



President's Letter



The College has had a busy and productive year, with major new initiatives. Key efforts of the College's hardworking committees will be highlighted during a stimulating and provocative Annual Scientific Meeting in New Orleans (see details below under Top Stories). The College continues to expand in size and diversity as the result of bylaws modifications and Membership Committee (Chair, Lorann Stallones) initiatives to recruit new and encourage re-enrollment of lapsed

members. To foster greater participation in College activities by epidemiologists at the start of their careers, 2005 initiatives include appointment of Associate Members to several Committees, presentation of 10 travel awards to doctoral students by Amgen and ACE to attend the ACE Annual Scientific Meeting, and the pending appointment of an Associate Member to the Board of Directors. At the 2005 annual meeting, the Awards Committee (Roger Bernier, Chair) will present the inaugural Contributions to Applied Epidemiology Award, and introduce the honoree, who will give an invited talk. Other exciting new awards will be rolled out over the next few years. The Communications Committee (Dan Lackland, Chair) is unveiling enhancements to the ACE website (thanks to Umad Ajani, and Olson Management Assistant Executive Director, Felicia Kenan) and is sponsoring a newsletter every 3-4 months to improve communication with College members (Carol Burns, Newsletter Editor). In this issue of the newsletter, recent activities of the Policy (Roberta Ness, Chair) and Membership Committees (Lorann Stallones, Chair) are highlighted.

The Publications (Melissa Bondy, Chair) and Policy (Roberta Ness, Chair) Committees have submitted or solicited a growing number of commentaries and articles in the *Annals of Epidemiology* (Editor, Rich Rothenberg); the ACE Annual Scientific Meeting abstracts are published in the September issue. During the past year, the *Annals* has launched online submission and e-publication, along with new features e.g., book reviews and a special section of the journal devoted to issues of topical and ongoing interest to

Calendar of Events

June 27- 30

[SER-CSEB Joint Meeting](#)

September 17- 20

[ACE Annual Meeting](#)

October 15

Last date for submission
of proposals for
[Congress symposia](#)

June 21-24, 2006

[2006 Congress of
Epidemiology](#)

College members. New ACE-sponsored workshops (organized by Javier Nieto), including the "Epidemiology of Disasters", will be offered at the 2005 annual meeting and the combined meeting of [the Society of Epidemiological Research and Canadian Society of Epidemiology and Biostatistics](#) (held in Toronto in June 2005). An ACE-sponsored workshop will also be unveiled at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2005.

The notable expansion in College efforts has been possible largely as a result of fiscal oversight by longstanding current and past Treasurers, Jim Collins and Elizabeth (Terry) Fontham, respectively. The Finance Committee has shown impressive new energy under the capable direction of the Committee's Chair, Denise Oleske. ACE has also benefited from recent and past generous contributions by the National Cancer Institute (initiated by Ed Trapido) and the Centers for Disease Control (initiated by Dixie Snider), and also resulting from conference grant applications by Jim Collins. Recently, opportunities have increased for greater participation by Associate Members in the Annual Scientific Meeting through the provision of travel awards by Amgen (resulting from the initiative of John Acquavella). Finally, the bulk of the College's financial support is provided by dues-paying members.

The College is stronger than ever due to our active members. These recent initiatives demonstrate our commitment to a strong future for the College.

Martha Linet

Top Stories

Increasing Size and Diversity of ACE

During the past few years, the American College of Epidemiology has shown notable growth in size and more diversity by age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Through the energy and commitments of recent (Aaron Blair) and current (Lorann Stallones) Chairs of the Membership Committee, the College has experienced steadily increasing growth, increasing from 859 active members in 2000 to 1164 active members to date. In analyses by ACE Associate Member Sunday Clark and Past President Carlos Camargo, the demographic characteristics of ACE members have undergone a notable shift. Newer members are notably younger (age 54 years in 2000 vs age 42 years for members newly enrolled during 2001-2003), less likely to be male (66% male in 2000 vs. 50% male among newer members), and less likely to be white (86% white in 2000 vs. 66% white among newer members).

