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## Thoracic Society Chapters 2014 Year in Review

Greetings to the Council of Chapter Representatives (CCR), presidents, and administrators. We invite you to share this *Thoracic Society Chapters Year in Review* with your officers, members, and other interested parties. The Year in Review provides a cumulative picture of what the thoracic society chapters of the American Thoracic Society accomplished in 2014. The collective efforts of the ATS's Thoracic Society Chapters ("chapters") have included medical education, trainee visibility, career advancement, networking, leadership development, and support of advocacy initiatives.



Thoracic  
Society  
Chapters

### Education

In 2014, chapters held 26 educational full-evening to multi-day meetings, which served more than 1,000 clinicians, researchers, and allied health professionals.

### Advocacy

Each chapter named a Government Affairs Representative (GAR) whose role is to locally support ATS Government Relations efforts that are led by the Washington, D.C., staff. GARs submit letters to their local legislators a few times a year on topics determined by the ATS Washington D.C. office.

Chapters were more involved with local advocacy this past year. Two Ohio chapter members had their letters to the editor published on the Columbus Dispatch website. GAR Ben Kopp's [Letter to the Editor](#) addressed e-cigarettes and CCR rep Don Hayes' [Letter to the Editor](#) discussed climate shifts and the effect on patients. The Oregon chapter agreed to co-sponsor the Oregon state crisis guidelines, joining a number of other societies and health care organizations there. The guidelines provide guidance for communication within the medical community through the state in the event of a natural disaster, medication shortage or other crisis event that stresses the available healthcare resources.

Additionally, representatives from thirteen chapters—Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Washington, D.C., and Washington State—participated in the annual ATS Hill Day in Washington, D.C., on March 19. The issues they presented to legislators included NIH research funding, opposing legislation exempting cigars from FDA regulation, a permanent fix to the Medicare SGR reform, and urging Congress to provide funding to the CDC domestic TB program.



### Chapter Revivals and Startups

As chapters continue to build, we are pleased to announce the revival of several inactive chapters that occurred in 2014. The Ohio, Oklahoma, and New Jersey chapters are operational again, and they are in the process of planning educational meetings for 2015. Volunteers recently stepped up to the plate to form or revive chapters in Indiana, Illinois, Texas, and Kentucky. Thank you to these future chapter leaders!

### Health Equality

The CCR Executive Committee (CCR-EC), led by 2014-15 Chair Robin Gross, began a new health equality community outreach project. The initiative aims to address health issues and provide patient education in underserved communities through posters. The first poster addressed sleep apnea. In addition to educating the public, these posters should help to identify the problem earlier and reduce subsequent medical complications and costs. A pilot program for distribution began in Washington, D.C., and Michigan, where chapter members distributed the posters in locations where they would be seen by the target patient population. The CCR will roll out the program in other states with the support of ATS Public Advisory Roundtable (ATS PAR) members. Future posters will focus on other diseases and health concerns such as asthma and tobacco.

In collaboration with the Clinicians Advisory Committee, the CCR-EC judged the newly Innovations in Health Equality Award. The award was designed to recognize a clinically focused initiative on health equality, and a policy, training for career development initiative focused on health equality. The two recipients were honored at the ATS 2014 International Conference in San Diego.

### Governance

The group tax exemption application submitted to the IRS in 2012 was approved. Chapters are now exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(6) of the Code.

The ATS continues to jointly sponsor chapter events for Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit. Chapters are also able to seek CME from other institutions if they wish.

## Outstanding Clinician Award

Each year, chapters are invited to submit nominations for the Outstanding Clinician Award (OCA), which recognizes clinicians who spend 75 percent or more of their time providing direct patient care, and, who are recognized by patients, families, and their peers as caring and dedicated healthcare providers who have made substantial contributions to the clinical care of patients with respiratory disease. In 2014, seven chapters named an Outstanding Clinician for the chapter awards:



- David Badesch, MD, University of Colorado - Colorado Thoracic Society
- Heidi Flori, MD, Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland - California Thoracic Society
- John Gotchall, MD, The Corvallis Clinic - Oregon Thoracic Society
- Oleh Hnatiuk, MD, Raymond G. Murphy Veterans Administration Medical Center - New Mexico Thoracic Society
- Fredric Jackson, MD, Highline Medical Center - Washington State Thoracic Society
- Gerald F. Schwartzberg, MD, North Phoenix Pulmonology - Arizona State Thoracic Society
- Michael Simoff, MD, Henry Ford Hospital - Michigan Thoracic Society

Dr. Jackson was selected to receive the ATS OCA award and was part of the awards ceremony at ATS 2014. The seven individuals were recognized at a reception at the Clinicians Center at the conference.

## Collaborations

Every year, the chapter council collaborates with ATS groups on projects with several council members also sit on committees to act as liaisons between chapters and committees. 2014's collaborations include the Breathing Better Alliance and the Public Advisory Roundtable's Lung Disease Weeks. CCR members sit on the following committees:

- Clinicians Advisory
- Education
- Ethics and Conflict of Interest
- Health Policy
- International Health
- Membership
- Patient & Family Education
- Planning and Evaluation
- Quality Improvement and Implementation
- Training

## Membership

The CCR supported the ATS leadership goal of providing opportunities to engage early career professionals in chapter activities and leadership. The CCR Executive Committee provided names for potential committee appointees and the thoracic society chapters recruited early career professionals as chapter members and leaders.

The CCR also developed a welcome letter for new ATS members from the chapters. The letter encourages participation in chapter meetings, which offer networking opportunities and affordable educational programs to clinicians, educators and investigators.

## Great Cases Symposium at the International Conference

The annual Great Cases: Clinical, Radiologic and Pathologic Correlations by Master Clinicians symposium highlighted nine unusual and interesting cases presented by trainees, with experts in clinical medicine also participating. Great Cases regularly draws a full house, and attendees participate in the diagnoses via audience response devices. CCR reps, who organize and chair the symposium, reviewed 600 hundred cases to select those that were presented. Thanks to Linda Nici and Samya Nasr for chairing Great Cases 2014.

## ATS Foundation Support

Thoracic Society chapters continue to support the ATS Foundation and its mission to provide awards to young investigators striving to discover cures and treatments for a range of respiratory diseases. The Chapter Council chair sits on the ATS Foundation Board of Trustees. Chapters also display Foundation literature at their educational meetings.

In 2014, the CCR was the first ever ATS group or committee to host a table at the Annual ATS Foundation Research Program Benefit.



## Publications

The Southwest Journal of Pulmonary & Critical Care continues its online presence. This e-journal is now the official publication of the Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado Thoracic Societies, an expansion from its startup by the Arizona Thoracic Society. The California Thoracic Society continues to produce twice yearly issues of its e-newsletter, CTS Inspirations, which contains medical content as well as chapter news.

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With thanks, and best wishes to the Thoracic Society Chapters and their leaders for a spectacular 2015!

*Samya Nasr, MD*  
2013-14 Chair, CCR

*Robin Gross, MD*  
2014-15 Chair, CCR

CCR Executive Committee, 2014-2015:

|                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Robin Gross – Chair          | Samya Nasr– Immediate Past Chair |
| Steve Kirtland – Chair-Elect | Steve Kantrow – Secretary        |

*Is your chapter engaged in an activity not included here? Let us know at [chapters@thoracic.org](mailto:chapters@thoracic.org) or 212-315-8633. ATS News is always looking for chapter news, and we will mention it in the 2015 Year in Review.*

ATS Member Services & Chapter Relations Staff: Jennifer Ian, Director, May Ling Brantman, Manager.  
Chapter web pages: <http://www.thoracic.org/chapters/index.php>