

# Lighting a Fire for Our Future

*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*

**T**hese words, written a century ago by the Irish poet W.B. Yeats, certainly resonate today with members of the SNM Technologist Section. We know there is a lot of work to be done if we want to ensure that nuclear technologists continue to keep pace with changes in our industry. We know we need to do more than simply fill pails with proposals and ideas. We need to expand our educational opportunities, curriculum development, and grant and scholarship awards. We need to light a few fires.

Some of you may have already heard about SNMTS efforts to expand education opportunities for our members and equip students new to the field, but they bear reviewing.

**Enhanced Educational Curriculum.** Technologists need to be competent in PET/CT and SPECT/CT fusion imaging in the very near future, in PET/MRI within a few years, and in radioimmunotherapy as research and protocols develop. To meet this need, the Technologist Section has approved a professional entry-level curriculum outline as the educational foundation for individuals entering the field of nuclear medicine technology. Because our professional applied curriculum does not address these areas of practice, we support the requirement of a bachelor's degree for entry into the field by 2015. Because this is a complicated issue, we are examining different types of models and working with representatives of two-year and certificate programs to advance this effort. SNMTS will increase outreach efforts to discuss the new curriculum and entry-level education.

**New Middle-Level Provider.** Members of the Advanced Practice Task Force are collaborating and investigating the creation a new middle-level



provider of nuclear medicine services with representatives of allied organizations. The final competencies and curriculum will be approved this year, paving the way for colleges and universities to start the master's program for advance practice—perhaps as early as this fall.

**Scholarships and Grants.** Five new technologist award categories have been approved to cover travel expenses for technologists' first-time oral presentations at the SNM annual meeting, completion of a bachelor's degree, enrollment in an advanced practitioner program, student travel, and clinical advancement to gain the appropriate education in additional modalities (such as CT or MRI).

**Continuing Education Programs.** SNMTS continues to develop programs that focus on CT, MRI, and nuclear medicine. We also held our first annual Leadership Academy to cultivate new leaders. This past fall, we brought together bright technologist professionals to participate in a seminar focusing on team development, communications, decision-making, and conflict resolution. The Technologist Section also set into motion

a strategic plan that will continue our work with existing educational programs to facilitate training about principles and concepts through preceptorship tracks, scholarships and grants, and networking. We are developing a recruitment campaign—targeted at technologists early in their careers in emerging technologies, advanced imaging modalities, and molecular imaging and therapy—and extended the free-trial student program for up to 24 months.

**The SNM 55th Annual Meeting, June 14–18, in New Orleans, LA.**

This year's meeting features a new scientific investigation track, "Novel Approaches to Molecular Imaging," showcasing studies involving nonradioactive molecular imaging techniques and agents. Be sure to register soon for the meeting. Details are available on the SNM Web site ([www.snm.org](http://www.snm.org)).

**Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility, and Excellence (CARE).** SNMTS continues to advocate for CARE in Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy legislation. The markup of the Senate version (S.1042) by the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) has been delayed. The CARE legislation would require personnel performing the technical components of medical imaging and radiation therapy to meet federal education and credentialing standards in order to participate in federal health programs. Passage of the bill would result in enhanced patient safety and a higher quality of medical imaging and radiation therapy services. Last fall, Technologist Section members joined more than 750,000 health care workers from 20 related organizations in a virtual march on Capitol Hill to urge its passage. We thank all of you

who called, wrote, or visited legislators about CARE and requested that Department of Energy funding be restored for basic nuclear medicine research. Our efforts were rewarded by the inclusion of approximately \$17.5 million. Members of our Advo-

cacy Committee champion these and other issues, including the USP 797 regulation that governs a wide range of pharmacy policies and procedures and CT state licensure issues.

As you can see, we made a lot of progress, but it only stirs us to work

together for more. It's the only way we'll be able to keep those fires lit!

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