A variety of efforts have been undertaken to achieve this impressive growth and demographic shift, including directed campaigns in which members and fellows were strongly encouraged to enroll colleagues, friends, and former students or post-docs. A second category of efforts involved expansion of the categories of eligibility to include Associate Members (e.g., pre-doctoral students) and master's-trained epidemiologists (e.g., the highest degree was master's-level, but all other criteria for enrollment as Member or promotion to Fellow remain unchanged). In a third major effort, the Membership Committee recently developed a compelling, yet concise, 'Benefits of Membership' statement. Adjunct efforts to increase membership have included special new initiatives to increase exposure of young epidemiologists to the organization through special awards (e.g., the award for the best poster by a student; the award for the best recent doctoral dissertation work, and, more recently, travel awards to enable students and Associate Members to attend the Annual Scientific Meetings).

These continuing trends suggest that the College is attracting younger epidemiologists, who are

increasingly diverse in gender and race/ethnicity. If these patterns continue, the future of the College appears bright as newer members become increasingly active in College Committees and leadership roles.

Congress of Epidemiology 2006

Betsy Foxman, Chair, Program Committee

The 2006 Congress of Epidemiology is promising to be a very exciting meeting. Each of the 18 participating epidemiology societies is planning a symposium showcasing the substantive area of their society. In order to facilitate participation by students in this important meeting, the Program Committee is actively seeking funding for travel awards (any help in this regard would be greatly appreciated!). We plan to provide 50 travel awards to students who present their research at the meeting. Applications for the awards will be concurrent with abstract submission. Watch the meeting website (www.epicongress2006.org) for details. We also will award some scholarships to enable several students to participate in pre-meeting workshops. If you are interested in helping with the Congress, have an idea for a symposia, breakfast round table or special event or would like to help fund student travel awards please feel free to contact me. [Betsy Foxman](#)

ACE Annual Meeting

Focus on advocacy and conflicts of interest

John Acquavella, Program committee

Advocacy and potential conflicts of interest are among the most controversial issues in epidemiology. The interest in these issues among College members inspired the theme for the 2005 Annual Scientific Meeting - Epidemiology and Advocacy in the Real World. New Orleans provides an inviting backdrop for what promises to be a probing discussion of the financial, sociological, and ideological forces that influence the conception, reporting and interpretation of epidemiologic research.

Pre-meeting activities begin on Saturday, September 17 with free workshops organized by the Minority Affairs Committee and Ethics and Standards of Practice Committees, respectively. Sunday's schedule begins with the educational workshops, organized by Javier Nieto, followed by the welcoming reception organized by our local host Terry Fontham (Tulane School of Public Health). ACE meetings are known for their relaxed pace, for interactions between epidemiologists at all stages of their careers, and for the myriad opportunities that are afforded for attendees to participate actively throughout of the meeting. The 2005 meeting will be all that and more. Read on for program information.

The formal meeting program begins on Monday with a panel session in which four distinguished and provocative epidemiologists will discuss their experiences with advocacy and epidemiology. Michael Bracken (Yale University) will chair this session. Confirmed speakers include Raymond Neutra from the California Dept. of Health (title "The Two Activisms: Truth Telling and Advocacy"), Carol Hogue from the Rollins School of Public Health (title "Who Knows What I Believe?"), Kay Dickersin from Brown University ("How I became a Breast Cancer Activist and Epidemiologist and Lived to Tell the Tale"), and David Graham from FDA (title tbd). The initial plenary session on Monday is titled: Research in the Public Eye. Irene Hall (CDC) and Deborah Winn (National Cancer Institute) will co-chair. This session will focus on two areas of research that have been highly visible and impacted by different stakeholder groups. Merilee Gammon (UNC, Chapel Hill) and Deborah Winn (National Cancer Institute) will give papers about the challenges of studying postulated environmental risk factors for breast cancer on Long Island. Gregory Gray (University of Iowa) and Han Kang (Department of Veterans Affairs) will give

papers about ongoing research into Gulf War Illness.

The lunch hour will be filled with two concurrent policy roundtable sessions. One will focus on the non-profit advocacy community and their growing impact on health research. Faye Davis (University of Illinois), the session chair, has enlisted representatives from a number of non-profit organizations to share their views on advocacy and epidemiology. The other policy roundtable will address multi-disciplinary/multi-organizational studies and how to credit appropriately junior epidemiologists who work on such studies. To date, 15 epidemiology department chairs have indicated they plan to attend the ACE meeting, so this session will provide an opportunity for ACE to facilitate thinking on this important career-influencing issue. Ed Trapido (National Cancer Institute) will chair this session.

