

## Letter from the President



*Paul A. Fuchs, Ph.D.*  
2008-2009 ARO President

ARO members:

We can take pride in the scientific growth of our association, as evident in each year's Annual Meeting. Our fields of study have dramatically expanded with new knowledge, therapeutic approaches and possibilities. At the same time, our success brings with it the responsibility to sustain and promote those efforts. This letter will provide an update on near- and longer-term planning that will shape ARO activities; resulting in part from a Strategic Planning session (ably directed by Gregg Talley) held on Saturday at the Phoenix meeting. This session aimed to clarify the ARO's mission, structure and longer-term goals – more about these later.

### Meeting Sites

The most immediate issue remains location, as warranted by the central role of the Annual Meeting in our affairs. Council members, aided by the superb effort of Lisa Astorga at Talley Management, have spent many hours considering and visiting potential locations (with special thanks to recent site visitors John Middlebrooks and Bob Shannon). We've gradually reached a new meeting site formula, drawing on input from membership, especially from the annual survey, results at:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=fvx92PYWzqixPsOIQwTmhK6hK4IsDPZUWcTCzWnlyGY\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=fvx92PYWzqixPsOIQwTmhK6hK4IsDPZUWcTCzWnlyGY_3d)

Perhaps most significant is that the ARO will adopt a 'bi-coastal' plan, alternating east and west coast sites for the next several years. This was strongly favored in the most recent membership survey (73.5% of 340 respondents) versus a single city plan. The International Committee also noted their approval of the bi-coastal plan in their annual report. The chief considerations for site selection have been to encourage attendance, while keeping costs as low as possible to enable maximum participation. Thus, Council has sought the best-equipped, most socially congenial and accessible venues possible.

Now, the foremost question for many is, of course, "When do we return to the beach"? The reality is however, that beachfront meeting sites with adequate meeting space are much more expensive (or not served by major airports). As examples, room rates for the Marco Island Resort (Naples, Florida) for 2010 are \$349 single/double, in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, \$319-329. So, in keeping with the goal of a west coast alternative, Council has agreed to hold the 2010 meeting at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim. Room rates will be \$179 (plus \$10 facilities fee). Nearby airports include LAX (35 miles), John Wayne (Orange County – 14 miles), Ontario International (37 miles) and Long Beach (19 miles). The convention hotel has

nice opportunities for strolling and mingling, and Huntington ('Surf City, USA') and Newport beaches are ~16 miles away.

As you know, we're returning to the Marriott Waterfront in Baltimore for 2009. This site has been well-received by the membership for the facilities, setting and ease of access (despite the 'unwarm' climate...). Furthermore, the Marriott has been eager to secure our business with favorable rates (\$179 for 2009). Therefore, Council has agreed to extend a contract with the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront for 2011 (\$199), 2013 (\$209) and 2015 (\$219). Council will again depend on membership feedback to consider Anaheim as a recurring west coast site. I'll end this section by emphasizing the importance of cost in choosing a meeting site. Many of us are struggling with the effects of shrinking NIH support. This is unlikely to improve in the near future. The rising cost of energy (e.g., airfares) is certain to increase our expenses. So, we face the challenge of shepherding the ARO, and supporting its growth, in the face of falling resources and rising costs. Given the economic present and likely future, affordability and ease of access will help to promote meeting attendance, especially for trainees and overseas members.

### The 2009 meeting program

The 2009 program in Baltimore will include symposia on deafness mutations, central auditory processing, vestibular compensation, cellular development and psychophysics. The Presidential Symposium, "Comparative Studies of the Ear – of (more than) Mice and Men" will provide a Cook's tour of ear function from moths to monkeys. There will be workshops on animal research, media relations, and one from the patient advocacy committee on speech and language disorders. A number of social events will lubricate discussions, including the second edition of the Saturday evening welcome gathering. For those who care (dare?), the Hair Ball will take place Wednesday evening, location to be announced.

