

ISBER Elections Biosketch Secretary (May 2020-May 2023)

First Name	Last Name
Monique	Albert
Degree (if applicable)	
M.Sc. Biological Sciences; PMP	
Current position and institution	
Director, Ontario Tumour Bank, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research	
Education and Experience	
<p>Monique Albert is the Director of the Ontario Tumour Bank at OICR (www.ontariotumourbank.ca), in this role for 7 years.</p> <p>In all, she has 2 decades of professional experience in the biobanking, health research and pharmaceutical sectors, having held a number of leadership and research roles at MaRS (EXCITE), OICR, the STTARR Innovation Centre at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the Microarray Centre (both at University Health Network) and in the corporate sector at Cangene Corporation and Affinium Pharmaceuticals.</p> <p>Her academic background combines a M.Sc. in Biological Sciences with Project Management certification/professional designation. During her time in university, she also developed skills in the area of enviro-bio research, having contributed at a thesis level to microbiology, food science and oenology research, making her a well-rounded candidate for representing all ISBER constituents.</p> <p>She presently serves ISBER in a number of capacities, including DAL Americas, and has served CTRNet (details below). She also had the privilege of co-chairing the Program Committee for the ISBER 2017 Annual Meeting in Toronto. Further, she has been appointed as an expert member to the Standards Council of Canada in the ISO 276 mirror committee.</p>	
Biobanking Interests	
<p>Ms. Albert began working directly with human biospecimens in 2001, in (at the time!) the very cutting edge area of RNA microarray analysis as a researcher. It was through this experience that she realized first-hand the utmost importance of controlling pre-analytical variables for generating the most reproducible data and, based on this, developed a number of initiatives to be implemented at the institutional level. She has been building on this expertise since.</p> <p>While sample quality is a key element of a biobank's success, it is not the only one that matters. She sees 3 main pillars that hoist up a biobank, and if one is weak the entire repository is at risk: (a) meet research needs (e.g., quality/fit-for-purpose, sample diversity), (b) sustain operations (e.g. costs, efficiencies, utilization, resource allocation, funding), (c) compliance with standards/regulation (e.g., ethics, privacy, best practices). Ms. Albert has interest in each of these, but has contributed most in the area of <i>biobank sustainability</i>, using her knowledge in the areas of Project Management and business planning to add the conversation around "future-proofing" the biobank itself from an organizational standpoint. To this end, Ms. Albert has presented her findings as a keynote speaker at the UHNGU Biobank symposium (2019, Toronto), co-edited a special edition on sustainability in Biopreservation and Biobanking (2015), co-chaired the sustainability session at ISBER 2015 (Phoenix), and published in Biopreservation and Biobanking (2014). Selected publications are listed below.</p>	

Professional Activities (ISBER and other)
ISBER Working Groups
<p>Board of Directors, Director-at-Large Americas (present, since May 2017) Member, Governance Committee (present, since June 2017) Member, Standards Advisory Committee (present, since 2018) Chair, Internal Audit Tools Task Force (present, since 2018) Member, ISBER/ASCP-BOC Qualification Task Force (present, since Jan 2018)</p>
Professional Societies and Volunteer Organizations related to biobanking
<p>ISBER: Member since 2010. Contributions are listed above and below in the “working groups” and “organizer of meetings” sections.</p> <p>CTRNet (the Canadian Tissue Repository Network): served as a leader of one of the founding member biobanks (OTB). Through this, Ms. Albert had a direct, hands-on role in developing the ROPs and SOPs that are a part of the CTRNet certification and education process.</p> <p>International Standards Organization and the Standards Council of Canada: Expert member of the Canadian mirror committee, contributing to WG2 of TC276 which has special provisions for biobanks.</p>
Organizer or co-organizer of meetings/conferences:
<p>Scientific Program Committee co-chair (Annual Meeting, 2017, Toronto) Scientific Program Committee member (Annual Meeting 2015, Phoenix) Co-chair, Sustainability Session (Annual Meeting 2015, Phoenix)</p>
Editorial Boards
N/A
Other
<p>Position statement:</p> <p>Hello! I’ve been volunteering my time to ISBER for many years. It has been a joy to be a part of it, and I would be pleased to transition into the role of Secretary. Having served the past 3 years on the BOD as Director-at-Large Americas and as a member of Governance Committee (which is chaired by the Secretary), I would be able to hit the ground running to keep the pace on existing aims. Having plenty of experience in a number of other roles within ISBER, I know where we are making the best impact and what our challenges are.</p> <p>In addition to being a voice on the ISBER Board of Directors as an Officer, the Secretary leads the maintenance and development ISBER by-laws, policies, and procedures. These are effectively the foundation of the society. It is important for the person elected into this role have a clear understanding through experience of how ISBER functions. This includes how BOD, Head Office, the advisory committees, WGs, and SIGs intersect and interact to drive innovative ideas forward to the benefit of us all. I believe that for any changes contemplated to ISBER’s governance materials, it is important to retain the original spirit of ISBER as envisioned by the founders, while also enabling growth and modernization. The governance framework empowers us to collaborate effectively to advance the biobanking sector.</p>

An example of my contributions to this aim, I initiated a project to create more opportunities for members to get involved and stay involved. This project has been assigned to a new Task Force reporting to the Governance committee. The path towards engagement and leadership is being further defined, for newer members wondering how to contribute their talents. Equally important, this project will define avenues for experienced ISBER leaders to stay involved – their knowledge, expertise, and commitment to ISBER is incredibly valuable (and valued!) as ISBER continues to evolve.

ISBER has enabled me to bring so much relevant knowledge back my organization, which is a benefit that I am sure is experienced by many others. ISBER is a great space for sharing ideas and bringing peers together for advancing the field – truly it is an important resource for tackling cross sector issues. The society and its members are savvy, wonderfully inclusive, and collaborative. I am happy to continue to volunteer my time and expertise for the continued growth of ISBER. I hope that my track record demonstrates that I show up prepared and ready to contribute, with the best interests of the Society and its members at heart.

Thank you for your consideration!

Selected peer-publications:

Assessing the stability of RNA and DNA Extracted from Fresh Frozen Human Tissues after Long-term Storage at Cryogenic Temperatures. Kelly R, Albert M, de Ladurantaye M, Moore M, Dokun O, and Bartlett J. Biopreserv Biobank. 2019

Finding the Path to Biobank Sustainability Through Sound Business Planning.
Henderson M, Simeon-Dubach D, Albert M. Biopreserv Biobank. 2015 Dec;13(6):385-6. doi:
10.1089/bio.2015.29039.mh.

Biobank bootstrapping: is biobank sustainability possible through cost recovery? Albert M, Bartlett J, Johnston RN, Schacter B, Watson P. Biopreserv Biobank. 2014 Dec;12(6):374-80. doi:
10.1089/bio.2014.0051.

Generating a comprehensive set of standard operating procedures for a biorepository network – the CTRNET experience. Barnes RO, de Souza-Hitzler J, Damaraju S, Albert M, Kodeeswaran S, Mes-Massons AM, Schacter B. Biopreserv Biobank. 2013 Dec;11(6):387-96. doi: 10.1089/bio.2013.0061.