

American Thoracic Society

ATS GLOBAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

| 2015



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Promoting Global Health

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Despite the name, the American Thoracic Society is an international organization. In fact, the Society has members from 129 countries, and 34% of its membership resides outside the United States.

An overarching principle of the Society is to improve world lung health. Broadly speaking, ATS pursues this objective through the following initiatives and related activities:

- Engaging international organizations, such as WHO
- Providing global education, research, and research training
- Engaging ATS members to participate in global initiatives
- Pursuing its broad global health policy
- Providing technical assistance and other capacity to build support



2015 Summary of ATS Global Activities

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Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS): As a founding member of FIRS, ATS is an active participant in its initiatives. Respiratory diseases, in particular the big five—chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, acute respiratory infections, tuberculosis, and lung cancer—account for a great burden to society and are a barrier to sustainable economic development. In fact, respiratory diseases affect approximately 500 million people globally, and governments, policy makers, professional societies, donors, and communities need to ensure that lung health is a global health priority.

To contribute to this ambitious goal, FIRS launched the “Decade of the Lung” program in September 2015. This initiative advocates for lung health by engaging as many organizations as possible, governmental and non-governmental, to strengthen prevention efforts. These include the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and MPOWER, measures intended to reduce the use of tobacco and establish effective treatment programs for lung disease.

Methods in Epidemiologic, Clinical, and Operations Research (MECOR): MECOR is the centerpiece of ATS’s international activities. This intensive one-week course for physicians and related health care professionals is designed to strengthen capacity and leadership in epidemiological, clinical, and operations research related to respiratory conditions, critical care, and sleep medicine in low- and middle-income countries. In 2015, ATS hosted seven MECOR training programs in the following regions:

- Latin America
- Africa
- Turkey
- India
- Vietnam
- China
- Indonesia

As part of the program, ATS MECOR awarded 20 Graduate Scholarship Awards to authors of ATS Conference abstracts, allowing them to attend the conference and present their research.



Tuberculosis control: TB is curable in the vast majority of cases, and yet slow progress against the disease means that it now kills more people annually than any other communicable disease. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 9.6 million people developed TB in 2014, and 1.5 million people died from the disease. This includes 1 million children who contracted TB and 140,000 who died from it.

Since the early 1900s, ATS has been the leading physician organization dedicated to the elimination of TB in the United States and around the globe. In addition to the ATS's contributions to TB control through research and clinical practice guidelines, the ATS actively advocates for U.S. and international funding to raise awareness of the significant health threats posed by TB. In 2015, related ATS activities included:

- Participated in the 46th UNION World Congress on Lung Health, focused on establishing a new global health agenda, reflecting the changing landscape of global public health
- Sponsored USAID World TB Day to raise overall awareness of the importance of funding TB prevention and treatment programs worldwide
- Lobbied to prevent a 19% funding cut to USAID's global TB program
- Served as a co-chair of the TB Roundtable, the leading TB federal policy coalition
- Supported the development, community engagement, and release of the National Action Plan to Combat Multidrug-Resistant TB
- Participated in the USAID grant-funded partnership, Challenge TB, to provide global leadership and field implementation for expanded access to TB prevention services; improved patient-centered quality care systems for TB, multidrug-resistant TB, and TB/HIV services; and country health systems improvements in 18 high-burden countries

ATS Global Scholars Program: This new initiative was launched in 2015 by Atul Malhotra, MD (2015-2016 ATS President) to help address the shortage of advanced training programs in respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine in low- and middle-income countries where the burden of lung disease is immense. Junior professionals learn via live webinars about a range of topics in pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine. There are 25 lectures in the series, each of which includes a pre- and post-test. Students who successfully complete the program receive certificates designating them as ATS Global Scholars, which can be used to help establish credentials with government agencies, professional colleagues, and patients.

At the end of December 2015, there were a total of 130 students in eight countries from the following facilities participating in the program:

- Mbarara University of Science & Technology (Uganda)
- Mulago Hospital (Uganda)
- Maputo Central Hospital (Mozambique)
- Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (Kenya)
- Bugando Medical Centre (Tanzania)
- University Teaching Hospital of Kigali (Rwanda)
- Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Butare (Rwanda)
- AIC Kijabe Hospital (Kenya)
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (India)
- Jos University Teaching Hospital (Nigeria)
- University of the Andes (Columbia)



Looking forward, in 2016 it is anticipated the program will expand to additional hospitals and universities in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Peer societies: ATS has long believed that collaboration with sister organizations located throughout the world best ensures maximum benefits to their own members, the respiratory community at large, and patients. Therefore, the Society is an active participant in exhibit halls and related conferences, where ATS leadership and subject matter experts frequently address general sessions, sharing knowledge and Society priorities