Begin thinking about symposium proposals for the 2010 meeting in Anaheim. The Program Committee will select among submitted proposals during the 2009 meeting in Baltimore. Guidelines for symposium proposals can be found on the ARO website.

### Strategic planning

A complete Strategic Planning communiqué will be forthcoming, but here I'll excerpt a few points of interest. ARO committee structure has become somewhat unwieldy. Some could become task forces with finite life-times, others could be merged. For example, a new "Training Awards" committee might combine responsibilities now split between Graduate Student Travel, Minority Affairs and Physician Research

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## Letter from the President (continued)

Training. Likewise, the existing Government Relations, Patient Advocacy, Media Relations and Animal Research Committees might combine forces in various ways to handle external relations. Discussion of committee structure will continue at upcoming Council meetings. Any members with advice regarding such re-structuring are encouraged to write to their favorite Council members.

Council considered the growing 'internationalism' of the ARO, (non-U.S. membership ~ 30%) how to best serve those members, and to encourage future growth. The bicoastal meeting sites arrangement is one such step. Another is to seek national diversity in committee membership, and on Council itself. Committee appointments for the 2008-2011 term have been made with that goal in mind. At the same time, the International Committee will continue to provide a specific forum for issues of concern, and a conduit for advice to the Council. While a non-U.S. site for the Annual Meeting is unlikely (NIH funding vs. international travel), ARO collaboration in activities elsewhere can be brought to the Council for consideration.

One other topic that bears mentioning is that of clinician attendance at the mid-winter meeting. Some have noted a disparity between the scientific content of the mid-winter meeting and the academic activities of many otolaryngologists. Certainly one important motivation for any biomedical research is its eventual application to the human condition. Furthermore, the bench-to-bedside dialogue can be reciprocally fruitful,

## Letter from the Editor



*Peter A. Santi, Ph.D.*  
ARO Editor

This newsletter highlights events that are planned for the 2009 ARO MidWinter meeting, which will be held in Baltimore, Maryland. We are returning to the excellent Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel. Abstracts can be submitted from September 1 to October 1, 2008, and remember that each abstract must be sponsored by an ARO member. Details on the meeting and abstract submission are available at: <http://www.aro.org/mwm/mwm.html>.

In regard to abstracts and publications, I recently read a document entitled: *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication*. This document was revised in 2007 by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and can be obtained from the following URL: <http://www.icmje.org/>. The document contains a great deal of useful information, and section II.A on *Authorship and Contributorship* provides specific criteria for who should and should not be an author of a biomedical publication. If you have comments on the ICMJE's authorship criteria, send me an email at: [psanti@umn.edu](mailto:psanti@umn.edu).

advancing therapeutics AND inspiring research efforts into fundamental mechanisms. Both our main source of NIH funds ("...Deafness and Communication Disorders") as well as our very name provide medical identities to our association. Thus, we will continue to seek mechanisms to encourage clinician attendees. One such step will be to start the meeting on Saturday, using the entire weekend. This option was highly favored in the survey (89.5% of 390 respondents). Discussion will continue at Council, and input from members is encouraged. Upcoming surveys will direct questions to this topic.

### Last words

Finally, here at the midpoint between Annual Meetings, it's useful to reflect on the role of the ARO in our profession. As I wrote at the beginning of this letter, research into hearing and balance continues its extended renaissance as novel surgical, imaging and prosthetic techniques combine with molecular, biophysical and computational advances. We, the scientists in this field, have both the opportunity and the responsibility to make the most of this expanding frontier. Our professional society, the ARO, is a vehicle for that endeavor and we should use it to move forward. This requires an active membership. Attend the Business Meeting at the Baltimore ARO, volunteer for committee appointments. Last but not least, donations to help rebuild the reserve fund are always welcome (<http://www.aro.org> to make a pledge).

See you on the waterfront.

## Call for Abstracts

The Association for Research in Otolaryngology invites you to electronically submit an abstract for the 32<sup>nd</sup> MidWinter Meeting being held at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Maryland. Abstracts may be submitted electronically in any of the 20 ARO meeting categories. Please visit the ARO website to submit your abstract by clicking on the submission link. The abstract site will open on September 1, 2008. The deadline to submit is October 1, 2008. <http://www.aro.org>.

