ACNP Bulletin

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Annual Meeting Evaluation Results

Alan Frazer – ACNP Secretary

Following the 2005 Annual Meeting, the Council appointed a Task Force to evaluate the annual meeting. The task force was asked to solicit input from a cross section of members and meeting attendees, conduct an analysis of the input, and make tangible recommendations on how to respond to the findings. The task force engaged Innovation Management, LLC (iM), a consulting company with experience in carrying out this type of survey research, to gather data, both qualitative and quantitative (focus groups, intercept interviews and an electronic survey), about the content, structure, time, and location of the Annual Meeting.

Innovation Management began the research study with a series of qualitative focus groups and intercept interviews that were carried out at the ACNP Annual Meeting in December 2006. About 40 members, randomly selected but representative of the membership of the College, took part in the focus groups. From that feedback, Innovation Management developed an electronic survey that was administered in February and March 2007. The survey was sent to 1,115 ACNP members, associate members, fellows, travel awardees and corporate representatives. We received 693 responses for an overall response rate of 62.2%. Of those who responded to the survey, 77% were Associate Members, Members, Fellows and Foreign Corresponding Fellows.

In general, the results of the web survey confirm the findings from the qualitative focus groups and intercept interviews held at the 2006 Annual Meeting. Below are highlights of preliminary conclusions drawn by the Innovation Management Team from the survey.

Content and Structure of the Annual Meeting

- The three primary reasons for attending the annual meeting include: (1) overall quality of the science, (2) networking and relationship building with other professionals, and (3) mix of basic research and applied/clinical research.

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Annual Meeting Evaluation Results

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- Respondents' perceptions lean toward adequate to too little discussion and debate during scientific sessions. Given that one-quarter of respondents say there is less time for discussion now than there was five years ago, yet a large proportion found the time for this to be adequate, this is something to be mindful of during meeting planning – but does not warrant large changes.
- Web survey results fail to confirm the qualitative finding that additional effort to offer greater scientific opportunities to young investigators would be helpful but instead suggest that the Travel Awardee program is acceptable as is, yet would not be harmed by including additional trainees and program components.
- More than 70% of respondents (71.6% completely agree or generally agree) agreed that potential conflicts of interest were sufficiently reported to audiences; this finding supports the work that ACNP has done in recent years to build transparency in reporting.
- Nearly 70% of respondents (66.9% completely or generally agree) perceive a trend toward having the same oral presenters (as Panel Chair, Discussant, or Presenter) year after year at the Annual Meeting. Further, nearly 80% of those who recognize this as a trend indicate they dislike the repetition.
- A large majority of respondents (81.6%) do not feel that additional programming is necessary for spouses and children.

Timing of the Annual Meeting

- A large majority of respondents (84.3%) indicated that the timing of the meeting (during the first two weeks of December) is acceptable. Of the respondents who accept the early December time, the first week of December was preferred to the second week by a large margin.

Geographic Location of the Annual Meeting

- The ideal geographic location for the ACNP meeting definitely involves warm weather. For many respondents, the ideal geographic location also involves an easy flight to and from the destination.
- While a convenient continental U.S. destination will not necessarily impact the overall success of the meeting, many members value an easy flight.
- The proportion of respondents who say they would 'never' or 'always' attend the meeting in Puerto Rico or Hawaii is similar. In other words, there are just as many respondents who <u>never</u> want to be in Puerto Rico or Hawaii as <u>always</u> want to be in Puerto Rico or Hawaii. The ACNP is simply not going to be able to please everyone all the time. South Florida, Arizona and Southern California were also seen as acceptable locations.

Hotel Venue for the Annual Meeting

- The most important criteria for hotel venue included the availability of functional meeting space for scientific sessions, adequate poster space, and overall hotel quality. The least important criteria included access to golf, tennis or a spa, that the hotel venue is the same every year, and access to shopping or entertainment.
- ACNP members are not looking for a new "home" in a hotel venue.

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Annual Meeting Evaluation Results

(continued from page 2)

Growth of the ACNP Membership

- A large majority (85%) of respondents say the meeting size is acceptable at its current size.
- Nearly 60% of respondents agree that expanding social and professional networking opportunities during the meetings is a good idea.
- Two-thirds of respondents (66.3%) completely agree or generally agree that ACNP membership should grow at a rate comparable to the growth rate of the field. However, 57% of respondents agree (either completely or generally) that it *is* possible that the meeting could grow to a level in which it would no longer be interesting.

