ASFA MISSION
ASFA is an organization of physicians, scientists, and allied health professionals whose mission is to advance apheresis medicine for patients, donors and practitioners through education, evidence-based practice, research and advocacy.

IN THIS ISSUE

ASFA 2015 Annual Meeting – A Great Success! ........................................... 1

Upcoming Meetings .................................. 2
   2015 Regional Meeting ............. 2
   Save the Date: ASFA 2016 Annual Meeting .... 2

The Journal of Clinical Apheresis
your journal and its past, present, and future! ................................. 3

How to Access the JCA
through the ASFA Website........ 4

How to Sign Up for
New Issue Notifications ............ 4

ASFA Updates ................................. 4
   2015 Reimbursement Guide .... 4
   Upcoming Webinar ............... 4
   ASFA Access ......................... 5
   ASFA Journal Club .............. 5

Committee Updates ................. 5
   Physicians Committee .......... 5
   Public Affairs Committee ...... 6
   JCA Special Issue Committee .. 7

Research Corner ......................... 7

ASFA Leadership and
Contact Us .................................... 8
   Board of Directors .............. 8
   Directors .......................... 8

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ASFA 2015 ANNUAL MEETING – A GREAT SUCCESS!

Thank you to everyone that attended the ASFA 2015 Annual Meeting in beautiful San Antonio, Texas at the Grand Hyatt from May 6 - 9, 2015. We are thrilled to note that with approximately 560 attendees the 36th ASFA Annual Meeting was a huge success.

Check out some of the conference photos below and be sure to read the post-conference report to learn more about participation statistics, award recipients and abstract submission. The conference presentations are now available on the ASFA website.

You can view more conference photos on our Facebook page!
UPCOMING MEETINGS

2015 Regional Meeting

ASFA is proud to announce that the 2015 Regional Meeting will be held at the Bloodworks Research Institute, Puget Sound in Seattle WA, on November 20, 2015.

The ASFA Regional Meeting will offer the unique opportunity for topic-specific learning and networking at a small and intimate apheresis meeting.

The goal of the meeting is to provide high quality education and discussion opportunity to physicians, allied health professionals, and medical students involved with donor and therapeutic apheresis. Specialties involved include, but are not exclusive of, pathology, hematology, immunology, nephrology, pediatrics and rheumatology.

REGIONAL MEETING REGISTRATION FEES

Early bird registration is available until September 30, 2015, 11:59pm PDT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Bird Rate (on or before September 30, 2015)</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health/Resident</td>
<td>$200 USD</td>
<td>$275 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician/PhD/Industry Associate</td>
<td>$250 USD</td>
<td>$325 USD</td>
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</table>

HOTEL RATES

ASFA has negotiated a discounted room rates for attendees of the Regional Meeting*.

One bedroom non-lakeside suite: USD 169.00 plus taxes

Rooms include buffet breakfast, access to fitness center and complimentary wifi.

Click here to book your room online.

*Room nights at discounted rates for the regional meeting are subject to availability. Once the negotiated ASFA room block is full, ASFA cannot guarantee discounted rates and guests will receive the prevailing rate at the hotel.

2016 Annual Meeting

ASFA is pleased to announce that the 2016 Annual Meeting will be held at the Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort & Spa in Palm Springs, CA from May 4 - 7, 2016.

Remember to visit the 2016 Annual Meeting page throughout the summer to learn more information about abstract submission, pre-conference activities and more!

2016 ANNUAL MEETING ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

CHAIRS:

Bruce Sachais, MD, PhD (Chair)
Nicole Aqui, MD (Scientific Co-Chair)
Jill Adamski, MD, PhD (Scientific Co-Chair)

PLANNING MEMBERS:

Laura Collins, RN, BSN, HP(ASCP)
Alicia Garcia, RN, HP(ASCP)
Margaret Hannan, LPN, AT(ASCP)
Anand Padmanabhan, MD, PhD
Christina Anderson, RN, BSN, HP(ASCP)
Lance Williams, MD

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Website
For those of you who attended the American Society for Apheresis annual general meeting in San Antonio, you saw the changing of the guard with the transition of the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Clinical Apheresis from Dr. Robert Weinstein to myself, Dr. Jeffrey Winters. Dr. Weinstein was honored at the business meeting for his more than a decade of service to the Society as the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Clinical Apheresis. During his tenure, Dr. Weinstein's leadership and hard work resulted in substantial growth and improvement in the Journal including expansion of the number of issues per year, an increase in the number of submissions, both from within and from outside of the United States, and most importantly, an increase in the Impact Factor of the Journal, a measure of the importance of a journal in the medical literature. Dr. Weinstein was and should be honored for his outstanding efforts! As was stated publicly at the business meeting, I would like to again state in writing, THANK YOU Dr. Weinstein for your outstanding service and contributions to the Journal of Clinical Apheresis and the American Society for Apheresis!

