

imaging in developing countries; and improve the dissemination of knowledge.

To address these needs, to sustain the current grants and awards program, and to initiate an array of new activities, we will need your support. New programs include seed grants, departmental fellowships, international fellowships, research fellowships, educational scholarships and fellowships, scholarships in molecular imaging, clinical fellowships in PET/CT, technologistscholarships in PET/CT, and a professional development grant in correlative/anatomical imaging.

Other Notable Achievements

In other 2004 actions, the PET Center of Excellence was established, and final board approval was given at last month's mid-winter meeting for SNM's new Center for Molecular Imaging. Our councils have been restructured and revitalized as we try to get more members than

ever before involved with professional and leadership development. The Young Professionals Committee has been formalized under the umbrella of the Academic Council, because the 2 groups share the goal of impacting training and career development in nuclear medicine. Additionally, I'm pleased to let you know SNM has posted the highest membership numbers in its 51-year history, with the largest number of students ever participating in trial memberships.

Although we've had many successes this past year, the SNM leadership recognizes that there's still more work to do in 2005 and beyond. On behalf of the SNM leadership, I sincerely thank all those who have helped accomplish these goals and acknowledge the hard work of the staff at the SNM office in Reston, VA.

*Mathew Thakur, PhD
President, SNM*

SNMETS 2004: Reorganization Complete; Successes Noted

Welcome to a brand new year! This is an exciting time to be a technologist, and I would like to share with you some highlights from 2004 and provide a glimpse of what is in store for the year ahead.

The great news is that SNMETS reorganization has been completed. The new members of the National Council of Representatives and the Executive Board are in place, and chairpersons of our new committees and task forces have been appointed. For the past 3 years we have been working from a strategic plan that states our core purpose is "to advance the field of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging through education, advocacy, and promotion of science, technology, and practical application." Our changes in committee structure, the National Council of Representatives, and Executive Board responsibility have positioned us to accomplish these defined goals. We were allowed to see our progress in action for the first time at the mid-winter meeting last month.

SHPL Advocacy

Our State Health Care Policy Liaison (SHPL) advocacy group has been successfully launched. The CARE (Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence) and RadCARE bills received unprecedented support in the last session of Congress. SNMETS continues to push for an initiative that would require all 50 states to develop licensure programs for nuclear medicine technologists. We have joined other imaging technologist organizations to compel those states that do not currently have licensure requirements to develop them. In addition, 2 newsletters

have been published, and a successful advocacy boot camp was initiated to educate those who desire to make an impact on issues affecting nuclear medicine. Future projects include adding additional appointees to the SHPL network; establishing goals and expectations for the representatives; developing effective 2-way communication within the SHPL network; and publishing the Advocacy Committee and SHPL rosters in the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology*.

We have formed strategic alliances with many organizations so that we may speak with a larger voice and be clearly heard by regulators and members of Congress. Some groups that we collaborate with include the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT), the American Healthcare Radiology Administrators, the Health Professions Network, and the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors. We provide valuable insight regarding the direction and advancement of our profession to those organizations, and they, in turn, include us in their decision-making processes.

Gateway Achievements

Gateway 2004 was held this past October. This special meeting allowed SNMETS leadership to focus on this year's initiative of professional development. The aim of this Gate-



Nanci A. Burchell

way was to give SNMTS leadership tools to aid in their personal and professional development. A formalized mentoring program was rolled out at the mid-winter meeting to ensure that the leadership pool is always full and that everyone who desires to be a leader reaches his or her maximum potential.

CT, PET Exams

CNMTs now have the ability to sit for the ASRT CT exam, and RTs will be able to sit for the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board (NMTCB) PET exam. The first PET specialty exam was administered in October. The NMTCB showed extraordinary initiative in getting the exam up and running.

The advanced practice NMT career pathway is well on its way to becoming a reality. A preliminary physician survey was completed. A second larger survey was funded and is now in the works. We learned valuable lessons from

the ASRT regarding what would work well with radiologists and nuclear medicine physicians. We still expect bumps in the road, but we have a clear direction and firm initiative.

Education and Research Foundation

SNM and SNMTS have formed a strategic alliance with the Education and Research Foundation, which is the funding arm of SNMTS. The first technologist research grant was awarded, and the Paul Cole Scholarship Fund received an additional \$10,000 in funds for the coming year. Look for exciting future opportunities for grants, awards, and scholarships as this new partnership progresses.

You can see that 2004 was a very good year. I look to even more successes in the year ahead. It is an honor and a pleasure to serve as SNMTS president. Thank you for your support, the challenges, and the opportunity to serve.

*Nanci A. Burchell, BS, CNMT, FSNMTS
President, SNMTS*

From the SNM Executive Director: SNM Readies MOC/Lifelong Learning Program

Five years ago the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) voted unanimously to expand and replace recertification programs with maintenance of certification (MOC) programs—more comprehensive programs to assess the ongoing competence of physician specialists and their ability to provide quality health care. MOC requirements for nuclear medicine professionals take effect this year. In response to this action, SNM will debut its comprehensive, innovative MOC program in fall 2005.

In the past, the certification process comprised successful completion of an approved educational program and an evaluation (including an exam). Now nuclear medicine professionals can no longer simply take an exam to renew a certificate; lifelong learning activities must be documented. For example, American Board of Nuclear Medicine (ABNM) members will be required to document that they have completed 100 hours of nuclear medicine-relevant continuing medical education within a 5-year period. In future years, ABMS MOC will attempt to increase the completeness of the evaluation by assessing a professional's performance in practice.

Four Components of MOC

To renew a certification when it expires, a nuclear medicine professional will be required to present evidence of (1) professional standing (medical licensure); (2) a commitment to lifelong learning through continuing

education activities and performance in a self-assessment process; (3) cognitive expertise (measured by a written exam every 10 years); and (4) quality of performance in practice (including the quality of patient care, professionalism, communication skills, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice).

SNM is tasked by the ABMS with establishing self-assessment materials in all areas of nuclear medicine for ABNM and the American Board of Radiology (ABR) and with developing test questions for the ABR. The Society is doing its best to ensure that the materials are convenient and user friendly. The most challenging project will be developing the tools to measure performance in practice. This component remains undefined for specialists who do not necessarily have direct patient contact in everyday practice.

SNM's Innovative MOC Program

Beginning in the fall, SNM will debut the first of 10 planned systems-based online modules that will help nuclear medicine professionals measure their performance in practice. The modules, complementing existing continuing



Virginia Pappas

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