Role of Industry within the Annual Meeting

- With regard to planned gatherings with industry professionals at the Annual Meeting, 8.7% of respondents had formal, planned gatherings at a poster or scientific session, and about 17% had planned, formal gatherings outside of a poster or scientific session.
- No consensus exists as to changes in the role of industry within the ACNP: 20% of respondents perceived a decreased role, 40% no change, and 40% an increased role.
- 95.6% of respondents indicated that the role of industry at the 2006 Annual Meeting was either somewhat or very appropriate; only 5% of the membership experienced or perceived what they considered to be inappropriate involvement of industry. In addition, 87.6% of respondents say that the ACNP has done adequate or 'above and beyond' work to ensure ethical industry involvement.

A link to the full report with recommendations from Innovation Management may be found on the ACNP home page. Council will be reviewing these results and using them as a guide in making decisions about our Annual Meeting and related issues. For those of you who participated, I sincerely appreciate the time you took to complete the survey. I am confident that this exercise will assist Council in making decisions for years to come.

A special thanks to the members of the Annual Meeting Evaluation Task Force: Ellen Frank, Michael Green, Terry Goldberg, Philip Harvey, and Richard Keefe.

Nature Publishing Group – Discount Offer

Nature Publishing Group has extended an offer to ACNP members for substantial discounts on a number of their journals. To take advantage of this offer go to the following web address: http://www.nature.com/content/npg/AJSociety/index.htm.