As the new Editor-in-Chief, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, indicate some of my thoughts about future directions, inform you about some changes, and ask for your help and feedback. First, for those of you who do not know me, my name is Jeff Winters and I am a physician at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester Minnesota. At the Clinic, I serve many roles but the most relevant for this discussion is that I serve as the medical director of the Therapeutic Apheresis Treatment Unit, a 17 bed unit performing approximately 3,000 therapeutic apheresis procedures per year. am board certified in Anatomic/Clinical pathology and Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine. have been intimately involved in the American Society for Apheresis since 1999, serving on many committees as well as the board of directors, including serving as ASFA president from 2010 to 2011. have also been an associate editor for the Journal of Clinical Apheresis since 2004.

It is my goal to continue the growth in the quality of the Journal of Clinical Apheresis that was started by Dr. Weinstein during his tenure as Editor-in-Chief. To this end I hope to focus on making some changes in both the processes and content of the Journal. My plans/goals are to achieve the following:

1. Update the submission process on the ScholarOne website to take advantage of the functionality offered through the website. This should make it easier for authors to submit articles and find information that they need.

2. Decrease the turn-around-time from the time that an article is submitted until the authors hear whether or not it has been accepted.

3. Decrease the turn-around-time from time that the article is accepted until it is published.

4. Expand the editorial board to include more members as well as greater international representation and representation from more diverse medical specialties.

5. Add new article types to the Journal. It has been suggested that the Journal consider publishing an invited review article in each issue, based upon the popularity of such articles. Other possible new types could include an “Images in Apheresis”, where authors could submit educational images related to apheresis and a Question and Answer section where the readership could submit a clinical question and an expert would provide an answer.

6. Finally, I would like to increase the number of articles published by allied health as well as the number of articles related to donor apheresis.

With regard to the present, it is important for the ASFA membership to realize that the Journal of Clinical Apheresis has become an electronic ONLY journal and that you will no longer receive a print copy. In order to access your
on-line subscription that represents a membership ben-
efit, you can do so by logging in through the ASFA web-
site. In addition, there is a way to register through Wiley
On-Line to receive an email notification when a new issue
has been published on-line. Instructions for accessing the
Journal of Clinical Apheresis through the ASFA website as
well as registering for notifications when new issues are
available can be found in this issue of Spin Column.

Finally, as I did at the ASFA ‘Breakfast with the Expert’ ses-
tions at the annual meeting, I encourage the membership
to provide me with feedback and suggestions concerning
the Journal. It is our Society’s journal and your input is im-
portant. Let me know what you would like to see changed?
Do you have suggestions for editorial board membership?
Are there changes to the submission process that would
enhance the Journal? Let me know!

Sincerely,
Jeffrey L. Winters, MD

How to Access the JCA through the
ASFA Website
Did you know you can access the JCA directly through the
ASFA website? Follow the steps below to start reading the
JCA online!

1. Go to www.apheresis.org and log in to your ASFA
   member account.
2. Hover your mouse over the menu headed ‘Resources’.
3. Click on ‘JCA Online Access’.
4. Click on the large, yellow ‘JCA Online Access’ button
   under the heading ‘Online Access’.

If you follow the steps above you will be immediately redi-
rected to the JCA homepage on the Wiley website.

How to Sign Up for New Issue
Notifications
Receive notifications directly from Wiley whenever new
Journal of Clinical Apheresis content is available by follow-
ing the steps below.

1. Log in to your Wiley Online Library account (note: this
   is separate from your ASFA member account).
2. Navigate to the JCA homepage.
3. Click on ‘Get New Content Alerts’ in the left-hand
   menu under the heading ‘Journal Tools’

ASFA UPDATES

2015 Reimbursement Guide
The ASFA 2015 Reimbursement Guide is now available to
both ASFA members and non-members. This ASFA publi-
cation is a comprehensive manual on reimbursement for
those who practice in the field of apheresis and those in-
volved in billing for apheresis procedures.

Please share this important resource with your colleagues!

Upcoming Webinar
Topic: Advocating for Apheresis Insurance
Reimbursement: Successes and Challenges Ahead
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2015
Time: 12:00 - 1:00 pm EST
Speaker: Keith Berman, MPH, MBA

Berman, MPH, MBA (Health Research Associates, Altadena,
CA) provides reimbursement consulting and market research
services to manufacturers, suppliers and providers of
medical devices, blood products and biopharmaceuticals.
Since 1989, Mr. Berman has also served as editor of
International Blood/Plasma News, a blood products industry newsletter.