After lunch, Stephen Teret from Johns Hopkins will chair a session entitled: Epidemiology and the Courts to focus on the ultimate advocacy environment - litigation. Talks to be presented include: "When Science Promotes Justice" (Jon Vernick, Johns Hopkins); "When Emotions Overcome Science in the Courtroom" (Cliff Hutchinson, Hughes and Luce law firm); and "When Judges Struggle with Epidemiology" (Margaret Berger, Brooklyn Law School). Later in the afternoon there will be a repeat of last year's popular Meet the Editors session (see Meet the Editors story) Monday's schedule ends with the associate member/post-doc reception that provides a special opportunity for early career epidemiologists to interact with our guest journal editors, ACE Board members, special ACE award winners, and meeting speakers. The student prize paper winner will be acknowledged during the reception and the student travel stipends, sponsored by Amgen, will be awarded.

Tuesday's activities begin with the breakfast roundtables organized by Sandy Sulsky. The roundtables include a diverse list of topics including: Implications of identifying genetic markers for future disease (Jay Fowke – Vanderbilt University) and The Role of epidemiologists in cultural competency training for medical students (Olivia Carter-Pokras, University of Maryland). The morning plenary session follows with the presidential address by Martha Linet and the ACE special awards presentations and related talks: the Student Prize Paper and the inaugural Contributions to Applied Epidemiology award. These presentations will be followed by the final plenary session: The Threat of Pandemic Influenza, chaired by Betsy Foxman. Speakers include: Robert Webster (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital – "The origin and control of H5N1 influenza virus") and Jeanne Santoli (CDC – "Ensuring a stable influenza vaccine supply in the United States: Challenges and Strategies).

"Money talks and other Forces that Shape Scientific Inquiry" is the title for the traditional annual meeting debate. Sandy Sulsky (Environ Corporation) and Carlos Camargo (Harvard School of Public Health) are the co-chairs. The debate will feature different perspectives on conflicts of interest from speakers in academia, government, private industry, and consulting (Sean Hennessey (University of Pennsylvania), Michael Alavanja (National Cancer Institute), John Acquavella (Amgen, Inc.), and Ken Mundt (Environ). The meeting program ends with the annual awards luncheon, which features the Lilienfeld Award presentation and, an annual highlight, the award winner's speech. Roger Bernier is the organizer and moderator of the luncheon.

We hope to see you in New Orleans, September 17-20!

Changing Nature of Epidemiological Research: New Opportunities and Challenges for ACE (Focus of open luncheon on Monday September 19)

What is the role of the College as an agent of change? A trend often bemoaned by epidemiologists is

the rapidly increasing size, complexity, and cost of epidemiological studies. These changes are influenced by a wide range of needs and developments. One oft-mentioned reason is the growing number of modest, but apparently real associations that require substantial statistical power to detect and estimate accurately, while disentangling the relationship from potential effects of confounders and effect modifiers. A second determinant is the need to evaluate modest to moderate associations in subgroups defined by histological or molecular subtype of a disease entity, clinical features, or demographic characteristics such as age, gender, racial/ethnic group. Methodological requirements and/or biological aspects may also dictate study design features that may necessitate a cohort approach, rather than a case-control study.

More recently, the advent of the genetics/genomics/proteomics/and other 'omics' era has upped the ante considerably, necessitating large sample sizes and replication requirements that are being addressed through a wide array of novel study designs as well as assemblage of consortia. The rapid changes and developments in genetic and molecular components of many medical conditions also require greater flexibility and speed of epidemiological research than in the past.

Can the College contribute meaningfully to the changing nature of the field? Should the College be in the forefront, and, if so, in what capacity? Is the primary role of the College to provide an educational forum, primarily educating epidemiologists about new developments? Is it useful for the College to consider the various issues primarily in discussion or debate formats? Or, should the College play a more active role in bringing together experts who can inform epidemiologists, and can work with epidemiologists to consider and perhaps implement new directions or methods?

