

Chair's Message

Since 2001, the American Thoracic Society (ATS) leadership has formally partnered with patients and their families through the ATS Public Advisory Roundtable (PAR). PAR continues to be one of the only patient-centered groups woven into the fabric of a medical membership association. The patient arm of the Society, PAR is a central component of the ATS providing the patient perspective in all aspects of the organization.

Each year, ATS PAR identifies patient speakers to scientific sessions during the ATS International Conference. During this global gathering in May of 2019, some of the best minds in pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine came together in Dallas, Texas. Fifteen compassionate and inspiring patients stood at the podium and with tremendous courage explained their disease-related experiences with the audience of professionals.

Their goal was to share their journey — to put a “face” to their diagnosis. As a result, respiratory professionals including physicians, clinicians, scientists, and researchers received an intimate look into disease impact on patients' lives. Understanding the patient perspective is essential for conference attendees to innovate and to advance scientific research toward better patient outcomes.

This booklet, ATS Patient Voices 8, was created to expand the reach of those stories beyond the conference. Today, we continue to align our work with the unique and urgent needs of individuals living with sleep disorders, critical illness, and respiratory diseases. Together, we're creating a more unified and powerful research and advocacy community. As our patients gain more knowledge and insight about their diseases and how it affects their quality of life, they remain invaluable resources to us all.

It is a great honor and privilege for the ATS PAR to be the “patient voice” of the ATS. ■



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