

Passing the Torch

One of the more gratifying aspects of being involved with a group such as SNMITS is seeing the way members work together to build on a foundation that has been carefully and thoughtfully laid over the years. This collaborative spirit has made my term as president both easier and more fruitful than it might otherwise have been.

Many of the accomplishments I could list in my final message to you as president of SNMITS are in actuality the culmination of years of hard work by former presidents in concert with the many amazing volunteers that make up the technologist section. At the same time, some of the projects we began during this year must wait to come to completion under other capable hands. But, judging from the list below, one thing is certain—SNMITS is an organization that will continue to lead the way in nuclear medicine technology.

Education. In keeping with our commitment to education, this year ushered in several new or improved developments. The position and title of nuclear medicine advanced associate were established, and we have filed for approval from the Department of Education. The first course should begin in fall 2008 or spring 2009 and will enable highly capable and motivated professionals to achieve an advanced degree as they increase their clinical responsibilities. We have also developed a new, more comprehensive entry-level curriculum—including CT and MRI and other molecular imaging modalities—to ensure that those embarking on an education in nuclear medicine technology are better prepared. The SNMITS Continuing Education (CE) Committee made available the required educational resources and board reviews necessary for preparing for the PET and nuclear cardiology certification examinations and continues to develop more curricula in emerging technologies—making many of these modules available online. One particularly exciting initiative is “VOICE credit sharing,” which will transmit CE credit data directly to the Nuclear



Medicine Technology Certification Board, ensuring that credit is reported accurately and on time.

International Outreach. It's a small world, and we are reaching out across borders to our international colleagues. We recently extended SNMITS member rates to technologist members of the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) interested in attending our meetings. This June, SNMITS and EANM will cosponsor a session at the 55th annual meeting of the SNM. We are eager to see the new dynamic that develops as we share ideas with nuclear medicine technologists in other countries. I am particularly excited about being invited to speak at an upcoming meeting in South Africa and sharing our experience here in the United States with our colleagues there.

Advocacy. Our efforts to ensure passage of the Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility, and Excellence (CARE) legislation met with some success, although we were disappointed that the Senate HELP Committee neglected to include a critical section enforcing credentialing standards. At the time of this writing, the bill is due for another markup at a later date. Another limited success was the restoration of \$17.5 million to the Department of Energy Basic Nuclear Medicine Research Fund, down from a budget of \$34 million prior to 2006. We will continue to press for sufficient

funding to ensure that the United States remains the leader in nuclear medicine research and therapy. To that end, the state health policy liaisons have been renamed “key advocates,” since they will work to increase community action on legislative issues related to molecular imaging through advocacy assignments, e-mail updates, and other activities. On a very practical level, the SNMITS Advocacy Committee generously supplied funds to allow several representatives from SNMITS to attend “RT in DC,” an event in Washington, DC, sponsored by the American Society of Radiologic Technologists in support of the CARE legislation.

Leadership Development. Recognizing that leadership must be cultivated, SNMITS sponsored its first Leadership Academy in September 2007. Many of those attending took enhanced skills, new ideas, and improved communication techniques back to their local chapters and are using them to keep SNMITS in touch with its members across the country. The technologist section has also created new award categories designed to help students and practicing technologists attend scientific meetings and educational courses.

These are just a few of the many initiatives and ideas we are working on. I wish I had room to list every one and in more detail. Of course, none of them would have developed to this extent without the enthusiasm and hard work of our members—you! For that, I am humbled and grateful and amazed.

And so it is with a sense of pride in our past accomplishments and a hope for our future that I pass the torch to my successor, Mark Wallenmeyer. I know he will run his course as president of SNMITS with skill and agility. I would encourage him to rely on the eager and intelligent help he can expect to receive from the members so that at this time next year he, too, can look back with satisfaction at a race well run.

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