refine and implement some of the long-term recommendations including:

- soliciting Associate Members by a short survey of their needs, expectations and what they would want to gain from ACE, compiling these responses and presenting them to committee chairs, and helping to implement a process to 'match' Associate Members with ACE activities
- helping to maintain a job bank for use by junior investigators
- planning ways to encourage graduate students to become Associate Members

There are emerging ways in which students can benefit from being an Associate Member and getting involved with ACE activities. In particular, the role of student representative has provided me with new and exciting learning opportunities; has enabled me to be involved with the Education Committee and offer input in workshop planning; and unlike other organizations, has provided me insight into the professional practice of epidemiology.

I hope through sharing some of the initiatives of the Associate Member student representative I have stimulated your interest in applying for membership and the position.

Committees

Minority Affairs Committee Jorge Ibarra, Committee Chair

The <u>Minority Affairs Committee</u> (MAC) has integrated existing members with newly interested college members. This led to a much expanded Committee, now with 16 active members. The MAC members meet by phone once a month where members review existing general ACE guidelines and discuss new initiatives and related action steps. The main interest of the MAC is fostering greater diversity within ACE and promoting innovative ideas that translate into action that helps to eliminate health disparities. The MAC has also helping ACE in reaching out to young students with an interest in epidemiology. At the 2006 Congress the MAC will host a premeeting workshop entitled "Pharmacogenomics: What's an epidemiologist to do?" Organized by Vickie Mays, the free workshop will be on Wednesday, June 21, from 7:30 am - 5:00 pm. If you are interested in learning more about the MAC contact Jorge Ibarra at <u>jmibarra2@utep.edu</u> or at 915 747 7292.

Membership Committee: The Member-Get-A-Member Campaign Jonine Bernstein, Committee Chair



A key duty of the ACE <u>Membership Committee</u> is membership recruitment and retention. We welcome input on the best way to accomplish these important duties! Currently, we launched a "Member-Get-a-Member Campaign", where individuals contact known lapsed members to find out the reasons for non-renewal and to urge them to consider rejoining. We plan to measure the results to assess the impact of the campaign.

For the "Member-Get-a- Member Campaign" to be most successful and comprehensive, we need the entire ACE membership to recruit and to maintain members. The Membership Committee has begun to develop a protocol for the initial

contact and follow-up. We plan to work with the Board to determine the best strategy for reaching to the membership at large.

We have also discussed developing a second questionnaire for the Deans/Chairs of Schools of Public Health and Chairs/Directors of Departments of Epidemiology who are not members to determine their attitudes regarding ACE membership. Please contact me, <u>bernstej@mskcc.org</u> with your input and ideas for ways to execute these efforts.

Commentary

It's time to make your travel plans for the 2006 Congress in Seattle. Many volunteers have worked tirelessly to organize workshops, symposia, lunches and receptions to make this meeting a reality. Thank you! Please consider writing your impressions of the Congress for the next newsletter. *Carol Burns, Editor* (cburns@dow.com).

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