In an effort to consider these and other large issues facing epidemiology today, the Education Committee is bringing together Chairs from several departments of epidemiology at the 2005 Annual Scientific Meeting. The Chairs will consider these issues in an open luncheon sponsored by the Education Committee on Monday September 19 that will discuss strategies for professional advancement of junior epidemiologists within the context of large consortia. There will be follow-up discussion among the Chairs in a closed meeting. The Education Committee (Co-Chaired by Faith Davis and Ed Trapido) is focusing on addressing this and other key issues related to the direction of our research efforts in an era of team science and consortia.

Meet the Editors (Focus of open session Monday September 19)

The popularity of the "Meet the Editors" session in 2004 has led the College Program Committee to repeat this stimulating session at the 2005 Annual Scientific Meeting. To that end, Drs. Richard Rothenberg (Editor-in-Chief, *Annals of Epidemiology*), Allen Wilcox (Editor-in-Chief, *Epidemiology*), and Moyses Szklo (Editor-in-Chief, *American Journal of Epidemiology*) will jointly appear in a session that will be sponsored by the College's Publications Committee (Melissa Bondy, Chair; Jim Gurney, Vice-Chair). It is anticipated that these leading epidemiology journal editors will provide brief overviews of their philosophy along with 'do's' and 'don'ts' of successful submissions. The opportunity for extensive interchange between audience and Editors and among the Editors promises to be a highlight of the forthcoming Annual Meeting. Scheduled immediately before the reception for Associate Members, the Editors will continue informal interchange in the subsequent reception.

In the News

ACE Member Receives the Rema Lapouse Award

We are pleased to announce ACE member Mervyn Susser of Columbia University was awarded the Rema Lapouse Award for outstanding scientific contribution in the field of psychiatric epidemiology. This award is granted by three sections of the American Public Health Association (Epidemiology, Statistics, and Mental Health). Congratulations!

From the Board of Directors

At their April 12 meeting, the ACE Board of Directors heard from committee chairs on our expanding membership and improvements to the College. Look for new initiatives to be featured at the annual meeting. Ongoing contributions of past ACE presidents are appreciated.



ACE past presidents pictured left to right:
Sally Vernon, Robert Hiatt, Dale Sandler, Richard Kaslow, Carol Hogue, Carlos Camargo, Martha Linet, Betsy Foxman .

Committees

Membership

Lorann Stallones, MPH, PhD, FACE
Chair, Membership Committee

As one of the standing committees of ACE, the Membership Committee is responsible for increasing membership, retaining existing members of the College, and to address issues related to member services. Currently the [Membership Committee](#) has eight members and two ex-officio members. The members come from academic, government and private organizations. The committee has been involved with a number of initiatives to maintain and expand membership in the ACE. Examples of past activities have included committee members attending SER meetings to recruit new members, a member-get-a-member campaign with participation of the ACE Board and committee members personally contacting epidemiology colleagues who were not members, a campaign to recruit Associate Members through a direct mail campaign to epidemiology training programs, and a direct mail campaign to non-member epidemiologists who had attended an Annual ACE meeting.

A significant effort by a sub committee of the Membership Committee resulted in an mentoring plan developed to assist Associate Members in their professional development. Although the detailed

mentoring plan was not adopted by the ACE Board, the work done resulted in a modified program which was presented to the ACE Board at the Annual Board Meeting in September, 2004. The Board recommended that the Membership Committee work with the Planning Committee for the upcoming Annual Meeting in New Orleans. The membership of the committee has been active in planning approaches to inform epidemiology training programs about graduate student awards which will be available for this meeting.

On-going efforts of the Membership Committee include a membership retention campaign where individuals who do not renew their membership to ACE are contacted by a member of the committee and encouraged to renew their membership in the College. In addition, the committee has begun to identify states and regions of the world where membership is low. We are working on a plan to increase membership in those areas through some modification of the member-get-a-member approach or through identifying organizations in those areas to target for a recruitment campaign.

Finally, the committee completed a [brochure](#) on the benefits of ACE membership which was included in the recent renewal notices.

Commentary

While ACE continues to be financially healthy, lower than expected attendance at last year's annual meeting reduced our reserve funds. Mark your calendar to attend the annual meeting in New Orleans this September. We are still looking for a photo editor to help organize the College's photo library. Please contact me if you have an interest. Thanks. [Carol Burns](#)

ACE News is published by the American College of Epidemiology

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