JUNE 2022 ASHI DIVISION REPORTS

Operations Division

Audit Task Force

Nothing to report.

Awards Task Force

The committee is preparing guidelines and an application process for a new award targeting young researchers. The award will be funded for 3 years by LabCorp in memory of ASHI member and LabCorp director, Dr. Michael Schmiederer. This is an informational item at this time while this opportunity is being developed.

The Awards Task Force and Sub Task Forces are completing score sheets to determine this year’s winners.

The ASHI Travel Fund is a resource that provides financial assistance to ASHI members so they may attend ASHI meetings. To be considered for a travel award, individuals must complete an application. Applications are reviewed and scored by the Awards Task Force using a score sheet. For 2022, the Board approved the following:

- For the ASHI Annual Meeting, the travel awards will increase from $1,500 to $2,000 for international members and from $1,000 to $1,500 for domestic members.
- For the ASHI Annual Meeting, 10 face to face and 15 virtual awards will be provided. The awards will be split as evenly as possible between domestic and international members. The EC will revisit how funds are awarded after reviewing applicant submissions.
- For the ASHI Educational Workshop (AEW), 10 travel awards of $1,000 each for the face to face AEW and 10 complimentary registrations to the virtual AEW will be awarded.

Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws committee and the Membership committee proposed revisions to the ASHI Bylaws. The proposed revisions were sent to membership for public comment. The Bylaws committee and Membership committee prepared responses for the public comments.

Finance Committee

Nothing to report.
Information Technology Committee

The committee created a process for reviewing the ASHI website. Some of the web pages need more oversight than others, so the committee agreed to three tiers of reviews: monthly, quarterly, and annually. Reviews are assigned to respective committees and headquarters staff. The staff liaison, Stephanie Isons, sends review reminders and maintains a tracking list of completed reviews on Smartsheets.

Leadership Development Task Force

Ballots were mailed to US and Canada members with pre-addressed stamped envelopes for the return of the ballot. Non-US members were emailed a ballot to be completed and mailed back to ASHI Headquarters. This was done to ensure that the ballots of non-US members were completed and returned to ASHI by the deadline. Regardless of location, all members are required, by Missouri law under which ASHI is governed, to return the completed ballot by mail. The deadline for receipt of ballots was July 29th.

Communications Division

Communications, Engagement, and Marketing Committee (CEMC)

Dr. Helene McMurray will serve as STIC liaison on the CEMC.

CEMC patient partners (3), caregiver partner (1) and donor partners (2) will assist in the following initiatives:

- ASHI 2022 Annual Meeting laymen/plain language abstract scoring for awards
- ASHI 2022 Annual Meeting laymen/plain language overview/summaries
- Public ASHI website patient page redesign

The CEMC leadership has collaborated with leadership of the ASHI Education Committee and ASHI Technologist Affairs Committee to address the concern that ASHI/HLA are not officially part of national/international technologist training programs.

This year, the CEMC has achieved great success and consistency in forming a campaign calendar using Smartsheets. This format has allowed all CEMC members to contribute to campaign creation.

Social Media Analytics

- Facebook (~32% increase in followers this quarter)
- Instagram* (~108% increase in reach this quarter)
- Twitter** (~216% increase in profile visits this quarter)
- LinkedIn (~44% increase in followers this quarter)

*ASHI Instagram account founded on 8/4/2021  
**New ASHI Twitter account founded on 9/1/2020  
**Old ASHI Twitter account closed/disabled on 5/25/2022
AABB Molecular Testing Standards Committee
Nothing to report.

AABB Relationship Testing Standards Committee
Nothing to report.

AAI
Nothing to report.

ACBSCT
Dr. Manish Gandhi has rotated off ACBSCT, so there will be no future updates until ASHI chooses a new liaison.

AFDT
The AFDT expresses thanks to ASHI and its Board of Directors for helping AFDT spread the word about AFDT's Basic and Specialist Course offerings. The Specialist course held June 2022 in Portland was very successful. AFDT is excited to support ASHI during this year's ASHI annual meeting and would like to inform the ASHI membership about future $1,000 technologist scholarship opportunities for courses in 2023. AFDT hopes to offer Basic and Specialist Courses yearly. At this time, AFDT is unsure if those meetings will be virtual or in-person.

AMP
At this time, ASHI does not have a liaison to this group.

AST
The AST Biomarker Consensus Conference in Kidney and Heart was held virtually on January 27-28, 2022. This was a closed session with working groups for Kidney and Heart that included HLA Directors. Consensus papers will be submitted to AJT.

