

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DECEMBER 2008



Plans for the [2009 ASGT Annual Meeting](#) are taking shape through the hard work of the ASGT Program Committee and [registration](#) for the Annual Meeting is now open online. The theme of the meeting is Gene and Cell Therapy of Cancer, and new Scientific Symposia on these areas have been added to the invited speaker program. The ASGT Scientific Committees are finalizing exciting Scientific Symposia in every field of Gene and Cell Therapy making this meeting a "must see" event. Preliminary Programs will be distributed to all members of ASGT, and members will also be able to access the Preliminary Program on the ASGT website in February. I encourage all members to begin to make their plans to [travel](#) to San Diego for this exciting meeting and especially to have trainees [submit abstracts](#) to present at the meeting.

This year the meeting schedule is a bit different from previous years and members are encouraged to consult the [preliminary schedule-at-a-glance](#) when [registering](#) and making their [travel plans](#). The year the first scientific symposia will take place at 8:30 am on Wednesday, May 27th with Symposia arranged by the International and Bio-Industry Liaison Committees. The popular Education Program will begin on Wednesday afternoon. There will be Simultaneous Oral Abstract Sessions and Poster Sessions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, where the latest results from the submitted abstracts will be presented.

Highlights of the Program include Dr. Brian Druker of Oregon Health and State University, will give the George Stamatoyannopoulos Lecture entitled, *Imatinib as a Paradigm of Molecular Targeted Cancer Therapies* on Thursday, May 28th. The Presidential Symposium will be presented on Saturday, May 30th. The speakers will be Dr. John Carpten of TGEN (*Interrogation of Cancer Genomes for the Discovery of Novel Therapeutic Targets*), Dr. John Nemunaitis of the Mary Crowley Medical Research Center (*Personalized Cancer Gene Therapy*), Dr. Helen Heslop of Baylor College of Medicine (*Immunotherapy of Viral Infections and Malignancy*) and Dr. Chiara Bonini of Fondazione Centro S. Raffaele Del Monte Tabor (*T-Cell Based Gene Therapy to Improve Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation*).

Congratulations to Dr. Inder Verma of the Salk Institute, the recipient of the 2009 ASGT Outstanding Achievement Award! Dr. Verma will receive his award and give a plenary lecture entitled *25 Years of Gene Therapy: Ups and Downs* on Friday, May 29th.

The [San Diego Convention Center](#) is an outstanding venue for our meeting and we have space to present all of the exciting work going on in the field, so once again, I encourage all members to [submit abstracts](#) about their work, and to encourage their trainees and colleagues to do the same.

Finally, please have a safe and healthy end of 2008 and best wishes for the same in 2009.

Sincerely,



David M. Bodine, PhD
ASGT President