

## Secretary's Annual Report 2012

**John C. Morris, M.D.**

This is my first annual report to the membership of ATA and I wish to begin by thanking the ATA for the opportunity to be involved with the many activities of our organization. It has been a good year for the ATA I will here touch on several of the items, some completed and some that will continue forward, that have made it such a strong year.

**ATA's membership** has continued to grow in numbers and diversity. Although we are still working to get better information about the interests and backgrounds of our members, it is clear that our organization is increasingly made up of persons of widely varied training and specialization, but who are all focused upon this small gland at the base of the neck. This is both exciting and challenging for us: Exciting in the opportunities it brings to learn from and teach our colleagues from other backgrounds, and challenging in that we need to provide those opportunities for education, research, and networking in the setting of varied disciplines. This year for the first time, and through a board directive which is reflected by a change in our by-laws, we implemented targeted membership on our board of directors through nominations of members within a specific practice area and/or specialty focus. The board is now charged with assessing its make-up and directing the nominations committee this way each year. This year's new members, which will be announced during this business meeting, will include a physician in practice to replace Carol Greenlee who is completing her term, and a second at-large member. It is important that the Board have accurate accounting of our members' demographics for this to work well for us, so I am here reminding you to please complete that workplace and specialty information on your member's page on the website and keep it up to date by reviewing and editing it periodically.

As mentioned in his annual report, one of the major themes of our President, Jim Fagin's term has been to re-connect and assure programming and **opportunity for the basic science cohort of our membership**. Several initiatives have been or are being implemented to address this issue. ATA's support of the satellite meeting on Thyroid Hormone Resistance held prior to our annual meeting, and efforts to bring all those who attend this meeting to our annual meeting is one example of this effort. We will also be adjusting the registration costs for basic scientists in the next year in order to make it more attractive to attend our annual meeting. We will enhance the focus of the program committee and ensure strong basic science representation on the committee and a strong and broad basic science component within the program. Our board will be discussing the establishment of a research affairs task force or committee to help us develop this plan further and into the future. In addition we welcome your continued commentary and suggestions to be included in our ongoing efforts.

Along these same lines, a major strategic priority of the ATA is support of **research** through **funding** of promising and important thyroid investigation. Last year ATA was able to contribute almost \$300,000 towards this line item. These funds come largely from ATA endowments and

from important contributions from ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors', Inc. funding thyroid cancer research projects. This year we were contacted by and successfully negotiated an endowment contribution from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation of \$406,000 which has been received and deposited with our financial advisor Barry Garber at Deutsche Bank. These funds will be designated for use by the donor specifically for Thyroid and Pregnancy related research. We anticipate this endowment will generate sufficient funds by 2014 for issuance of an RFA and funding research awards, which will be managed through our research committee.

In my opinion the peak activity of the ATA and arguably the basis of our existence is the **annual meeting**. This year's annual meeting is expected to be a near-record one with respect to attendance (the all-time record was the New York meeting in 2008). The depth and breadth of our scientific program continues to grow and is again outstanding this year, thanks to the efforts of the program organizing committee and its chairs **Elizabeth Pearce and Doug Forrest**. Of course the efforts of the ATA office are all important in making this meeting successful and I wish to thank all the office staff for their work, especially Adonia Coates, for making this meeting what it is. You may have noticed the growth in display booths in the industry display area. This growth, which brings income to the ATA through our meeting is largely through the marketing efforts of Adonia and is especially important in these days of declining direct sponsorship contributions from industry partners.

After a one year hiatus, ATA will be holding a **Spring Symposium** for 2013. In keeping with the format other ATA spring meetings the focus will be narrower than our Annual Meeting, and include both research and clinical programming surrounding a current topic of high interest in Thyroidology. Jacquie Jonklaas and Ken Burman, along with other members of the Hypothyroidism task force, are deep into the planning process for this which will held April 25-26 in Washington, D.C. It will focus on clinical and research topics around hypothyroidism and thyroid hormone analogues, and is entitled "Treatment of Hypothyroidism: Exploring the Possibilities". It will include a half day of basic science topics on Thursday afternoon followed by a full day of clinical presentations on Friday, and will be held at the Westin City Center. Please mark your calendars for this.

Congratulations to **Peter Kopp** for being selected as the new **Editor-in-Chief for THYROID**. Peter brings tremendous energy and editorial experience to this job and is already well into the transition process, which will be completed and "official" in the New Year. Through discussion with our publisher, Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., he has already brought several new ideas and objectives forward for implementation and promises to further advance THYROID in its scope, visibility, and importance. He will of course be building upon a very strong foundation that has been constructed by the current EIC, Charles Emerson, and Charles' predecessors Terry Davies and Jerry Hershman. Already the premier journal for thyroid-related science, of all types, the impact factor for THYROID increased again this year to 4.792, a tribute to the efforts of the editorial board under Charles' direction. And with Peter's leadership, it promises to grow and flourish towards even greater heights.