The AST-ASHI STAR conference took place virtually as a pre-meeting for the Cutting Edge of Transplantation meeting on April 5, 2022. This was open to ASHI members. Great attendance. [Click here for a link to the program](#) to see the HLA topics that were covered. A paper is being submitted to AJT. There will be 2 non-HLA antibody sessions at the ATC pulling from members of this STAR group.

ASTCT
No report received.

CCCLW
CCCLW isn’t meeting again until December.

FOCIS
The 2022 meeting will be held in San Francisco from June 21-24, 2022. On behalf of ASHI, Dr. Elaine Reed organized two jointly sponsored symposia.

IHIWS
The IHIWS was held in the Netherlands in May. ASHI’s liaison to the IHIWS, Carolyn Hurley, was unable to attend, so she could not report on activities of the group.
**NMDP**
Nothing to report.

**The Joint Commission**
The Joint Commission Business Development and Advisory Councils Joint Meeting was held on Thursday, May 5, 2022, at its headquarters in Oakbrook Terrace, IL. Dr. Sam Ho attended the meeting in person. A variety of topics were discussed during the Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Council meeting, such as updates on the TJC lab accreditation program, laboratory performance improvement standards changes, and current education activities and new initiatives, etc. However, nothing pertaining to histocompatibility and immunogenetics testing was discussed.

**UNOS**
No report received.

**WBMT**
No report received.

**WMDA**
- Held a membership meeting in May by teleconference. One item on the agenda was discussion of the role of unrelated donor registries/cord blood banks on upcoming cellular therapy initiatives worldwide. The In person meeting is scheduled for the Netherlands October 17-19.
- ASHI members might find the [WMDA wiki on hematopoietic stem cell donor suitability](#) useful.
- WMDA's Search & Match Service is a tool for obtaining an overview of whether an unrelated donor exists for a patient in need of a stem cell transplant. A search coordinator supporting a physician in identifying an unrelated donor can immediately give them an initial overview. To simplify this process, WMDA has created a set of 3 digital applications. These API’s can be integrated into a registry's internal system to automate many of the processes that currently require manual effort, such as data entry and analysis from multiple data sources. Security is also being upgraded.
- The WMDA collects Serious (Product) Events and Adverse Reactions—S(P)EARs—via an online reporting tool: SPEAR. The aim of the SPEAR system is to gain insight in the occurrence of serious events and adverse effects in relation to blood stem cell donation by volunteer donors and blood stem cell collection/processing from volunteer donors. Reporting for related donors is highly encouraged as well. For example, in 2020, a WMDA S(P)EAR Committee received three (3) reports of serious incidents in which the patient’s extended and/or verification HLA-typing was performed after final donor selection. The results showed a significant mismatch or even complete discrepancy with the typing on which the donor was matched.

**National Clinical Affairs**
The ASHI on the Hill article written by WSGR representatives James Fleischmann and Julie Shroyer appeared in the June 2022 issue of the ASHI News e-newsletter.

**Publications**
Since the last quarterly report, the Publications committee has reviewed the 2022 Q1 and Q2 ASHI Quarterly articles, 1 new ASHI-U module, 10 issues of ASHI insights, 5 issues of ASHI News, and 15 ASHI eblasts.
ASHI Quarterly
The Q1 2022 issue was released to the membership on April 18. This was the last issue produced by AH. E & M Consulting is now the publisher of the ASHI Quarterly. The Q2 issue was released to the membership on Tuesday, June 14. You’ll notice that there is advertising space available on this site. E & M will be selling this advertisement space beginning with the Q3 issue. In 2023, they will take over selling the advertisement space within the publication. Our hope is that E & M will be able to entice new vendors to reserve advertisement space in the ASHI Quarterly to offset the cost of production.

ASHI Insights
This e-publication is distributed to ASHI members twice monthly on Tuesdays. It contains ASHI meeting news as well as favored scientific articles, some recommended by the STIC.

ASHI News
This e-publication was created to share non-ASHI meeting related news items such as member and committee spotlights, news from our sister societies, etc. It’s distributed to ASHI members once a month. If you have news to share with the ASHI membership, contact Mandi Cruz.

Membership Division

Membership Committee

The committee continued New Member orientations via Zoom, which have been well received. Recordings are placed on ASHI University and the speakers are rotated for each call.

The committee has begun planning games and programs for the Annual Meeting including:

- ASHI Wheel Game at the Membership Booth
- Mentor/Mentee program
- Volunteer Breakfast
- New Member and First Time Attendee Reception
- Mobile App Leadership Board contest

The committee created a proposal for a Membership Assistance Fund which will be presented for board approval.