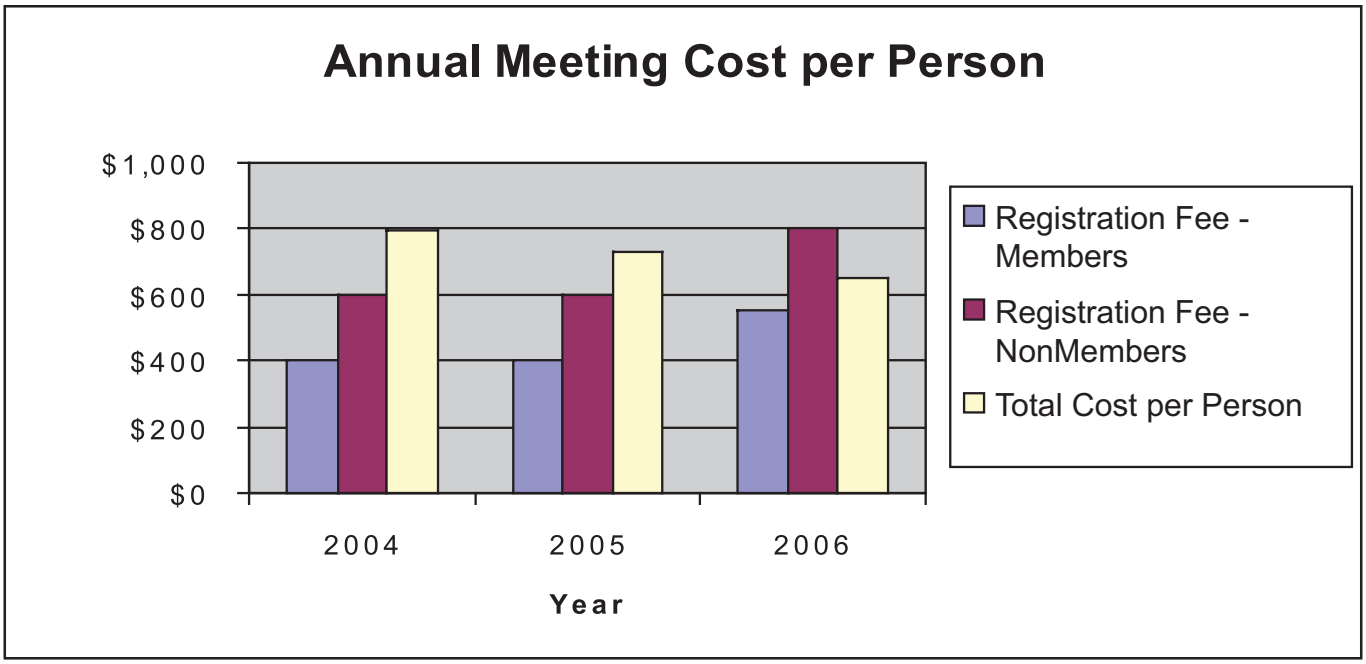
ACNP Annual Meeting Financial Report

Ronnie Wilkins – ACNP Executive Director

Over the last several years there have been many conversations in Council and even more among members about the impact of moving the annual meeting to the continental U.S. One of the factors considered in making the decision to move was the financial benefit. Council projected, and announced to the membership, that there would be a significant financial advantage to holding the meeting in South Florida. Since the cost of the meeting constitutes a significant portion of the total College budget, it plays an integral role in our efforts to reduce the percentage of financial support that comes from the pharmaceutical industry.

The 2006 Annual Meeting in Hollywood, Florida, exceeded our projected financial benefits of relocating. We had a total net gain from this meeting of over $320,000 compared to the meeting in Hawaii, and of over $276,000 compared to the 2004 meeting in Puerto Rico. Our expenses decreased by over $229,250 as a result of a 15% discount on food and beverage costs from the Westin Diplomat, assuming management of and negotiations for food and beverage pricing by the ACNP Executive Office, decreased travel expenses, and our tax exempt status in the state of Florida, which saved over $38,000. Income from the Annual Meeting was increased by over $91,000 from incentives in the hotel contract and a contribution to the College from the Ft. Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau.

On a per person basis, the cost of the meeting has dropped from $792 per person in 2004 to $652 in 2006. The following chart compares the cost per person with the registration fees in 2004 – 2006.



The financial impact of the meeting destination is certainly not the only factor in choosing a location, but it is an important one. As we move forward in establishing our financial independence, it is important for members to understand the financial impact of our meeting.

Advocacy Committee Resolution

Council recently approved the following resolution from the Advocacy Committee:

"Whereas NARSAD philanthropy over the past 20 years has made possible the performance of hundreds of experiments by ACNP members, it is resolved that Council encourages ACNP members to make themselves available to NARSAD, as speakers, whenever and wherever NARSAD sponsors public education symposia concerning the severe brain disorders for which it seeks improved diagnosis and treatment."

ACNP Code of Conduct Receives Recognition by AAMC

The March 2007 Issue of the AAMC Reporter included an article entitled "Conflicts of Interest Targeted in Research, Medical Education," which prominently mentions the ACNP's recently adopted Code of Conduct for Supporting Corporations. The Reporter article describes the issue of conflicts of interest as a pervasive problem in medical education and discusses plans of the AAMC's Task Force on Industry Support for Medical Education to thoroughly review existing policies and procedures and to report its findings by the end of 2007. The ACNP Code is described as one of a small number of efforts by medical schools and academic societies to "codify the nature of their own relationships with industry." You can find the article on the AAMC website at http://www.aamc.org/newsroom/reporter/march07/start.htm.

History Committee Looking for Volunteers

The History Committee has begun editing video and audio transcripts from the ACNP archives of member interviews from past Annual Meetings. These interviews tell the history of neuropsychopharmacology and the College through the eyes of our membership. Tom Ban is heading up this project which will play a role in commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the College in 2011. If you are available to assist in editing the already transcribed interviews, please contact Kay White in the ACNP Executive Office at kwhite@acnp.org.

ACNP Annual Meeting Invitation Bank

The ACNP Executive Office will again manage an invitation bank for this year's Annual Meeting. Members who are not using their invited guest privilege may donate their meeting invitation to the invitation bank. Other members, who may be looking for an invitation for a young colleague, may then use one of those donated invitations. In order to qualify for an invitation from the bank, the invitee must be no more than fifteen (15) years beyond his/her most recent degree (M.D., Ph.D., or comparable).

If you wish to donate your invitation, you may return the invited guest card (that you will receive in the meeting registration materials) indicating your donation or send an e-mail to acnp@acnp.org.

If you should decide to invite a guest after donating your invitation, the Executive Office staff will pull that invitation from the bank. The total number of extra invitations will not be allowed to exceed the number in the bank.

