Letter from the President

This issue of the Donor Spotlight features two extraordinary members who have demonstrated their commitment and dedication to making a significant, meaningful impact on the Academy and Foundation by becoming Life Members of the Millennium Society and Founding Members of the Hal Foster, MD Endowment.

I encourage you to read the fascinating stories of Stacey L. Ishman, MD and Jerry M. Schreibstein, MD to gain insights into the reasons that they are passionate about their involvement in the Academy, contributed to the Foundation, and advanced our vision of empowering otolaryngologist—head and neck surgeons to deliver the best possible patient care.

We can all have an impact, regardless of amount or current level of engagement. The important thing is to be a part and contribute to the whole – to start donating if you have not yet done so or to renew your pledge for 2012. You may consider increasing your support to make the next step up in your commitment. There is strength in numbers and our percentage of participation is more impressive than the dollars contributed. Each year, participation in the Millennium Society has increased, and for 2012 we have high expectations that membership will grow to another all-time high. With your participation, we will be working together to strengthen the impact of the Foundation on our specialty, for the good of patients everywhere.

Leadership and staff are making a concerted effort to be at various meetings around the country this year (dubbed “the Road Show”). I encourage you to seek out, get to know and engage your Academy staff and leadership wherever possible.

We have many exciting plans for 2012, and will, no doubt, have unforeseen challenges ahead. Having just come off our most successful Academy meeting yet, I have every confidence that your support will continue to strengthen our Academy and Foundation. Thank you for all that you do and we encourage you to continue to get involved. Let’s make 2012 a pivotal year where we transition to long-term sustainability and viability.

Thank you.

Ródney P. Lusk, MD
AAO-HNS/F President

As 2011 drew to a close, so did the page of our organization’s history books that will recognize the Hal Foster, MD Endowment’s Founding Donors. With the support and generosity of these donors, the endowment has grown to more than $7.5 million in cash and planned gifts that provide sustenance for the future of this organization. Our most sincere thanks to the Founding Donors:

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- Ronald B. Kppersmith, MD, MBA, and Nicole Kppersmith

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- Harlene Ginsberg and Jerry Schreibstein, MD
- Gavin Setzen, MD, and Karen Setzen
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- Seilesh Babu, MD, and Abbey Crooks-Babu, MD
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- Rebecca D. Golgert, MD
- Stacey L. Ishman, MD, and Jim McCarthy
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As of January 19, 2012
Partners for Progress—Momentum Gains, Engagement Increases, and Patient Care Benefits

Nikhil J. Bhatt, MD
AAO-HNSF Development Coordinator

Reflecting on the past year and its successes, and looking forward to 2012 and its promises for advances in the specialty, one very special program comes to mind as worthy of highlighting. Now entering its third year in the lineup of development programs that facilitate advances in patient care, Partners for Progress is becoming a very popular way for groups to engage with the Foundation’s mission. During 2011, the AAO-HNSF introduced new enhancements to the already successful program, and these are leading to advances in many areas of patient care—both face-to-face and through conference calls were held:

■ Upon participation in the Forum and a subsequent Partners for Progress conference call that presented updates about key health policy issues (including the RUC survey, BCBSA balloon policy, etc.) partnering groups expressed eagerness and willingness to assist the health policy team with these efforts.

■ After hearing about the Partners for Progress and feeling the energy of Partners at the Fall AOA Large Group Forum, two new Partners enrolled for 2012 (Colorado ENT and Sound Health Services), each of which will provide vital insights to the overall group.

■ After the AAO-HNS presented to the AOA Large Group Forum and the Partners for Progress, physicians at the participating groups became ENT PAC donors for the first time.

■ A member, not previously involved in AAO-HNS/F committees, is submitting his application to serve.

In addition to these tangible outcomes, we anticipate higher volunteerism and collaboration from the Partner groups at the upcoming May Board of Governors and the Otolaryngology Advocacy Summit. The AAO-HNS/F would like to express sincere appreciation to its Partners for Progress, and all physicians and staff from the partnering groups, for their enthusiasm in support of the best patient care.
The Foundation is honored to spotlight Harlene Ginsberg and Jerry M. Schreibstein, MD in this issue. It’s not a stretch to say that this family’s generosity is linked to the Hal Foster, MD Endowment’s success to date. Dr. Schreibstein and Harlene began supporting the Foundation after he completed his residency. Their first gift of $100 in 1998 was for the President’s Appeal and supported the Foundation’s operations. Just over a decade later, Harlene and Dr. Schreibstein took a giant leap in their giving to the Foundation by becoming one of the first Hal Foster, MD Founding Donors in 2009.