Regarding the newly approved membership categories:

- The committee is working with staff to prepare for the launch of the new membership categories in September 2022.
- The committee reviewed and updated questions on the electronic membership profile application to better utilize available data.

International Committee

The webinar series subcommittee is initiating a new bilingual series of webinars and case studies. A French webinar has already been hosted and an Arabic one is on the way. Many initiatives are now being prepared through the webinar series including soft communication skills series and case studies. The multilingual webinar series is planned to also include advice and real experiences from
international laboratories regarding proficiency testing and ACHI certification testimonials from international members to increase awareness of such activities.

A proposal is still being formulated to introduce translation software that allows instant translation subtitles for spoken words in many languages to facilitate comprehension and communication with international members.

A survey among international committee members was conducted to allow more engagement from members and to introduce new ideas and initiatives.

An update about the EFI meeting and the IHIWS held in The Netherlands will be prepared and propagated through the Facebook group *International Interactions* to engage and encourage international members.

The committee is also planning an in-person reception for the 2022 ASHI Annual Meeting.

**Directors’ Affairs Committee**

Surveys created by the committee to identify differences in testing, interpretation, and education within ASHI laboratories have been completed. The information on practice variation will be provided to ASHI members.

The committee is finalizing the agenda for the Director’s Forum presentations at this year’s ASHI Annual Meeting in October 2022. We will focus on HR in HLA (Nevada Donor Network HR guest speaker), discuss HLA Communication/Consultation with clinical teams (committee input content), and highlight new directors/trainees.

The committee has been gauging interest in the publication of a study manual for CHT/CHS/Directors’ exams (purchasable review book, beyond ASHI-U material) with practice examinations. Further discussions with the Education Initiatives Sub-committee is underway.

A CPT coding shared practice article has been outlined and sent to the CPT sub-committee for review prior to writing a summary for the ASHI Quarterly.

The committee has discussed ASHI’s position on the Proposed FDA rule/VALID Act of 2021 update.

**Technologists’ Affairs Committee**

The June 2022 virtual happy hour was held on June 16th with guest speaker ASHI President Dr. Annette Jackson. September and December’s virtual happy hours will focus on leadership development.

There will not be a combined Technologists’ and Directors’ Affairs Forum at this year’s ASHI Annual Meeting; each committee will hold its own, separate Forum. The committee is in the process of confirming topics and speakers for the Technologist Forum.

The committee continues to make regular contributions of ASHI Quarterly articles, including case studies from poster submissions at past ASHI meetings, HLA journeys of technologists, experience of certified ASHI inspectors, and summaries of virtual happy hours.

The committee continues to market the Technologist mentoring program.
The committee created a feature in *ASHI News* called Techs on The Move to shout out technologists moving from one institution to another.

**Science & Education Division**

**Education Committee**

The Education Committee is comprised of three subcommittees. Below is a report from each of these subcommittees.

**ASHI Educational Workshops Subcommittee**  
Faculty, keynote speaker, donor and recipient, and moderators are selected. Case studies have been selected. We are progressing as planned for the in-person meeting on June 23-25 at Westin, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and then for the Virtual meeting on consecutive Fridays, July 22nd and 29th.

**ASHI University Subcommittee**

- Cells and Tissue module was released on ASHI University in May 2022.
- The committee is discussing succession planning for the incoming co-chair.
- The chapter on Autoimmune diseases and HLA is near completion.
- A “HLA Beyond Tears” task force has been created to further discuss options on showcasing this asset and bridge the past to the future in terms of histocompatibility testing/management issues and newer technologies on our ASHI University platform.

**Educational Initiatives Subcommittee**

Certification Exam Study Guides are posted on ASHI University. The Project group is reviewing user comments and preparing an update.

The Director in Training Journal Club is proceeding according to monthly 2022 schedule. The organizing group is hosting a teleconference on July 11 to obtain input from all the directors-in-training as to next year’s activities. Chairs of relevant ASHI committees involved in director training and review have been invited to attend.

A professional development webinar series to be presented quarterly in collaboration with other committees is underway. In November, the subcommittee together with the Technologists’ Affairs Committee will present a webinar on employee retention and career ladders. The STIC and Technologists’ Affairs will coordinate webinars through November.

Developing training sessions for non-HLA healthcare professionals is completed and slides are available for ASHI member use on the ASHI website (https://www.ashi-hla.org/page/Education).

Orientation session slides for new ASHI committee chairs and vice-chairs are completed and in use. Joint International HLA Laboratory Director’s Curriculum project has been transferred to DTRC/Portfolio Committee & ACHI Board.