## Future ARO MidWinter Meetings

### **February 14-19, 2009**

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland

### **February 6-11, 2010**

Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California

### **February 19-24, 2011**

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland

**2012:** TBD

### **February 16-21, 2013**

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland

**2014:** TBD

### **February 21-26, 2015**

Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland

## Long Range Planning Committee Report: 2008 MidWinter Meeting Questionnaire Summary



*Robin L. Davis, Ph.D.*

*Chair, Long Range Planning*

'Excellent' is the word that appears to best summarize our members' impressions of the ARO MidWinter meeting in Phoenix. The majority of respondents to the MidWinter

Meeting questionnaire ranked the overall meeting, symposia, presidential lecture, podium sessions, and contributed posters in this category. In conjunction, many other aspects of the overall meeting, such as abstract submission, online registration, online voting, and the newsletter, were also ranked as 'Excellent' by a majority of the respondents. A notable exception, however, was satisfaction with the hotel accommodations, which were ranked by a majority of the respondents as good (33%). Furthermore, the meeting location was evenly divided between those who ranked it as 'Excellent' (30%) and those who ranked it as 'Good' (28%). With this in mind, it was not surprising that discussion of the venue dominated the written comments in which members were asked their opinions regarding the best and worst aspects of this year's gathering. As described below, recommendations were diverse but constructive, with an overall enthusiasm for holding the meeting in different locations.

As one might imagine, proposals for desirable cities included many of our previous locations, such as Baltimore, Denver, New Orleans, Phoenix, and St. Petersburg Beach. (No one mentioned Daytona, by the way. . .) Other suggestions spanned the USA and beyond, from Boston to Seattle, San Diego to Miami, as well as San Juan, Puerto Rico and Europe. Approximately 90% of respondents plan to attend the meeting in Baltimore next year. Perhaps telling are the responses to whether members would prefer to have a meeting in the same city each year or alternate between east and west coasts. An overwhelmingly high percentage (74%) indicated that they would prefer rotating between coasts each year. Responses were split on the issue of reducing the length of the meeting, although a strong majority (approximately 90%) favored starting the meeting on Saturday instead of Sunday.

The success of ARO in attracting more members over the years, resulting in raising attendance at the MidWinter meeting, has led to the concern that the casual scientific interactions that make this meeting so special are slowly being lost. To encourage greater interactions, Council implemented the LRPC's suggestion to hold a Special Interest Social at the beginning of the meeting. The idea was to give communities of investigators with similar research interests an opportunity to gather, connect with old acquaintances, and make new ones. Furthermore, we determined that by defining broad research areas we would be able to provide a framework for students to interact with senior members of the organization. Overall, the LRPC, Council, and our membership agreed that the inaugural event was a success. There was also general consensus about ways in which the format could be improved – which hinges critically on the location of food and drink! Rather than have refreshments in the hallway, we hope to organize the special

interests into defined regions in a single large room with the food and beer in a central location. That way people can intermingle, yet maintain the special interest structure. Announcements for the event are targeted to go out earlier (it apparently slipped through the cracks this year) and arrangements will be made to prevent overlap with other events, such as the Short Course.

This was the second year that ARO sponsored a Student Social and again they were ranked highly by those who were in attendance. Of those responding, approximately half (52 %) placed the event in the outstanding-excellent categories. Comments confirmed enthusiasm for holding the event and satisfaction with the overall organization, although many respondents requested improvements in the food and drink selections and the location. The main goal of these gatherings set out by the LRPC was to foster greater student participation in ARO. We can claim substantial success in this regard because during the 2008 meeting a small core of student leaders made substantial strides in forming an active student organization that will undoubtedly contribute to the future of ARO with their invigorating energy.

Since this is my last year as the LRPC Chair, I would like to express my appreciation to the membership for their support and critique of our new initiatives. I especially want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of the committee; their innovative ideas and enthusiasm were absolutely contagious and made the experience a genuine pleasure.



