March 29, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

Many of us have just returned from the AAAAI Annual Meeting in San Francisco where an impressive number of WAO Councils and Committees as well as the Board of Directors had very productive meetings. I want to thank all of you who took the time to attend and contribute to these meetings to help further the implementation of WAO initiatives and the upcoming XXII World Allergy Congress (WAC 2011), 4-8 December in Cancún, México. ([http://www.worldallergy.org/wac2011/](http://www.worldallergy.org/wac2011/))

I especially want to thank the WAO Board for a smooth, collegial and instructive process of voting in new officers and members to the WAO Board of Directors 2012-2013. Congratulations to those joining the WAO Board and sincere thanks to all the nominees for their willingness to commit to the WAO. WAO was fortunate and honored to have such excellent nominees and the selection process was by no means an easy one. This is one problem that WAO is glad to have!

Official communications to all nominees will be sent this week and new members will be ratified by the WAO House of Delegates at its meeting during the Congress in Cancún.

Among all the important WAO business that the Board conducted during its meeting, it also approved three new WAO manuscripts. WAO is committed to collaborating with its Member Societies in developing global manuscripts on topics of major interest to allergists and immunologists. The WAO Board of Directors has approved the development of three new WAO manuscripts: (1) On Biodiversity Hypothesis and Allergic Disease, which will be a WAO Statement; (2) On Testing IgE Associated Conditions and Interpreting Results, which will be a WAO Position Paper; and (3) On Diagnosis and Treatment of Urticaria and Angioedema – a Worldwide Perspective, which will be a WAO Position Paper. I encourage you to click on this link for a PDF of the “WAO Document Development Process” and review criteria for and involvement of Member Societies with WAO Statements and WAO Position Papers.

One of the regular WAO meetings I most look forward to is the WAO Member Society Forum. In San Francisco it was held on 20 March and was as informative and enjoyable as I had hoped. Forty three attendees, representing 30 or so Member Societies, were in attendance. While the WAO Board uses this opportunity to provide news and updates on WAO programs, the focus of this Forum is on the Member Societies – and we truly appreciate all your comments and feedback. It was my special pleasure to announce to the group that WAC 2011 in Cancún will hold a special reception to honor the Presidents and President-Elects of WAO Member Societies.

So please remember to send your updated list of your Member Society Executive Committee members so the WAO Staff are able to send invitations to the Presidential Symposium and Cocktail Reception to be held on Monday, 5 December, immediately after the “Presidential Symposium” at the XXII World
Allergy Congress in Cancún. Please send your current Executive Committee list, including email contact information, to Kate at kkirchner@worldallergy.org no later than 15 April 2011.

Also at the Member Society Forum, Ruby Pawankar, who will take over the WAO presidency on 1 January 2012, shared the news about the completion of the WAO White Book on Allergy which includes contributions from many Member Societies about the status of allergy medicine as well as training needs in their countries. Attendees received a copy of the full book on USB drives to share with their members. It can also be downloaded from WAO at: http://www.worldallergy.org/publications/.

World Allergy Week 2011: Next week (4 to 10 April) World Allergy Week 2011 will be held to disseminate the message of Allergic Disease as a Global Public Health Concern. Resources are available for WAO Member Societies online at: http://www.worldallergy.org/worldallergyweek, including the Executive Summary of the WAO White Book on Allergy and a slide set and news release. This will be a global effort to highlight the needs of patients with allergic and immunologic diseases and asthma, provide information about the prevalence of these disorders, and explain the need for enhanced education and patient care services. If you would like to share news about the activities your society held during World Allergy Week, please send a note to the WAO Secretariat (info@worldallergy.org).

WAO Member Societies are adding the World Allergy Week logo to their own websites and linking it to information and resources on the World Allergy Organization website. If your society does not have a website, WAO invites you to include the information in newsletters. Among other activities, Member Societies will host workshops and meet with local media to discuss the importance of allergy awareness in their communities.

The WAO Junior Members Group was launched in San Francisco to better serve WAO’s junior members and help to strengthen the future of our field. Young physician and researcher members will have the opportunity to be part of a worldwide professional network with benefits tailored for them, occasions to interact with the leading international experts in the field and the opportunity to develop a leadership role in the specialty. The WAO Board of Directors will send a letter to all Member Society Leaders shortly with details about the Junior Members Group and how to encourage their members to become involved. More information and a membership application are available at a dedicated WAO Junior Members website: http://www.worldallergy.org/juniormembers/.

What’s New with the XXII World Allergy Congress? The Preliminary Scientific Program and Call for Abstracts were on hand during the AAAAI Annual Meeting in San Francisco and distributed at WAO meetings and the WAO booths in the exhibit hall. The majority of invited speakers have already accepted and the remaining are responding daily. Watch for updates in the Cancún Insider email newsletter and forward it to your colleagues. Cancún Insider content is also archived online (http://www.worldallergy.org/wac2011/insider/index.php).

The WAO Booths in San Francisco: To increase face time with individual members and promote WAO programs, WAO tries to have booths at the exhibitions of various scientific meetings worldwide. In San Francisco, the World Allergy Organization Journal was featured in a booth for attendees to explore. Every active member of a WAO Member Society has free access to the Journal, and the scientific meetings give WAO the opportunity to sign up new readers and answer questions from readers as well as potential authors and reviewers.
The WAO booth on the Cancún Congress offered newly published WAC Preliminary Program and Call for Abstracts, promotional give-away such as Desktop calendar featuring Cancún sites and key Congress Date highlights, Congress mouse pads, pins and magnets. A Cancún Visitor’s Bureau representative was also there to offer local information about the city.

At previously announced times, WAO raffled at the booth two free delegate registrations (valued at $610 each). The lucky winners are: Douglas Jones (Utah, USA) and Taraneh Dean (Southampton, UK). The raffle was conducted by Noel Rodríguez-Perez, Local Organizing Committee Chair. Another raffle, for a 5-star hotel stay of 4 days and 3 nights in Cancún (courtesy of the Cancún Conventions Bureau), was won by Fusun Kalpaklioglu (Turkey).

Congratulations to the winners! We look forward to welcoming you to Cancún and the more than 5,000 other expected attendees!

Sincerely,

Richard F. Lockey
President, World Allergy Organization