

# President's Message

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As you will recall from my newsletter, ASHI Council, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs, and FAIT (ASHI Foundation) members met together in Hilton Head on January 17-19, 2001, for an intensive strategic planning session. All segments of our Society were represented, namely Clinical Lab Directors, Basic Scientists, and Technologists. We had two excellent facilitators: Glenn Tecker, President and CEO of Tecker Consultants, LLC, in New Jersey and Tony Nash, President of Nash Service Associates, Inc., in Toronto, Canada. I am gratified, encouraged, and enthusiastic about the end results of these sessions, and I wanted to share them with you.

First we looked at our assumptions about the environment in which we operate, the current and emerging trends that will shape our future and affect our ability to perform, the areas in which we must excel, and what we already do well. We started by brainstorming about where we are now, where we are going, and what needs to get done. That is, what are some of the issues and challenges that face us? With about 36 people in the room, we came up with 74 different issues which we thought were of major importance. For a short time, I think a quiet groan was heard as we wondered how to deal with all of these different items. However, thanks to Tony's excellent facilitation, we actually were able to group ideas into major categories, then prioritize what we needed to do first, and finally come to a consensus as to our Mission, Purpose, Vision, Major Goal, and Core Values. The conversations we had were earnest and honest. While we didn't always agree initially, we were able to discuss the pros and cons of each issue until we could arrive at a consensus. What came out of these sessions is a remarkable, cohesive and challenging new direction for the Society. This direction honors who we are and what we do well, while stretching us in new and more exciting directions. It is time for us to grow as a Society, especially if we wish to be part of the new opportunities in immunogenetics and clinical medicine afforded by basic science, and if we want to be part of the national debate and policy making in transplantation. In many public arenas we have fallen off the radar screen and we have been viewed as strictly a "trade" society. It is time for us to realize that histocompatibility is only one small area of immunogenetics and that we need to have a broader vision. That broader vision is articulated in the following:

## Our Mission

The American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics is a professional Society dedicated to advancing the science and practice of immunogenetics and its impact on the quality of human life

## Our Core Purpose

... is to improve the quality of human life

## Our Vision

... is to improve the quality of human health through the understanding and application of immunogenetics

## Our Big Audacious Goal

... is to be acknowledged as global leaders in generating and translating immunogenetic knowledge to

improve human health

Our Core Values

Leadership in immunogenetics

Patients come first

Expanding knowledge

Diversity of membership

Integrity

We have already identified key actions in key areas and many individuals and committees have been tasked with getting us moving toward our strategic goal quickly and effectively. Five key focus areas where we will be turning our attention are the following:

Scientific Leadership: We, ASHI, will provide the resources and education to our existing and new members, and form strategic alliances to be the recognized scientific and clinical leaders in our specialty.

Restructuring Laboratory Practice: We, ASHI, will expand the purview of laboratory practice in the areas of transplantation, autoimmune disease, immunogenetic genotyping, cancer and HLA therapeutics through research and application of new technologies. Testing procedures and practice guidelines will be standardized and consistent with evidence-based medicine.

Public Recognition: We, ASHI, will become more visible by seeking out and taking advantage of all opportunities to drive public policy, guide clinical practice, and participate in scientific collaboration.

Membership Issues: We will make the benefits of ASHI so compelling that we will attract a diverse group of people who become actively participating members. We will provide a seamless two-way line of communication among the various groups of ASHI members to facilitate ASHI global recognition.

Reengineering Ourselves: We, ASHI, will have a membership supported, dynamic strategic plan that is facilitated by an optimal system of operation ensuring continuity of leadership and promoting effective communication.

This is the essence (minus the details) of the discussions we had. Those present were exhausted but extremely enthusiastic about this new vision and direction. Your comments and questions are encouraged and invited. You may make them to Mike Flanagan at the Executive Office, to me, or to any member in attendance. It will take all of us working together to make this plan a reality!