*Dr. John Middlebrooks was presented a certificate of appreciation for his service as the 2005-2008 ARO Program Committee Chair. Pictured are (L to R): Ashley Wackym, John Middlebrooks. Photo by D. Lim*



*Dr. Brian C.J. Moore received the 2008 Award of Merit. Pictured are (L to R): Ervin Hafter, Robert Carlyon, Brian C.J. Moore, Christopher Plack. Photo by D. Lim*

## Addendum to the Long Range Planning Committee Report



*Donna S. Whitlon, Ph.D.*  
*Member, Long Range Planning*

This year the LRPC tapped into the creative thinking and experience of the membership with four short answer questions relating to the overall structure and future of the ARO. All members of the LRPC received all of the comments. Following is a summary of the responses:

### **Question #1. What should the ARO be to its members? To the general scientific and non-scientific community? What is your vision for the ARO?**

174 members responded to this question. For the most part, ARO members very much appreciate ARO and its annual meeting. They see it as an accessible meeting for people of different disciplines to come together and share information, cross fertilize ideas and meet friends. Education is a large part of the attraction, with a number of people saying that they want to expand their horizons, get new ideas, learn new techniques. The social network also plays a role. Mainly people like the interactions between clinicians and basic scientists and want to encourage it, although a few think that ARO should be entirely basic. A number of people noted the preponderance of auditory science represented. Some liked it this way. Some thought that all specialties should be represented. The attendance of NIH staff is appreciated. Many believed that ARO should take the lead in interacting with the general public and with government committees to ensure that those who pay for us understand what we are doing, to advocate for otolaryngology research, and to increase visibility. Many believed that ARO has a responsibility to help the next generation of scientists and clinicians on their career paths. Several specifically stated that it was important for ARO to have a journal.

### **II. How can the ARO help to bridge the knowledge and language gap between clinical otolaryngology and the basic sciences?**

The membership has clearly given this a lot of thought. There were 131 responses to this question. Overwhelmingly, the members felt continuing to have an excellent midwinter meeting with better designed symposia, workshops and short-courses were the best approaches. The emphasis of the responses seems to be on the teaching aspect – teaching basic scientists and clinicians to understand each other, trying to use language that is first defined and that both can understand. Sessions focused around issues of joint interest – perhaps on one disorder - and lead by both scientists and clinicians were cited most often. Also suggested were sessions in which clinicians explained disorders to basic scientists while basic scientists explained methods and limitations of their research to the clinicians. High on the list was increased attention to translational research by always having one meeting session devoted to the area, by specific translational research symposia that highlight collaborative efforts, and by sponsoring a translational research award with the recipient delivering a special seminar at the meeting. A panel or committee on bridge

and translational issues was suggested as part of the ARO organization. To increase clinician attendance at the meeting, suggestions were to reorganize the time and length of the meeting, offer CME credits, have a clinical keynote speaker, have successful clinical scientists organize sessions, highlight research by junior otolaryngologists who have won awards at Academy meetings, give a young investigator award for a clinician-scientist. Fostering the social interaction of basic and clinician scientists was also suggested. Increasing the size of JARO and including more translational and clinical research papers was also proposed. A number of respondents were not convinced that it was necessary to do this and several wanted the ARO to remain mainly a basic sciences forum.

### **III. Is the present government of the organization sufficient for our future needs? Are there aspects of our organization that are lacking?**

97 members responded to this question. 50% of the respondents gave a clear Yes to the first question and believed that the organization was “top notch” with good leadership. About 10% were not sure. Comments from the remaining group included concerns about the lack of growth of the organization and the limited involvement of younger generation of scientists. There were concerns about the lack of solicitation of input from members, the need for stronger ARO presence at the AAO meeting and the need to become more international. A social chairman was suggested.

### **IV. What fund-raising methods would you suggest to support ARO programs?**

This proved a more difficult assignment. 79 members responded to this question. The suggestions were, however, wide ranging – from simply reducing costs and eliminating programs to ways to solicit donations, to include more sponsors at the meeting, to advertise and to create programs and material that would generate income.

