

## Notes from the Top

Alan B. Packard, PhD, 2020–2021 SNMMI President

**G**reetings, fellow SNMMI members. Since March, COVID-19 has disrupted pretty much every part of our lives, making previous plans largely irrelevant. That said, the central premise of my campaign for president—enhancing the value of SNMMI membership—is now even more important. Although the paths we will take to accomplish this goal have changed dramatically, they still involve “building bridges” to improve our connections both within and outside the SNMMI community.

One important way to enhance the value of SNMMI membership is to make the SNMMI Annual Meeting an essential experience for today’s physicians, scientists, and technologists. This is more critical than ever this year as, for the first time in the 66-year history of the society, we were forced to cancel the face-to-face Annual Meeting. The SNMMI Scientific Program Committee, Board of Directors, and staff have worked closely together to plan an exciting virtual meeting that will be the best possible alternative to a face-to-face meeting—achieving our goals of offering continuing education, presenting the latest research, and providing networking opportunities, all while ensuring the safety of our attendees. Best of all, this year registration is *free* for SNMMI members! I wholeheartedly encourage everyone to join us online July 11–14 for the 2020 SNMMI Meeting—Virtual Edition.

Applying what we learn from this year’s virtual meeting, we are already thinking about how SNMMI meetings will look in the future and, more generally, what scientific conferences will look like in the face of the challenges of travel and of gathering in large groups. We are, above all, social animals, and one of the primary reasons we go to conferences is to get together with friends and to meet new people. We now have the opportunity to redefine how we do this in the future.

Continuing education is a core service that SNMMI provides to its members. In response to COVID-19, the society is expanding its virtual curriculum and increasing the number and scope of continuing education webinars and other virtual options. In addition to webinars geared to physicians and technologists, the society is also presenting webinars focused on the needs of our scientist members, including addressing the challenge of reopening our laboratories in a new and very different environment.

Another core element of SNMMI membership is *JNM*, which has supported both clinical practice and basic science for 60 years as the leading journal in the world for

nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. The journal is an extraordinarily valuable tool for advancing important, peer-reviewed research and promoting active discussion within the community. It is, therefore, essential that the society continue to support this resource both for our members and for the broader nuclear medicine community.

The society can serve our younger members by providing pathways for advancement within the society that will help in their careers. This year we are revising the committee appointment process to provide more opportunities for early-career physicians and scientists to serve on SNMMI committees and to develop within SNMMI’s councils and centers.

My predecessor, Vasken Dilsizian, MD, led the society in its development of strong communications and outreach efforts, and we need to build upon and expand these efforts to build bridges to those outside our community. Perhaps the greatest strength of SNMMI is the diversity of its membership, with physicians, scientists, and technologists working together in one society dedicated to advancing the field of nuclear medicine. All of us, as members of SNMMI, need to continue to reach out to referring physicians, regulators, patients, and the general public to share with them the value of nuclear medicine.

The society has been very fortunate in receiving strong support from our Value Initiative Partners, who continue to recognize the strategic role of SNMMI in demonstrating the essential value of nuclear medicine and molecular imaging to the medical community, regulators, patients, and the general public. This remarkable partnership will continue to enhance the value of society membership and the success of the nuclear medicine and molecular imaging profession.

As a member of SNMMI leadership, I intend to be accessible to all society members and to ensure that your voices are heard. I am very much looking forward to an exciting and innovative year, and I thank you all in advance for your help in accomplishing our shared goals.



Alan B. Packard, PhD