**Topics Covered:**
- 2015 Therapeutic Apheresis Reimbursement Update
- Medicare as Payer and Research Partner for Non-Indicated Uses: The Photopheresis Experience
- New Initiatives to Expand Insurance Coverage for LDL Apheresis

**ASFA Access**

ASFA Access is a section of the ASFA website exclusive to our members. Here you will find webinar recordings, the ASFA guidelines and reimbursement guide and more information related to apheresis.

Visit the webinar library to view webinars on topics such as Medications and Apheresis, Multiple Sclerosis and NMO, Hematologic Emergencies, Pediatric Apheresis and much more! In addition to the webinar library, ASFA Access allows members to view PDF copies of the JCA Special Edition and ASFA Guidelines.

We are excited to offer these resources free to all of our members, log in to your ASFA member account and check out ASFA Access!

**ASFA Journal Club**

The ASFA Journal Club provides an opportunity for members to connect, discuss, and exchange ideas from current literature on apheresis topics. The sessions utilize an interactive online format. Manuscripts for discussion will be selected from the Journal of Clinical Apheresis, the official publication of ASFA, and other leading journals.

The next Journal Club will take place on July 17 from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm EDT, hosted by Matt Karafin. We will be discussing the following article:

Effective collection of peripheral blood stem cells in children weighing 20 kilogram or less in a single large-volume apheresis procedure.


Log in to your ASFA account to register!

**COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Physicians Committee**

*Chairs: Nicole Zantek, MD, PhD and Yvette Tanhehco, MD, PhD, MS*

The Apheresis Physician Committee is responsible for issues unique to physicians in Apheresis Medicine. The committee is devoted to physicians at all levels from training to practicing providers. The committee has completed and is working on several projects dealing with physician education, training, competency, and practice in Apheresis Medicine. The committee meets quarterly by teleconference, but the many achievements of the group were accomplished by the members of its subcommittees.

The Apheresis Graduate Medical Education Committee (subcommittee chair Dr. Carol Marshall) focuses on issues related to training physicians to become providers of apheresis medicine. The committee has been working on projects related to the ACGME milestones for physician training. They have completed milestones for trainees in Pathology residencies and Transfusion Medicine fellowships. They are currently drafting a crosswalk between the ASFA curricular milestones and the ACGME reporting milestones. In the future the committee would like to develop methods and tools for evaluation of trainee competency and survey non-Pathology programs about incorporating apheresis milestones into their subspecialty milestones. The committee planned three ‘Breakfast with the Expert’ sessions for the 2015 ASFA Annual Meeting. The
topics were Paths in Apheresis, Neurobiology of Learning, and Apheresis Education Issues.

The Apheresis Medicine Attending Physician subcommittee (subcommittee chair Dr. Gay Wehrli) is working to create opportunities for attending physicians to improve apheresis practices through information exchange and competency assessment tools. The committee has been focused on vascular access issues. They are conducting a formal literature review on the topic. The committee is also developing a survey on vascular access options and issues for apheresis.

The Guidelines Ad Hoc subcommittee (subcommittee chair Dr. Yvette Tanhehco) was established to make recommendations for updates to the ASFA Guidelines for Documentation of Therapeutic Apheresis Procedures in the Medical Record by Apheresis Physicians. In particular they address what it means for an apheresis provider to say “they saw and evaluated the patient for the procedure”.

Public Affairs Committee

Chairs: Jan Hofmann, MD, MPH, MSc and Chester Andrzejewski, MD, PhD, FCAP

The mission of the Public Affairs and Advocacy (PAA) Committee of the American Society for Apheresis (ASFA) is to serve as one of the Society’s major resources in addressing advocacy, public relations, and regulatory affairs and issues pertinent to the field and practice of Apheresis Medicine and ASFA. In this regard, the PAA Committee performs an indispensable role in this era of increasing regulatory and financial oversight from various stakeholders regarding the discipline of Apheresis Medicine. The committee participates in planning vital advocacy initiatives such as clarifying intent of CMS documents. On behalf of ASFA, the committee also responds to unanticipated challenges such as creating and submitting comment during public comment periods on proposed changes that would directly affect apheresis practice. The committee has been involved in several initiatives during the past year, and will be moving forward on several new, key initiatives in 2015-2016. These include:

• Assisting the BOD in writing an official comment to CMS regarding the 1992 Apheresis National Coverage Determination (NCD) document in support of the retirement of this document. This letter to CMS was co-signed by the American Society of Hematology (ASH) and AABB, and submitted by ASFA during the public comment period this spring. As a response from CMS may not occur until October or November, 2015, a variety of options are being discussed (in anticipation of the retirement of the NCD document) in order to manage future interaction between ASFA and CMS intermediaries.

• Editing the 2015 Apheresis Reimbursement Guide (currently revised every two years) and working closely with the author, Keith Berman. Two updates: 1) the 2015 guide is now available to non-members on the ASFA website and 2) the BOD is strongly considering a yearly update of the Apheresis Reimbursement Guide.