## **Make Your Hotel Reservations for the 2009 ARO MidWinter Meeting**

Special hotel rates are available at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel for ARO Attendees (based on availability). For reservations, call 800-228-9290 and mention the ARO group or visit <http://www.aro.org/mwm/mwm.html> and click on the appropriate hotel information link.



Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel  
700 Aliceanna Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
USA

## ARO Joins Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding



*Maureen Hannley, Ph.D.*  
*Chair, Government Relations Committee*

When it comes to important legislation, the louder and more widespread the voice of the constituency is, the greater the attention of the legislator. At its last meeting during the 2008

Midwinter Meeting in Phoenix, the ARO Council approved a motion to join the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding, a coalition of over 300 organizations concerned with biomedical research and NIH funding. These include 135 professional societies and associations (including giants like Society for Neuroscience, FASEB, and AChemS), 105 colleges, universities, and medical schools, 27 research foundations, 24 patient advocacy groups, 27 hospitals or health systems, and 21 coalitions. ARO will join its voice to one that is not only loud and diverse, but known and respected on Capitol Hill and at NIH.

Since its establishment in 1982 as an administrative division of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC; hence, the lack of operating costs charged to its members), the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding has pursued one goal: to improve the health of the American people by advocating for an enhanced federal investment in biomedical and behavioral research by increasing the appropriations for the National Institutes of Health. The Ad Hoc Group works toward these goals and serves the interests of its members by:

- Holding annual meetings with NIH leadership and its constituent institutes and centers to remain current on scientific opportunities and how national health needs are being reflected in research portfolios and funding opportunities.
- Holding “Policy Briefings” on Capitol Hill for major Washington policy makers and opinion leaders, a format that also provides NIH leaders an opportunity to address NIH advocates about promising research sponsored or conducted by NIH.
- Tracking research-related federal legislation and e-mailing update bulletins to members to encourage direct communication with Members of Congress and making sure you have the latest news – while it’s new!
- Publishing a *Resource Guide to the National Institutes of Health*, a very useful guide to each of the institutes and centers, their recent funding history and success rates, an overview of the key funding mechanisms, the Roadmap Initiative, and a Glossary of NIH terms. One copy is free upon request; additional copies may be obtained at a minimal cost by contacting the Ad Hoc Group at <http://www.aamc.org/research/adhocgp/>

On February 28, five medical research advocacy groups - the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, the Campaign for Medical Research (CMR), the Federation of American Societies

for Experimental Biology (FASEB), the National Health Council (NHC), and Research!America - joined together to call on Congress to expand the nation's investment in medical research by increasing the budget of the NIH by \$1.9 billion in FY 2009. The groups' recommendation would increase the NIH's discretionary budget authority provided through the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee to \$31.1 billion in FY 2009, an increase of approximately 6.6 percent.

Member organizations do not lose their identity or their individual choice in the activities of the Ad Hoc Group: all initiatives and letters that are sent out representing the voice of the Group must first be approved by the leadership of each member organization; members are free to endorse the initiatives or not, depending on their own missions, principles, and priorities. But through membership in the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding, ARO's voice in Washington, DC and at the NIH will be stronger than ever before.

## ARO Symposia, Workshops and Special Events for 2009

### Presidential Symposium

- Comparative Studies of the Ear – of (more than) Mice and Men

### Short Course

- Advanced Microscopy Techniques

### Scheduled Symposia and Workshops

- Mechanisms of Deafness Caused by Genetic Mutations: What We Have Learned from Mouse Models
- Novelty Detection in the Auditory System: Correlating Animal and Human Studies
- New Scientific Developments in Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)
- Vestibular Compensation: New Clinical and Basic Science Perspectives
- Molecular Basis of Prosensory Specification in the Mammalian Cochlea
- Importance of Temporal vs. Spectral Fine Structure for Pitch and Speech
- From Psychophysics to Speech and from Physiology to Engineering: Jack Cullen's Contributions to Hearing Science

### Animal Research Committee Workshop

- Updated Perspectives in Animal Use

### Media Relations Committee Workshop

- Science and the Media

### Patient Advocacy Committee Workshop

- Disorders of Speech, Language, and Communication: What Have we Learned?