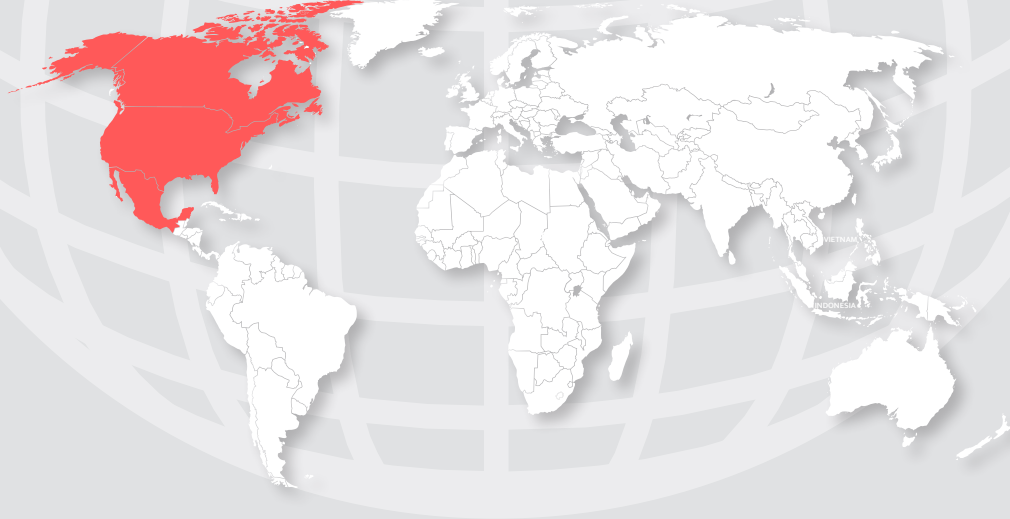
International scholarships: ATS provides Scholarships to international trainees to attend the ATS Conference. The International Trainee Scholarships (ITS) and International Abstract Scholarships (IAS) help early career professionals who have submitted abstracts to the International Conference attend the meeting to learn about state-of-the-art science in basic and clinical research as well as new developments in the practice of pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine.

The ITS awards are made possible through the International Lung Health and Membership Committees; the IAS awards are offered through the Society's assemblies. In 2015, the Society made available 42 International Trainee Scholarship Awards and 98 International Abstract Scholarship Awards.

In addition to the above, the ATS offers numerous, extensive programming that is truly globally focused. These include:

- **International Conference:** The annual ATS International Conference is where more than 15,000 clinicians, researchers, academics, and related health care professionals in the fields of respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine gather to meet, share, network, learn, and, ultimately, move the needle on lung health. The conference typically features more than 500 sessions, more than 6,000 abstracts, and case reports. In addition to the general sessions, the conference features postgraduate courses; meet the professor, sunrise, faculty development, and medical education seminars; thematic seminar series; and workshops. The exhibit hall has more than 200 exhibitors.
- **ATS Journals:** The ATS publishes three peer-reviewed journals: the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* (AJRCCM, also known as the Blue Journal), the *American Journal of Respiratory Cell and Molecular Biology* (AJRCMB, also known as the Red Journal), and the *Annals of the ATS* (AnnalsATS, also known as the White Journal). Published to help clinicians, researchers, and other health care professionals interested in adult and pediatric pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine keep up to date on the latest developments in respiratory medicine, the journals have significant global representation, both on their editorial boards and through their published authors.
- **Official ATS Documents:** These include clinical practice guidelines, policy statements, research statements, technical standards, and workshop reports, many of which are developed collaboratively with other professional societies. Together, they establish the latest standards of care for a variety of adult and pediatric respiratory, critical care, and sleep disorders.

What follows is a compilation of ATS's international activities, by continent.



North America

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Peer conferences: In 2015, ATS leadership was an active participant in many conferences held by peer organizations with an interest in respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine, as listed below. The Society also had a booth in their exhibit halls:

- Canadian Thoracic Society
- Society for Critical Care Medicine
- CHEST (American College of Chest Physicians)

ATS Journals: In 2015, all three ATS Journals—AJRCCM, AJRCMB, and *AnnalsATS*—had significant participation from editors and authors from throughout North America, as listed below:

- 108 *AJRCCM* editors
- 669 *AJRCCM* authors
- 158 *AJRCMB* editors
- 163 *AJRCMB* authors
- 59 *AnnalsATS* editors
- 318 *AnnalsATS* authors

Scholarships: In 2015, ATS provided financial support to help researchers from outside the United States attend the International Conference in Denver:

- 2 International Travel Scholarship Awards
- 27 International Abstract Scholarship Awards



South America

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Peer Conferences: In 2015, ATS officials attended the following conferences and participated in their exhibit halls:

- Brazilian Thoracic Society
- Asociacion Latinoamericana de Torax
- Latin American Pediatric Pulmonology Society Congress

ATS MECOR Programming: For the past 22 years, ATS MECOR has partnered with the Latin American Thoracic Society, graduating 1,000 students from the program.

