

Assembly Annual Report

Working Group Chairman: Robert J. Freishtat, MD, MPH

Assembly Working Group Title: Stem Cell Biology Working Group

Assembly Request for Continuation: Yes NO

Assembly Chair Approval: Please attach e-mail from Assembly Chairman

Have the Goals and Objectives of the Working Group Changed? Yes NO

If yes please explain: _____

Working Group Accomplishments: _____

The Stem Cell Biology Working Group of the RCMB remains a vibrant working group with diverse membership (by age, career stage, gender, geography and others). We are excited for 2016 after we had a very successful 2015 with several accomplishments toward our goals:

- 1) Activities at the ATS International Conference
 - a) Efforts were made to increase stem cell-related content and RCMB content in ATS programming after it had decreased the previous year
 - i) PG courses: Out of three PG submissions, we successfully competed for another PG course in 2016 (AIRWAY REMODELING IN HUMAN LUNG DISEASE: A BIG LAB MEETING 2016) that follows our successful big lab meeting format we introduced at ATS 2015
 - ii) Mini-symposia, poster discussion: The working group submitted 8 proposals for meeting sessions. Several of these were programmed.
- 2) Online Services to RCMB Membership
 - a) Efforts were made to increase the online presence of the working group in order to serve RCMB members
 - i) Dr. Darcy Wagner, PhD from Helmholtz Zentrum Munich - Comprehensive Pneumology Center (CPC) took over the working group Twitter (@RCMBStemCell) feed and has been periodically sharing stem cell updates from the literature and conferences.
 - ii) Reformatting of the WG website on the ATS website is underway in coordination with the RCMB Web Committee. We are including links to common tools and protocols that are publically available in working group members' labs
 - iii) We are preparing two webinars in the RCMB series. There will be a stem cell tourism webinar in a Journal Club format using the NEJM paper on stem cell clinics to talk about stem cell tourism, regulation of stem cell therapies and the (non)-science behind direct-to-consumer unproven stem cell interventions. The second one will be a presentation by experts on iPSCs.
- 3) Advocacy against Stem Cell Tourism
 - a) Advocacy efforts against stem cell tourism have been a major focus of the working group for several years. Drs. Ikonomidou, Freishtat, and Weiss have prepared an editorial to be submitted to the AJRCCM in the next month. This editorial has been endorsed by 13 international respiratory and thoracic societies.
- 4) Vermont Conference

- a) The Semiannual “Stem Cells, Cell Therapies, and Bioengineering in Lung Biology and Lung Diseases” Conference took place this past summer. This is one of the ongoing activities of the working group and has grown to be a destination conference for the stem cell biology community.

Working Group Goals for Upcoming Year: _____

The Stem Cell Biology Working Group of the RCMB intends to continue and expand on current efforts in the coming year.

- 1) Activities at the ATS International Conference
 - i) Efforts will continue to be active contributors to the International Conference program to bring the latest stem cell discoveries and technologies to the RCMB membership.
- 2) Online Services to RCMB Membership
 - a) Efforts will continue to increase the online presence of the working group in order to serve RCMB members
 - i) The working group Twitter (@RCMBStemCell) feed will continue to be active. We will advertise this feed to increase followers.
 - ii) We plan to complete reformatting of the WG website on the ATS website in coordination with the RCMB Web Committee. We are including links to common tools and protocols that are publically available in working group members’ labs.
 - iii) We plan to present the two webinars that are in preparation for the RCMB series.
- 3) Advocacy against Stem Cell Tourism
 - a) Advocacy efforts against stem cell tourism will continue as we plan to publish our editorial and work toward an ATS Statement on Stem Cell Tourism for Respiratory Diseases
- 4) Vermont Conference
 - a) 2016 is an off-year for the Vermont Conference. Plans are underway for the 2017 conference.

Expected Products: _____

- 1) ATS International Conference Post-Graduate and other session submissions.
- 2) Twitter feed and Webinars
- 3) Stem Cell Tourism Editorial and Statement
- 4) Vermont Conference in 2017