NIH Director's New Innovator Award

The NIH Director's New Innovator Award will support research by new investigators who propose highly innovative projects with the potential for exceptionally great impact on biomedical or behavioral science.

NIH expects to make at least 14 awards in September 2007. Each grant will be for 5 years and up to a total of $1.5 million in direct costs plus applicable facilities and administrative costs.

Women and members of groups that are underrepresented in biomedical or behavioral research are especially encouraged to apply.

Open to New Investigators Who:

- Have not yet obtained an NIH R01 or similar grant
- Hold an independent research position at an institution in the United States
- Received a doctoral degree or completed medical internship and residency in 1997 or later
- Propose research in any scientific area relevant to the NIH mission

Apply Electronically

- Get instructions at http://r.vresp.com/?NIHOCPL/de791f3be8/879796/1b04cf309f/6d5c5a3
- Prepare the short application; preliminary data allowed, but not required
- Submit the application through Grants.gov between April 25 and May 22, 2007

More Information

- See http://r.vresp.com/?NIHOCPL/933265193f/879796/1b04cf309f/6d5c5a3
- E-mail questions to newinnovator@nih.gov or call 301-594-4469

Dates to Remember

Mid-May 2007	Registration Materials Distributed
May 18, 2007	Deadline for Honorific Awards Nominations
September 4, 2007	Deadline for Posters/Hot Topics
September 17, 2007	Deadline for Membership Applications

Upcoming Meetings

62nd Annual Convention Society of Biological Psychiatry
May 17th-19th, 2007
Westin Horton Plaza
San Diego, CA
Peterson.maggie@mayo.edu
http://www.sobp.org/

APA
May 19-24, 2007
2007 Annual Meeting
San Diego, CA
http://www.psych.org/
apa@psych.org

CCNP
June 15-18, 2007
30th Annual Meeting
Banff, Alberta, Canada
www.ccnp.ca

38th Annual ISPNE Conference
August 19-22, 2007
Madison, WI
www.ispne.org

World Congress on Psychiatric Genetics
October 7-11, 2007
Marriott Marquis Hotel
New York, NY
www.wcpg2007.com

20th ECNP Congress
October 13 - 17, 2007
Vienna, Austria
ecnp2007@iceo.be

ACNP Annual Meeting
December 9-13, 2007
Boca Raton Resort and Club
Boca Raton, FL
www.acnp.org
acnp@acnp.org

International Society for Bipolar Disorders 3rd Biennial Conference
January 27-30, 2008
New Delhi, India
www.kenes.com/isbd

Neuropsychopharmacology Press Release

Developmental nicotine exposure diminishes attention capacity – March 16, 2007

The Public Information Committee selected the manuscript, "Gender Specific Effects of Prenatal and Adolescent Exposure to Tobacco Smoke on Auditory and Visual Attention," to be released to the media through the Nature Publishing Press Office. The release was picked up in Scientific American, Post Chronicle, Detroit News, Medical News Today and Newsday.com.

Teen smokers who were also exposed to nicotine before birth show a dramatic reduction in attention capacities related to vision and hearing, reports the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*. The study, led by Leslie Jacobsen and colleagues, also demonstrates that male and female attention capacities are affected by the exposure in different ways.

Jacobsen's team found that girls who smoke and were subject to nicotine exposure in the womb performed most poorly in both visual and auditory attention tasks. Individuals who do not smoke and did not have prenatal exposure performed most accurately. As expected of a dose-dependent effect, those performing in between were individuals who smoke but whose mothers did not, or individuals who do not smoke themselves but whose mothers did during pregnancy. In boys, nicotine exposure had a greater effect on auditory attention, suggesting that brain regions involved in auditory attention may be more vulnerable to nicotine in boys. These gender-specific effects may result from differences in hormonal control of nicotine's actions.

Previous studies on smoking have found that rates of tobacco smoking and nicotine dependence are higher among individuals prenatally exposed to maternal smoking. The Center for Disease Control reports that smoking during pregnancy is the single most preventable cause of illness and death among mothers and infants. Prior to this study, very little research was available on the less dramatic effects of exposure to smoking such as the impact on attention capacity.

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