International HLA Lab Mentoring project has been transferred to the international subcommittee of the Membership Committee.
An HLA Technologist Training Program is being prepared as the program offered by Michigan State University (Dr. Gerlach) with suggestions on content from ASHI members of subcommittee. This is not an Educational Initiatives Project per se.

In the Fall, the committee will request the Board to clarify “ownership” of components of the ASHI University website i.e., who oversees content and duration of time posted No action needed at present.

Science and Technology Initiatives Committee (STIC)

In October, Dr. Abeer Madbouly will reach the end of her term as STIC Chair and pass the Chair role to the current STIC co-Chair Dr. Nicole Valenzuela.

Dr. Helene McMurray is now acting as the liaison between STIC and CEMC. STIC and CEMC have a strong relationship with regular communication around hot scientific topics and publications to be shared through ASHI social media channels.

STIC Subcommittee updates:

Professional Development Subcommittee
This subcommittee is a collaboration with the Educational Initiatives subcommittee. The group has successfully planned and delivered a webinar on CPT codes and reimbursement. Currently, part II is being planned of the same topic. Two upcoming webinars are being planned on presenting scientific and clinical findings and employee retention in collaboration with the Technologists’ Affairs committee.

Basic Science Subcommittee
The group has completed a proposal for future offerings of the ECA and Innovation awards following the successful experience of last year. The proposals are described in the initial section of this report. STIC is requesting the Board approval of this proposal.

Discussions are currently on-going with LabCorp to offer a new award in honor of the late Dr. Michael Schmiederer. The award will be funded by LabCorp on a yearly basis for the next three years in the amount of $15K to support research directly connected to transplantation. Discussions are on-going to design the eligibility criteria and judging rubric for this new award.

HLA Dictionary Subcommittee
The HLA Dictionary subcommittee continues to update the 2008 Dictionary with more diverse alleles and more HLA loci. Dr. Loren Gragert has recently presented an update on the subcommittee’s work in the 18th IHIWS held in Amsterdam. More work is currently being implemented to align the recent proposal from Dr. Marcelo Fernandez-Vina

Reimbursement Subcommittee
A group of STIC members has recently drafted a proposal for the complete lifecycle of a new laboratory test. The proposal has gone multiple iterations and is now ready to be discussed in the Reimbursement subcommittee. Dr. Michelle Hickey will be invited to the discussion as a liaison to the STAR Network
  a. STIC has recently provided a proposed list of publications to cover all 2023 scientific webinars presented by the DIT Journal Club.
  b. STIC continues to provide non-Human Immunology articles for publication in ASHI Insights and promote on social media.
  c. The STIC Chair is participating on the Program Planning Committee for the 2022 ASHI Annual Meeting.
Professional Standards Division

Accreditation Review Board

The ARB met in person in Louisville, KY on April 1 & 2. Cycle 3 labs were reviewed and approved. Business was taken care of as well. The ARB will meet again August 4-6 in Asheville, NC.
ASHI’s deemed status approval with CMS was announced in the agency’s Federal Register publication on April 15th: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/04/15/2022-08153/announcement-of-the-re-approval-of-the-american-society-of-histocompatibility-and-immunogenetics

The ARB has formed a task force to perform a crosswalk of ASHI Standards & UNOS policies – Dr. David Nguyen from QAS is also sitting in on this task force so there is overlap there, too.

We have decided to host another full day inspector training workshop at the annual meeting this year in Las Vegas. This year would typically have been a half day update only (they rotate every year: half day-full day-half day-etc.), but due to the pandemic and travel restrictions, we’d like to give folks another opportunity to become a trained inspector. Attending a full day workshop is the first step.

The ARB is exploring a “Commissioner’s Corner” addition to ASHI News blast emails or similar, where the ARB will address a certain issue regarding standards interpretation, based on some of the queries they receive on a regular basis from labs. Should be great & interesting education for all labs.

ACHI Board of Directors

This group has quarterly zoom meetings and one face to face meeting in the Fall.

There have been multiple discussions about PSI, the company we outsource exam activities to including application processing and exam administration. The current contract expires in December 2023. We’ve had issues this past year with psychometrician leadership with exam committees (improving!) and customer service for candidates applying to take the exam (subpar, continuing.) The ACHI Board is considering an RFP next year for a new exam company, but the priority now is to complete a job analysis to update exam content. PSI has given the board a quote which will be reviewed by the ASHI Board of Directors.

ACHI Portfolio Committee

The committee redesigned letter templates with ACHI & ASHI logos together.

We are getting clarification from CMS on their interpretation of regulations for directors/technical supervisors with a DCLS degree to see if it meets criteria as an earned doctoral degree.