• An Allied Health Apheresis Competency survey has been developed and will be reviewed by the Allied Health Committee (the survey will query both nurses and medical technologists [med techs] performing apheresis treatments); we plan to have the survey ready for circulation by July, 2015. Within 12 months, the goal is to have developed suggested guidelines and benchmarks for nurse and med tech apheresis competency and qualification.

• Performing literature review and market research on the topic of “remote” apheresis management/telemedicine (stimulated by increasing interest in defining the role of the apheresis consultant/expert in providing disease management [cognitive] recommendations “remotely”). Issues include:
  » What are the medical/legal issues involved in providing such clinical advice (including suggested apheresis orders, etc)?
  » Can an apheresis consultant be reimbursed for “remote” disease management (DM)?
  » What would (or should) the electronic documentation look like for “remote” DM?
  » Consideration of preparing a white paper on suggested guidelines for remote apheresis management and documentation.

• A member of the committee is closely involved with a multicenter academic working group to develop a national TTP registry database/research network (and will be working with the Rare Diseases Subcommittee).

In addition, this committee occasionally hosts guest speak-
ers and consultants from industry, national organizations, and other ASFA committees to discuss policy issues regarding clinical practice, reimbursement, research, and local and national determination coverage. The chair of the committee is the official ASFA representative at the annual AABB Liaison Meeting with the FDA.

JCA Special Issue Committee

Chairs: Beth Shaz, MD and Joseph Schwartz, MD, MPH

The ASFA Special Issue Committee is actively working on Guidelines on the Use of Therapeutic Apheresis in Clinical Practice: Evidence-Based Approach from the Apheresis Applications Committee of the American Society for Apheresis (also known as the Seventh Edition of the ASFA Special Issue or JCA Special Issue 2016). The Committee is comprised of ten ASFA members representing ASFA’s diversity of apheresis experts (nephrologists, pediatricians, hematologists, bone marrow transplant experts, pathologists, and transfusion medicine experts) and global reach (Seattle, Milwaukee, Charlottesville, New York, Philadelphia, Dartmouth, and Vienna). The expanded and updated Special Issue 2016 should be published in June. The Committee is evaluating the potential of 93 fact sheets (13 new ones) with 170 disease conditions. We have monthly calls to evaluate fact sheets and will be meeting in Seattle in late September. Our goal is to serve the membership and the apheresis community at large with easy to use, evidence based, guide to therapeutic apheresis applications.

RESEARCH CORNER

Edward Wong, MD

The National Heart and Lung Institute is beginning a new cycle of listening and learning about key research needs and has named it NHLBI Strategic Visioning. Several key events have already occurred and are listed below.

- Feb 11, 2015 – Strategic Visioning Webinar
- Mar 2015 – Draft Strategic Visioning Framework released and SV Forum open to collect Compelling Questions and Critical Challenges
- Mar 2015 – Strategic Visioning Webinar
- May 15, 2015 – Deadline for submitting Questions and Challenges for inclusion in 2015 Strategic Visioning Scientific Priorities
- Jul-Aug 2015 – Community Input on the Draft Strategic Research Priorities
- Early 2016 – Strategic Research Priorities Released

Fortunately, this strategic visioning was brought to ASFA’s attention during the May 2015 annual meeting. Based on the November 2012 NHLBI Workshop on the State of the Science on Apheresis, 12 broad proposals put together by Bruce Sachais, Marisa Marques, Yossi Schwartz, Zbigniew “Ziggy” Szczepiorkowski, YanYun Wu, Jennifer Schneiderman, Richard Edelson, Nora Ratcliffe, Ed Wong and Jeff Winters were developed for potential inclusion in the 2015 NHLBI Strategic Vision Scientific priorities. These proposals were very well received by the ASFA membership. Proposals included 1) development and support mechanisms for apheresis medicine investigators, 2) support for apheresis medicine in the management of sickle cell disease, 3) development of novel cellular and adsorption apheresis technologies, 4) establishment of an apheresis medicine consortium to advance the development of evidence based therapies, 5) treatment of sepsis related multi-organ failure utilizing apheresis based strategies (special help from Joe Kiss), 6) evaluation of key product factors for optimal hematopoietic progenitor stem cell graft function, 7) evaluation of extracorporeal photopheresis on acute and chronic graft-vs-host-disease, 8) study of the immunologic effects of extracorporeal photopheresis, 9) role of extracorporeal photopheresis on heart and lung rejection, and 10) evaluation of immunologic predictors of cardiac function following apheresis for dilated cardiomyopathy. It should be noted that there will be community input on a draft of NHLBI Strategic Research Priorities from July through August of 2015, with strategic research priorities released in early 2016. It is hoped that many of these apheresis proposals will be research priorities in the next 0-5 years. Members should continue community input on the draft being put together by NHLBI this summer.
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June 2015