



## ASH: RENAISSANCE OF A SOCIETY— A MOVEMENT OF VIGOROUS RENEWAL

Throughout history, scientific groups that have remained on the forefront of disseminating new ideas have survived various obstacles and turmoil in the course of their existence. In the survival process, each has had to revisit and reflect on their original purpose in light of changing circumstances. Each has recaptured, restated, and restructured its original mission to meet current member needs and those of the society at-large, thus experiencing a rebirth and renewal. They have all emerged wiser, stronger, and more courageous as world leaders in their respective disciplines.

Like many other professional medical societies, the American Society of Hypertension (ASH) is struggling with issues dealing with changes in research focus and funding, in health care delivery and quality, in the numerous guidelines and position papers, in disclosure and conflict of interest issues, and in organizational structure and member needs. To manage these issues, the Society has implemented a major paradigm shift—as noted by Dr Suzanne Oparil in her March 2007 leadership message referencing the implementation of the new strategic reorganization of the mission and role of the Society. With that initiative, ASH has refocused its mission not only on scientific research in hypertension and vascular health but also on translation into the community. As Dr Robert Phillips noted in his recent leadership message, “translational research, bringing to the fore the recognition that although bench to bedside and efficacy trials are critical, without dissemination of these results into the community through education and community-based activities, the public will not benefit from our scientific advances.”

This “renaissance” within the Society has prompted a number of initiatives at every level of the organization. These initiatives include (1) position papers on hypertension topics to the 2008 ASH public health, (2) hypertension community outreach programs that started in New Orleans and will continue throughout the country, (3) launching of an ASH Educational Alliance with Medscape.com and theheart.org, and (4) translation of state-of-the-art research topics in the scientific meeting program for

current and new target audiences. Furthermore, in his address at the May 16, 2008, ASH Annual Membership Meeting, Dr Henry R. Black issued a call for members to embrace their role as ASH members with engaged *commitment, contribution, cooperation, collegiality*, and *consensus* to advance the mission and goals of the Society.

As in most medical societies, the ASH Annual Scientific Meeting is its cornerstone, highlighting the focus of the society on current hypertension research translated into effective treatment strategies for patients. The Annual Scientific Meeting serves as the scientific forum where new ideas are presented and others are borne through discussion and critique from other researchers and clinicians from around the world. The key to its success is the volume and quality of the abstracts submitted. The ASH Annual Scientific Meeting is the forum for the presentation of your scientific research!

We want high-quality basic science as well as translational, clinical trial, and outcomes research. The meeting this year will feature many more oral presentations, with a reduced number of posters. We invite abstracts from basic and clinical scientists. The Program Committee this year has been revamped with many new faces and with younger and more diverse talent generating new concepts for the meeting. Please note that awards will be given for best presentation in a given category, and travel awards will continue to be granted.

We invite all who have attended the ASH Annual Scientific Meeting in the past to come and experience the “renaissance.” To individuals who have never attended, come and see how a high-quality meeting can provide a boost to your career. For a group to be successful, they must work together. The discussion and knowledge disseminated is dependent on the abstract number and quality, so “the more the merrier.” I invite all of you to try ASH again, for the first time, and to submit an abstract and see what we are today.

See you at the May 6–9, 2009, ASH Annual Scientific Meeting in San Francisco!

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