## Call for Symposium and Workshop Proposals for ARO 2010 MidWinter Meeting



*Sharon G. Kujawa, Ph.D.*  
*Chair, Program Committee*

The ARO Program Committee is presently soliciting proposals for Symposia and Workshops for the 2010 MidWinter Meeting.

Symposia are organized as a series of oral presentations on a theme. Preference will be given to proposals that strive for novel syntheses across or within existing disciplines or explorations of new approaches that will expand research in new directions. Speakers from outside the usual ARO circle are encouraged insofar as they might contribute a novel perspective. Note that the ARO will reimburse coach-class travel expenses and will pay a small honorarium for non-ARO-member symposium and workshop speakers.

Workshops can be on topics of interest to a focused subgroup of ARO members or might focus on a particular technical innovation. Workshops often are scheduled for late afternoon or early evening.

The Program Committee encourages participation in symposia and workshops by non-U.S. scientists.

Proposal submission involves two steps: submission of a Letter of Intent followed by solicitation of a Formal Proposal. Letters of Intent are requested with a strict due date of Monday, February 16, 2009, at 10:00 am. The letter can be emailed (preferred) or hand-delivered to the Program Committee chair or to the ARO Registration desk (attn: Program Committee chair) at the 2009 MidWinter Meeting. The late due date for proposals is intended to accommodate symposia that might arise from discussions in the first day or two of the MidWinter Meeting - earlier submission is encouraged if possible.

The Letter of Intent should include:

- Name of the organizer with contact information, including email
- The session title
- A brief (<300 word) description of the theme and target audience
- A tentative list of speakers (4 to 7), with descriptive titles of their topics. Indicate whether each speaker has been contacted and agreed to participate. Not all speakers need to have committed at this point.

The program committee will meet during the 2009 MidWinter Meeting to select the topics of interest. Formal proposals will then be solicited. The formal proposals will include agreements to participate from all the speakers, brief preliminary abstracts for each talk, a time schedule, etc. Solicited formal proposals will be due on March 13, 2009. The Program Committee will evaluate the proposals shortly thereafter and will make the final selections. Note that the final abstract for each symposium or workshop talk will be due at the regular abstract submission time, September 1 - October 1, 2009.

Send Proposals to:

Sharon G. Kujawa  
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary  
243 Charles St., Boston, MA 02114  
Phone: 617-573-6382, FAX: 617-573-3023  
Email: [sharon\\_kujawa@meei.harvard.edu](mailto:sharon_kujawa@meei.harvard.edu)

E-mail is preferred.

## ARO Council

*Photo by D. Lim*



*Pictured are: (front, L to R): Robert Shannon, Karen Steel, Ashley Wackym, Paul Fuchs, Karen Avraham, Jay Rubinstein; (back, L to R): David Lim, Laurel Carney, Peter Santi, John Middlebrooks, Steven Rauch*

### **Association for Research in Otolaryngology**

19 Mantua Road  
Mt. Royal, NJ 08061 USA  
Phone: (856) 423-0041  
Fax: (856) 423-3420  
Website: <http://www.aro.org>

#### **Headquarters**

Darla M. Dobson, ARO Executive Director  
E-mail: [headquarters@aro.org](mailto:headquarters@aro.org)

#### **Meetings Department**

Lisa Astorga, ARO Meeting Manager  
E-mail: [meetings@aro.org](mailto:meetings@aro.org)

#### **Exhibits Department**

Alexandra Springer, ARO Exhibit Manager  
E-mail: [aspringer@talley.com](mailto:aspringer@talley.com)

#### **Newsletter Staff**

Peter Santi, Ph.D., ARO Editor  
E-mail: [psanti@umn.edu](mailto:psanti@umn.edu)