

News from the ASM Program Committee

By Vinod Chandran, MBBS, MD, DM, PhD

We look forward to “seeing” you at the CRA’s first virtual Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM)! It is shaping up to be an exciting and dynamic offering that can be enjoyed from the comfort of your own home. In 2021, as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the CRA, our meeting will showcase the strengths of our extended rheumatology community, aptly captured by the theme of our meeting: Collaboration, Resilience and Advancement.

Oh, what a difference a year can make.... clinical care, research and meetings have all been transformed by technology and are much different than what we were accustomed to when we last met in Victoria. While a virtual conference will undoubtedly also be a different experience from years past, what will NOT change is the exciting lineup of speakers and workshops you expect, as well as the opportunities to network that you enjoy.

The meeting will run from Wednesday, February 24th to Friday, February 26th, 2021. Each day will offer a full day of formal, interactive programming and adequate time for networking plus, you will have the opportunity to watch on-demand sessions afterwards! Although the sessions are shorter in duration than at CRA’s in-person conference, they will deliver practical, clinically applicable learnings from leading experts from Canada and around the world.

The ASM keynote lectures include:

- Dunlop-Dottridge, delivered by Dr. Daniel Kastner, NIH Distinguished Investigator, Inflammatory Disease Section, National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI). Dr. Kastner will speak on the advances made in understanding autoinflammatory diseases.
- State-of-the-Art, delivered by Dr. Michael Libman, Director of the J.D. MacLean Centre for Tropical Diseases at McGill University. Dr. Libman will be speaking to us about vaccinations and rheumatic diseases.
- Non-Medical Expert, delivered by Dr. Danielle Martin, family physician and Executive Vice-President and Chief Medical Executive of Women’s College Hospital in Toronto. A highly regarded health system leader, Dr. Martin will speak to us about inequities in health care delivery in the current times.

Additionally, we will feature abstracts and poster tours for trainees and investigators to showcase their research activities; state-of-the-art and crowd-sourced workshops; satellite symposia; as well as the not-to-be-missed crowd favourites including Clinical Pearls and Mysterious Cases, RheumJeopardy and The Great Debate! Opportunities to celebrate our award-winning colleagues will be featured throughout the meeting, and satellite meetings will feature the Residents’ Pre-Course, CRA Review Course, Arthritis Health



Dr. Daniel Kastner



Dr. Michael Libman



Dr. Danielle Martin

Professions Association (AHPA) Pre-Course, and the Canadian Arthritis Research Conference.

We welcome all CRA and AHPA members, as well as interested stakeholders, and colleagues around the world to join us for this exciting and memorable Annual Scientific Meeting. We look forward to reconnecting, sharing, and celebrating with you in February!

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Abstract Review Committee Update

By Marinka Twilt, MD, MScE, PhD

The abstracts have been submitted and the CRA Abstract Review Committee has begun the hard work of reading and scoring the abstracts, ably supported by Virginia Hopkins, Manager, Research & Innovation. The committee selects the abstracts worthy of poster presentation. Our meeting will be converted to a virtual meeting this year, and the Annual Scientific Meeting team supported by Claire McGowan (Manager, Educational Programs and Events) together with the CRA Abstract Review Committee have worked hard to retain the multiple opportunities the CRA & AHPA ASM offer on an ongoing yearly basis. Our meeting continues to garner interest from researchers, clinicians, trainees and industry. Even during these unprecedented times, more than 200 abstracts were submitted. Each abstract will be scored by three reviewers, and the best in each category are chosen based on the average score; the chair will break any tie for a spot on the virtual poster tour. Thank you reviewers!

There will be six poster tours during which the top-ranked abstracts will be presented. There will also be interactive poster sessions where attendees will be able to “discuss” posters with the presenters. The top 5 abstracts in each award category will be judged during the poster session for the following awards:

- Best Abstract on Quality Care Initiatives in Rheumatology
- Best Abstract on Research by Young Faculty
- Best Abstract on Pediatric Research by Young Faculty
- Best Abstract on Basic Science Research by a Trainee
- Best Abstract on Clinical or Epidemiology Research by a Trainee – Phil Rosen Award
- Best Abstract on SLE Research by a Trainee – Ian Watson Award
- Best Abstract by a Medical Student
- Best Abstract by a Rheumatology Resident
- Best Abstract by an Undergraduate Student
- Best Abstract by a Post-Graduate Research Trainee
- Best Abstract by a Rheumatology Post-Graduate Research Trainee

We look forward to seeing you all during the first virtual CRA & AHPA ASM!

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