Most of the work of ATA is accomplished through the efforts of our many **committees and task forces** and their members and chairs. You will see many examples of these efforts during the committee reports at this annual business meeting. A couple of especially notable items from this long list include the recent acceptance for publication and upcoming publication of the Hypothyroidism **guidelines**, led by Jeff Garber in collaboration with AACE, and the Anaplastic Thyroid Cancer Guidelines led by Bob Smallridge. We expect both of these to be in press by the end of the year. These documents continue and add to the superb list of similar publications that set the standard for thyroid disease diagnosis and management guidelines and are a source of pride and notoriety for our organization and completion of them is a major effort for the task force members and for our office staff. I offer a special thanks to all members of these task forces and all who supported them. Other active guideline task forces at present include Basic Science in Thyroidology, Pediatric Thyroid Cancer, Thyroid Nodules and Cancer, Medullary Thyroid Cancer, and Thyroid Hormone Replacement and Use of Thyroid Hormone Analogs.

As noted by David Sarne and alluded to above, we continue to experience a drop in **contributions from industry** for direct support of our annual meeting. This is not unique to ATA and is being experienced by all professional organizations, although because of the smaller focus of our society we may be more affected than some other groups. We continue to be diligent on our search for support of ATA activities. One very important effort here is the establishment of the **Corporate Leadership Council (CLC)**, which is directed by Greg Randolph and had its first meeting at Indian Wells. This council will serve to improve collaboration between ATA and subscribed industry partners. Its first project will be to establish a mechanism by which to serve as a communication link between ATA members and these corporate partners. Much work has already been done and more will be accomplished at a meeting of the CLC on Saturday. We anticipate the membership to begin seeing this in your in-boxes within a few months. Because the treasurer is elected by acclamation, it is safe for me to say that Greg will become Treasurer-Elect of ATA as of this business meeting and will continue many of these efforts as part of his responsibility as Treasurer. Greg and members of the Development Committee are also actively pursuing new ideas and avenues of support for ATA activities which will expand our base of funding for research, clinical and patient oriented projects. More to come on this over the next few months.

Last year at our meeting Rick Kloos announced the ATA's leadership of the **Medullary Thyroid Cancer Registry**. This is an industry sponsored, nation-wide registry of MTC cases that has been mandated as a post marketing requirement to pharmaceutical companies who produce GLP-1 directed therapies for diabetes mellitus. It is a response to C-cell proliferation and neoplasia observed in rats and mice in pre-clinical testing, although no such changes were observed in non-human primates or in the 7000 humans who participated in clinical trials. ATA's has been asked to provide expertise and leadership in the oversight of the registry activities and data. Novo-Nordisk is the leading industry partner but several other companies will also be involved in the effort. Rick was chairing this initiative himself in its original design, but with the change in Rick's position, Mike Tuttle has generously agreed to lead this registry task force which will

include several additional ATA members. The study will be 15 years in duration and will result include the industry consortium's support of ATA's leadership and participation.

ATA continues to be served tremendously well by our **headquarters' office staff**, which of course is led by our outstanding **CEO, Bobbi Smith**. Bobbi's knowledge of our organization, effective management skills, and warm manner is the face of the ATA for much of what we are and do. Thank you Bobbi for all that you do for us. Bobbi leads a strong and effective group in our office, **Adonia Coates**, director of meetings, **Sharleene Cano**, membership and publications, **Kelly Hoff**, development and IT, all of whom have several jobs and duties including support of our committees and task forces. Last but not least is **Shirlyn Barger** who serves as our Chief Financial Officer and works closely with the Treasurer, Finance and Audit Committee, our Auditors, and the Board of Directors and keeps all of our financial bottom lines in view.

I want to thank **Jim Fagin** for his dedicated service as ATA President over the last year. I have very much enjoyed working with Jim and have found him to be as strong a leader and advisor as he is a scientist. He has been exceptionally involved in numerous issues and efforts of ATA during his tenure and will continue to work on many of these over the next year as Past President. The only difficulty I have had with Jim is beating him to the email punch, because he always seems to be available to answer. **Bryan Haugen** will be stepping into this role very soon and is already active in many items. I am looking forward to his leadership over the upcoming year as well. Special thanks to Greg Brent whose helpful advice and deep knowledge and memory of our societies' activist has served us all and especially me extremely well.

I thank the ATA for the opportunity to serve our organization as Secretary.