ATS Journals: The number of South American editors and authors in 2015:

- 2 *AJRCCM* editors
- 25 *AJRCCM* authors
- 7 *AJRCMB* authors
- 10 *AnnalsATS* authors

ATS Scholarships: ATS offered South American researchers the following scholarships in 2015:

- 5 International Travel Scholarship Awards
- 2 International Abstract Scholarship Awards
- 7 MECOR Development Scholarship Awards



Europe

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Peer Conferences: In 2015, ATS officials attended the following conferences and participated in their exhibit halls:

- British Thoracic Society
- International Union Against Tuberculosis & Lung Disease (UK)
- European Respiratory Society
- Turkish Thoracic Society

ATS MECOR programming: For the past nine years ATS MECOR has partnered with the Turkish Thoracic Society, graduating 200 students.

ATS Journals: The number of European editors and authors in 2015:

- 34 *AJRCCM* editors
- 610 *AJRCCM* authors
- 15 *AJRCMB* editors
- 94 *AJRCMB* authors
- 5 *AnnalsATS* editors
- 43 *AnnalsATS* authors

ATS Scholarships: ATS offered European researchers the following scholarships in 2015:

- 19 International Travel Scholarship Awards
- 42 International Abstract Scholarship Awards



Africa

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ATS MECOR Programming: For the past nine years, ATS MECOR has partnered with the Pan African Thoracic Society, graduating 200 students.

Global Scholars Program: In 2015, junior professionals from the following African nations participated in this Internet-based advanced training program in respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine:

- Rwanda
- Kenya
- Mozambique
- Uganda

ATS Journals: The number of African editors and authors in 2015:

- 1 *AJRCCM* editors
- 5 *AJRCCM* authors
- 1 *AJRCMB* authors
- 2 *AnnalsATS* authors

ATS Scholarships: ATS offered African researchers the following scholarships in 2015:

- 6 International Travel Scholarship Awards
- 9 MECOR Development Scholarship Award
- 4 Research Grants (through the ATS Foundation)



Middle East

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Peer Conferences: In 2015, ATS officials attended the following conferences and participated in their exhibit halls:

- Iranian Thoracic Society
- Gulf Thoracic

ATS Journals: The number of Middle Eastern editors and authors in 2015:

- 3 *AJRCCM* editors
- 15 *AJRCCM* authors
- 1 *AJRCMB* editors
- 2 *AJRCMB* authors
- 10 *AnnalsATS* authors

ATS Scholarships: ATS offered Middle Eastern researchers the following scholarships in 2015:

- 1 International Travel Scholarship Award



Asia and Asia Pacific

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Peer Conferences: In 2015, ATS officials attended the following conferences and participated in their exhibit halls:

- India Chest Society
- Asian Pacific Society of Respiriology
- International Symposium on Respiratory Diseases (Beijing)
- Chinese Thoracic Society
- Japanese Respiratory Society

Global Scholars Program: In 2015, junior professionals from the following Asian nations participated in this Internet-based advanced training program in respiratory, critical care, and sleep medicine:

- Delhi, India

ATS MECOR Programming: ATS has enjoyed long-standing relationships with many countries where MECOR courses have been taught. These include:

- MECOR Country Partner – US CDC/NCDC, Indian Chest Society: 5 years and 125 students
- MECOR Country Partner – U. of Sydney, National TB Program of Vietnam: 5 years and 125 students
- MECOR Country Partner – W. China School of Medicine/W. China Hospital/Chinese Thoracic Society/NHLBI: 3 years and 75 students
- MECOR Country Partner – Indonesian Society of Respiriology: 3 years and 75 students

ATS Journals: The number of Asian and Asian Pacific editors and authors in 2015:

- 10 *AJRCCM* editors
- 333 *AJRCCM* authors
- 10 *AJRCMB* editors
- 105 *AJRCMB* authors
- 4 *AnnalsATS* editors
- 46 *AnnalsATS* authors

ATS Scholarships: ATS offered Asian and Asian Pacific researchers the following scholarships in 2015:

- 9 International Travel Scholarship Awards
- 27 International Abstract Scholarship Awards
- 4 MECOR Development Scholarship Awards



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