

The American Thoracic Society (ATS) has long held the inclusion of the patient perspective as a core component of its mission. For more than a decade, the ATS Public Advisory Roundtable (PAR), which represents the patient voice of the Society, has played an invaluable role in helping the organization shape its policies to keep families and patients as a central focus of all ATS programs and activities.

Nowhere has this been more evident than at the annual ATS International Conference where PAR has facilitated patient programs such as the Meet-the-Expert patient and family forum, the PAR Symposium, and the many patient speakers integrated throughout scientific sessions.

Patient Voices highlights the stories of some of the patients who have spoken at past ATS International Conferences on their experiences with pulmonary disorders such as sleep apnea, COPD, lung cancer, pulmonary hypertension, hypersensitivity pneumonitis, alpha-1 antitrypsin disease, and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, among others. These brave patients, many of whom have had lifelong struggles with diseases, put faces and voices to their oftentimes life-threatening conditions. Their stories serve as an inspiration to many others who have pulmonary diseases and illustrate that a full life can go on after diagnosis, and that patient voices will be heard.

Patients and their families are seeking cures, and the opportunities for discovery and research have never been greater. We now have the tools to unlock the mysteries of lung disease. The ATS is advancing pulmonary health through innovative research, clinical care, advocacy, and training of tomorrow's leaders who will translate discoveries to patients. Indeed, the ATS partners with patients and patient advocacy organizations to find these cures, and on issues of disease awareness, public education, and advocacy. The ATS also opened its membership criteria—anyone,

including a patient, is able to join and participate in the activities of the Society. The ATS continues its commitment to funding cutting edge research through the many grants awarded to deserving investigators by the ATS Foundation Research Program in partnership with PAR. This booklet is another manifestation of our efforts to strengthen the relationship between patients, their families, and the ATS.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the ATS Public Advisory Roundtable, as well as the patients who have given talks at the ATS International Conference that have inspired us and made this booklet possible. We hope that this booklet will be valuable to clinicians who are seeking the patient perspective and to other patients and their families. The ATS will continue its firm commitment to working with patients and its PAR members on advocacy, research, and educational issues. We look forward to continued inclusion of the patient perspective in the work of the Society as we progress toward cures for many lung and airway diseases.



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