“I had been a Millennium Society supporter for years. When I was elected as the Board of Governors (BOG) Chair, I began to think about how I could make a long-term difference in, and commitment to, the Academy. We felt that given the importance of the Academy to my career and our lives, making a gift to the endowment would demonstrate commitment, and encourage other members of leadership and our general members to give back to the Academy.”

Dr. Schreibstein became a member in 1990 during residency. He found value in his membership using many of the knowledge resources and the annual meeting to support his educational needs. As his career matured, he found rich networking and leadership development opportunities in the BOG. Through his role as a BOG leader, he became enlightened about the value of the Academy and Foundation to him and his peers; this incited his desire to do more for the mission.

“I was involved in the BOG, an excellent vehicle to network with my colleagues in academic and private practice. Through this experience, I learned best practices, became involved in national activities, healthcare reform, reimbursement and coding issues, and in the full gamut of the Academy’s activities. It’s allowed me to learn things from my colleagues, stimulated my interests in academic areas, and challenged me to change the way I do things in my practice.”

“The amount that we give in dues pales in the amount of benefit we get, philanthropy is the way to ensure the Academy’s future—the specialty’s future.”

Dr. Schreibstein has truly led by example, and this has led to a strengthened Academy and Foundation, and the specialty. He has directly influenced members to become Hal Foster, MD Endowment donors or Millennium Society members, ensuring mission progress on many fronts. His endowment gift demonstrated the importance of the endowment. Through his active championing of our mission, he has led his peers to quickly make similar decisions – leading to the reality of a $7.5 million endowment just two years after his gift was given. He is a spirited champion, and not at all reluctant about sharing why he is an “Academy advocate.” When colleagues ask how and why he gave a significant gift, he is quick to answer:

“We demonstrate our commitment to the Academy through leadership in volunteering and giving. It doesn’t really take a lot of money. There are flexible vehicles to do it, whether you’re giving appreciated stock, using life insurance, or making a gift from your estate, there are ways to ensure the Foundation’s future. Your giving is vital to ensuring that the residents and the future members of our specialty will have the resources of the Academy and Foundation available.”
Stacey Ishman, MD joined the Academy in 2000 at the prompting of her then Chair, P. Ashley Wackym, MD (also a Hal Foster, MD Endowment Founding Donor). Little did he know that his introduction of the Academy to Stacey would facilitate her transition into one of this organization’s most engaged young leaders, and that her experiences would lead her to give a gift to ensure other young otolaryngologists benefit from the programs and services she cherishes.

Through Dr. Wackym’s leadership and urging of his residents’ membership in the Academy, Dr. Ishman gained a greater understanding of the value of the Academy. Over the last decade, she served on the Section for Residents and Fellows (SRF), held an SRF leadership position, served on the Sleep Disorders and the Pediatric Otolaryngology Committees, and has been active in BOG leadership. In 2010, Dr. Ishman was awarded the AAO-HNS Honor Award in recognition of her service.

“I feel like the Academy’s done a lot for me; I think it does a lot for every otolaryngologist. There are a lot of intangible things. Like the lobbying efforts conducted that people don’t understand, even if it’s just helping to make sure a Bill doesn’t pass, which I see every day. There’s also tangible things like the Academy working with the insurance companies to do things that make more sense, and help with reimbursement. Personally, I really felt supported through committee participation, opportunities to present at meetings, and to be a member of the BOG leadership – all of those things have really helped me to be involved, helped me to see how the organization works and see the value to it.”

During a BOG meeting, Dr. Babu shared with Dr. Ishman the ease and affordability of giving a gift of life insurance, and noted that it fit his intent to support the Millennium Society for the long term future. Dr. Ishman, in turn, inspired others to do the same, convincing a handful of her colleagues to join the Millennium Society or become endowment donors.

