

EDITORIAL

President's Column

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As 2005 closes out and 2006 begins, it seems like a good time to give a "State of the Union" update for the membership. ASHI finds itself at a point where our finances are in excellent shape: we are carrying more than 80 percent of our operating budget in reserves. This is quite remarkable as most not-for-profit associations are struggling to carry at least 50 percent. What has been the source of this success? I think we can ascribe it to a number of things. First and foremost, it is an indication of the commitment of the members to support the organization. Second, the leadership over the years, and especially in the last few years, has paid close attention to the bottom line to ensure as much as possible that funds are being expended appropriately. It is my commitment and that of the board to continue to remain focused on this. Third, I would submit that ASHI took a bold step a few years ago to reorganize and bring in a professional management organization to provide administrative support for the organization and thereby allow the volunteer leadership to focus on strategic initiatives for the future. While the transition to the professional management organization has not been without its challenges, I am sure, had we not gone in this direction, we would not be in the position we find ourselves today. Finally, working with our staff, the leadership has been able to expand our support from the corporate sector—an effort the current leadership is committed to continue.

In January, the ASHI Executive Committee spent a day at Association Headquarters Inc. in advance of the board meeting to meet with the ASHI staff, and to review the processes and procedures that are in place to carry out ASHI business. I am pleased to report the entire committee was very impressed with the level of resources that are available at Association

Headquarters to support ASHI. Moreover, in reviewing the accounting and time-management processes, we were very pleased to see that high-quality systems are in place to ensure accountability to ASHI by Association Headquarters. After this review and the subsequent report to the board, we have affirmed our intent to renew our relationship with Association Headquarters as our management partner.

Given the excellent financial position we find ourselves in, and with the stability that has been afforded to us through our staff team, the question becomes, where should we focus our efforts now? At the board meeting, our committees came back with their action items for the coming year in line with the new strategic plan. All of these initiatives were well received by the board and our commitment is to see these initiatives taken forward with the support they will need to succeed. For example, it became clear that the Web was going to be a key vehicle for achieving success for a number of the committee's plans (e.g. ASHI-U, "Team ASHI" at the HRSA Transplant Collaborative Project). Therefore, it is the intent of the board to expand our current budget for 2006, and depending on our fundraising success, to invest some of our reserves, if need be, to ensure the success of these plans. While we are committed to maintaining our reserves at more than 80 percent of our operational budget, we as a board felt strongly that our mandate is to continually improve the benefits of membership and to promote the resources that ASHI has to offer to the broader scientific/clinical community. This can only be accomplished through strategic investment of our time, knowledge and dollars. Indeed, in doing so, we will ensure that ASHI has a bright future for many years to come.

ASHI Quarterly Scientific Communications Guidelines for Authors

The *ASHI Quarterly* invites submissions of scientific articles of interest to the histocompatibility and immunogenetics community. In general, the articles should relate to clinically-relevant topics in transplantation immunobiology, including reviews of novel techniques or assays, testing/assay applications, specific disease states in transplantation medicine, characteristics of specific lymphocyte subpopulations or lymphocyte markers, and anthropology/population genetics. Articles examining the history and impact of immunogenetics on transplantation medicine are also appropriate. The articles should be 2-4 pages in length and include relevant references.

In order to further the goal of providing educational content with the articles and provide Continuing Education Credit to the ASHI membership, authors are requested to submit five quiz questions pertinent to the article in multiple choice format. The questions should relate to the main points of the article, and provide a means to ascertain that the reader understands the relevance and principles presented in the article. Please provide the reasoning behind why the right answer is considered correct, and more importantly, why the alternative answers are not correct, unless it's obvious. The answers to the questions will be published in the *ASHI Quarterly* immediately following the edition in which the quiz is presented in order to provide educational feedback to the reader membership.