

President's Column

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I am writing to you as the new President of our society. I am honored to serve our organization, which includes so many highly motivated and skilled members. Historically, the structure of the society has provided a nurturing environment that has allowed for professional development and growth of the members. I would like to take the opportunity to thank many of the members of the society who have helped me in my academic and professional endeavors. I have gained so much knowledge, and received such high-quality advice, from so many colleagues and mentors who have, over time, become dear friends.

I just came back from the ASHI meeting loaded with optimism and enthusiasm spurred by the outstanding quality of scientific and educational activities and the devotion of our members to the committee activities.

Last June, the ASHI Board of Directors met and outlined six strategic goals:

1. Maintaining financial stability
2. Membership growth
3. Creating a relevant, high-quality PT Program
4. Being viewed as a scientific leader
5. Developing and implementing a marketing plan
6. Maintaining and enhancing core competencies

We are making plans and actively working toward their achievement.

The creation of the PT Program, with Dr. Marilyn Pollack as the Director, and the advanced development of the software for reporting and monitoring PT results make us optimistic that we will count this activity as an efficient core competency of our society. I would like to thank Danny Youngs, Mickie McCarter, Margaret Vinson and John Hart for their great efforts in running seamless PT activities and developing these plans.

In the last few months, the Executive Committee has been working on several issues concerning changes in nomenclature and mechanisms to comply with those changes. In April 2010, the nomenclature for reporting HLA alleles will change. We have been working actively on strategies to adopt the changes, and on the other hand, ensuring there is minimal impact in the laboratories to achieve compliance with the accreditation standards during 2010.

The Executive Committee is planning to keep members more frequently informed of the progress on projects and new developments. In 2010, we are planning to send electronic messages with brief descriptions and links to pertinent Web sites.

We are also evaluating the possibility of developing committees or task forces that will work on specific issues in clinical histocompatibility practice that require responses from our organization in a short or intermediate time period.