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Joan R. Goldberg
Executive Director

Farewell and Thanks

This is my last column as President of the ASCB, and I would like to use it to say “thank you” to the many people who have made this year such a fulfilling one. It was with great trepidation that I accepted the president’s gavel from Bob Goldman at the 2008 ASCB Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Then immediate ASCB Past President Bruce Alberts didn’t make me feel any more confident when he laughingly referred to the flood of emails I would now receive! (It was a gross exaggeration!)

The job has certainly been much easier and more enjoyable than I expected. The major reason is because the ASCB is such a terrific organization and is helping such a wide range of people achieve their goals in cell biology. That’s true, both in this country and throughout the world. But the task has been greatly lightened by the support of the ASCB staff, and, in particular our Executive Director Joan Goldberg.



Brigid Hogan

Acknowledging a Dedicated Group

Joan and her team work tirelessly on behalf of the Society from our headquarters in Bethesda, MD, not far from the National Institutes of Health campus. The Society is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people. The list of tasks that the Staff are responsible for is really quite impressive. They research issues, make recommendations, prepare materials, plan and schedule Council and committee meetings, and ensure that everyone stays on track about public and science policy, Society financials, and all of our programs. In addition, the staff represents the Society to other groups and agencies, supports the membership, keeps the finances in order, publishes the *Newsletter*, *Molecular Biology of the Cell (MBC)*, and *CBE—Life Sciences (CBE-LSE)*, and, in fact, writes most of this *Newsletter*, member broadcast emails, minutes of meetings, and drafts of statements, reports, and press releases. Last, but by no means least, they play a crucial role in organizing our Annual Meeting, handling abstracts and meeting logistics. For those of you fortunate enough to have just attended the

meeting in San Diego, you will appreciate what a huge undertaking this is. Much to my dismay I realize that the *ASCB Newsletter* does not list all the ASCB staff or show photographs of them.

So, here they are, pictured and identified on page 4. On behalf of all ASCB members I want to say a big “thank you” for their work over the past year.

Champion Volunteers

The other champions of the Society are the people who volunteer time and effort to hold crucial leadership positions, such as Treasurer Thoru Pederson and Secretary Jean Schwarzbauer. Thoru has been a steadfast ally and advisor throughout the year.

Many of us try to avoid dealing with budgets and the difficulties that arise when balancing resources against desires in our scientific and personal lives. For us, Thoru is a hero indeed! Other notable people who keep the Society strong and vital are those who volunteer to be members of our committees. The chairs of these committees, in particular, are passionate about their work and use their positions and the energy of their teams to advance far-reaching goals.

I very much hope that more young people will see the Society as a way of contributing to the scientific and educational community, reaching out to the public and spreading inspiration and knowledge to scientists and teachers throughout the world. In fact, when ASCB advertises openings on committees (by email and in the *Newsletter*), I hope members at all career stages will volunteer. While there may not be enough openings for all who volunteer, committee membership isn’t the only venue for involvement. I hope members will consider assisting committees as affiliates and taking part in networking activities, formal or informal. The ASCB website has a link for networking groups that can be joined through Facebook. Other ways of becoming involved include presenting a poster at next year’s ASCB Annual Meeting, mentoring others, and sharing thoughts by writing president@ascb.org. Remember, this is YOUR Society, and it provides many opportunities to help you develop your career and succeed!

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Pointing to Accomplishments

The year has seen many achievements for cell biology and for our Society. We will have a new Editor-in-Chief of *MBC*, David Drubin. He has ambitious plans to build on the successes of Sandra Schmid in raising the profile of the journal. We have also completed another search, for a new editor for *CBE-LSE*.

Council has appointed Erin Dolan to serve as Editor-in-Chief beginning in August 2010 (more information to come in the next *Newsletter*). I know that she will extend the good work done by Editor-in-Chief Bill Wood.

Another exciting development is the Society being awarded a \$2.5 million Grand Opportunity grant to build an online image library of the cell (see www.ascb.org). For this Grand Opportunity to succeed we'll need everyone to submit images of their favorite cells, organelles, and cellular process. Information about how to do so will be forthcoming by email and at www.ascb.org in 2010. With

appropriate resources we can now develop a rich and lasting resource that will help inform and educate society about cell biology.

In the coming years we must use every opportunity and strategy to inform students, laypeople, teachers, and policymakers about our work. We need them to know that cell biology is a vibrant and innovative field that is making many advances in human knowledge. Indeed, two of this year's Nobel laureates, Liz Blackburn and Carol Greider, are long-time members of the ASCB. Cell biology is of great relevance, not only to biomedical research and human health, but also to agriculture, environmental conservation, and industry.

I have been proud to have been President of a society with a rich history and the energy to move forward and evolve. By the time you read this I will have handed over the gavel to Tim Mitchison, a superb cell biologist. I know that he will lead the Society to the 50th Anniversary ASCB Annual Meeting with energy, humor, and resolve. I look forward to seeing everyone at that very special meeting as well. ■

Comments are welcome and should be sent to president@ascb.org.



ASCB Staff: Standing, left to right: Charlie Binder, Kate Kelly, Eleni Hailu, Danielle Nicholson, Eric Baker, Cheryl Lehr, Alison Harris, Kevin Wilson, Lynn Marquis, Ed Newman, Thea Clarke, Howie Berman, Katherine Hempel, Liz Rich, Ricky Fernandez; Seated, left to right: Trina Armstrong, Joan Goldberg, Cynthia Godes, Mark Leader. Not pictured: John Fleischman, Deborah McCall, David Orloff

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