“One of the biggest things the Academy is doing, is to reduce reliance on corporate sponsorship and I would love for us to see that this kind of financial stability from endowed money that takes us away from those kinds of worries. The education mission is enormous. What I love about the annual meeting is it’s really all about education, so being able to personally support more of that is phenomenal. We have an amazing set-up with the CORE grants—as an applicant anything that I can do to help contribute to that is useful. Then there’s advocacy. Even though there’s no direct line between ENT PAC and the Foundation, I think the awareness of the advocacy efforts that is facilitated by the Foundation is critical. In the past, we weren’t always involved in the discussion and that’s why some of these restrictive laws and taxes and things have come up that we think are ridiculous, because we weren’t paying attention at the time. I think it’s fantastic that even if we individually don’t pay attention, the Academy’s doing it for us.

Dr. Ishman, who is 43 and has young children, does not fit the mold of a typical planned gift donor. When asked what compelled her to give a major gift to the Hal Foster, MD Endowment at such a young age, Dr. Ishman is eager to share that she was inspired by Seilesh Babu, MD another young founding endowment donor. When asked about her vision of what her gift will accomplish and why she chose to support the AAO-HNS/F in such a big way, Dr. Ishman sums up her thoughts about the important leadership role the Academy and Foundation play in the life of today’s otolaryngologist – head and neck surgeon. Please see above.
Humanitarian Team Works with Thyroid Patients in Kenya

Thanks to enthusiastic Academy members, and their donations to the AAO-HNS Foundation's humanitarian efforts, our organization can boast one of the most active humanitarian programs of any specialty society. Countless teams travel around the globe to provide medical and surgical care and training.

Kenya Relief takes teams to Migori, near Lake Victoria, in western Kenya. Last fall, Merry E. Sebelik, MD, Humanitarian Efforts Committee Chair, led head and neck surgeons Bruce H. Campbell, MD, Amy Y. Chen, MD, MPH, Salvatore M. Caruana, MD, Kelly M. Malloy, MD, and Alcon Foundation grantee Ryan Meacham, MD on a Kenya Relief mission.

In three days of clinic, the team saw more than 1,000 patients and performed 30 operations, mostly subtotal thyroidectomies for goiter patients in this iodine-deficient setting. The team used an ultrasound machine with an endoluminal probe to evaluate goiters and determine, along with mirror laryngoscopy, the pre-op mobility of vocal cords. Without T4/TSH, FNA, CT scans, post-op calcium, and intra-op nerve monitoring, judicious operative planning was required.

Dr. Meacham stated: “There remains a vast need for future surgeons to perform tympanomastoidectomies.” He adds, “although participating in a medical mission like this is highly rewarding to see lives that are forever blessed, it is equally humbling and disappointing to realize one’s limitations to help others...Both challenging and gratifying, operating in Kenya was something I will never forget.”

Gregory W. Randolph, MD, Coordinator for International Affairs, led the next Kenya Relief team to Migori in February 2012. We are greatly indebted to individual contributions to help residents in training take part in these life-changing missions.

To support humanitarian programs at AAO-HNSF visit www.entnet.org/donate.
With the leadership of Dr. Michael Setzen, the AAO-HNS/F had the opportunity to present to over 150 otolaryngologists – head and neck surgeons in attendance at the December 8, 2011, Annual Clinic Day.

As part of a new “Road Show” effort, Academy staff and leadership are attending local and state chapter meetings to provide attendees with a greater understanding of how the Academy and Foundation continues to work for members in the areas of healthcare reform, quality initiatives, medical education, research, and to share opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

During the meeting several members joined the ENT Advocacy Network, made an ENT PAC donation, or became a member of the Millennium Society. The AAO-HNS and its Foundation are grateful to its members’ for their continued support. We would like to highlight those who chose to donate to the Millennium Society, contributed to the ENT PAC or both at the Annual Clinic Day: Peter D. Berman, MD; Greg I. Dash, MD; Anthony Del Signore, MD; Anthony Durante, MD; Emil Ganjian, MD; Neil S. Hamerman, MD; Louis M. Rosner, MD; Lee Smith, MD; and Gary M. Snyder, MD.

To request AAO-HNS/F staff or leadership presence at a future meeting please email, jdean@entnet.org.