Incoming committee members in October 2022: Dr. Cathy Gebhart, Dr. Cynthia Ellison, Dr. Daniel Ramon and Dr. Elaine Chou-Wu. Dr. Ryan Pena is stepping up to be the next vice chair of the portfolio committee.

The May 1, 2022 portfolio cycle has 7 new directors submitting portfolios (a normal cycle is 4-5 portfolios). Oral interviews will happen in June & July this year.
Proficiency Testing Committee

Jr. Data Manager
Nick Paris was chosen out of an excellent pool of candidates to serve as the first Junior Data Manager on the PT Executive Committee. Monthly training sessions have begun to provide him a better understanding of the current software and his role and responsibilities.

ImmuCor Contract Negotiations
The current contract with Immucor expires December 2022. Calls between the PT Executive Committee and Immucor have begun to discuss possible updates to the contract, including pricing. The PT Executive Committee is currently in discussion with Immucor to determine whether additional offerings for the EMO (Engraftment Monitoring) survey (subset testing, additional admixtures, etc.) are feasible.

Shipping charge increases
Immucor recently reevaluated shipping and handling charges and has proposed increases that reflect higher FedEx shipping charges for some locations. S&H increases vary from 2% for some locations to more than 100% (Puerto Rico). The PT Program Director has requested Immucor reevaluate their proposed shipping charges so that labs are not negatively impacted by a higher than usual S&H increases. Additional information will be provided once it is available.

Proposed Document/Customization fee
Shipping to international laboratories is more complicated than shipping to domestic labs for several reasons, including requests by international labs for customized documentation. During the past two years, the types of customization have increased with labs not only requesting that the vendor provide a separate letter (to include specific sample details) on vendor letterhead, but also asking for specific language to be added to commercial invoices, asking for shipping brokers to be contacted during specific timeframes, asking for emails with pictures of packaging (boxes and tubes) to be sent prior to shipment, and even asking for custom tube and box labeling for their lab’s particular shipment. Often these requests require several rounds of communication to clarify the details of the request and to confirm if the additional details are indeed necessary for facilitating clearance of the shipment. Because the volume and complexity of these document requests have increased and continue to require additional time and attention during the preparation and fulfillment of thousands of tubes shipped by Immucor for each survey, Immucor has proposed adding a document/customization fee for labs making such requests. The PT Program Director is in discussion with Immucor to determine a range of agreeable amounts for such requests.

Clotting
Ongoing discussions with Immucor about clotting issues (experienced by some ASHI laboratories in the past) resulted in Immucor enacting additional quality control measures after several rounds of testing culminating in no reports of clotting issues during the recent AC survey. Immucor indicated that a more careful handling of the blood during the tube filling process may have contributed to the positive turnaround.

ACD to CPDA-1 Bags
Discussions with Immucor also resulted in the vendor switching from ACD bags to CPDA-1 bags during the 2022 EMO-1 survey since ACD bags limited the number of blood centers available to Immucor in the past.
Immucor Audit Materials
At the request of the ASHI PT Executive Committee, Immucor is in the process of compiling information, including pictures and videos taken during the fulfillment process, which could be used for auditing purposes annually since an in-person audit is not possible due to COVID restrictions still in place at the Waukesha facility.

CAP Audit
Every three years, the ASHI PT Program is audited by CAP as a CAP-approved PT provider. This year, the audit meeting is scheduled for August 2022 between ASHI and CAP representatives. It will be held virtually. Documents requested by CAP have been provided for their review prior to the meeting.

Reimbursement for Typing Lab (AC survey)
In 2021, the Board agreed to reimburse the AC survey typing lab for the amount of the AC module ($1335) with the stipulation that the PT Executive Committee would gather additional information on the need for this testing (via the AC Questionnaire). The AC Questionnaire was sent to 113 AC participant labs to assess if the typing data was essential to participant testing, if it was needed within a specific timeframe, and if typing could be assigned to other lab(s) that might be willing to provide this testing as a service to the ASHI community.

Though several U.S. laboratories were willing to provide AC typing, only 2 labs - Baylor College (Dr. Peter Jindra’s lab) and LifeLink - were willing to provide it within 1-2 days and only Baylor College was willing to provide it this year. Other U.S. labs that were willing to provide testing were not able to do so within a 1-2 day timeframe, so Baylor College provided the typing for the 2022 AC-1 survey.

Quality Assurance & Standards

The draft 2022 standards have been approved by the ARB and ASHI Board and are ready for public comment. The QAS committee will host its first webinar regarding the 2022 proposed changes to that ASHI Standards before they go out for public comment. The webinar is scheduled for July and the public comment period will follow.