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Vol. 26 No. 6

AABB News

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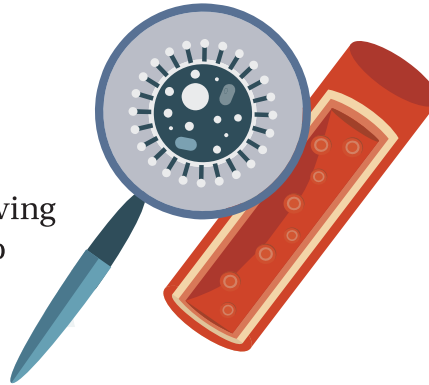
Monitoring the Transfusion Chain

Internationally recognized as the world’s strongest system for hemovigilance, the U.K.’s SHOT program shares reporting efforts and key findings.

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Tracking Emerging Infectious Diseases

The blood community keeps an eye trained on novel, evolving pathogens – essential work to ensure the continued safety of the blood supply.



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World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

Groundbreaking treatments and initiatives may transform sickle cell care in the U.S. and Kenya.

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Celebrating World Blood Donor Day

AABB and the blood community celebrate World Blood Donor Day on June 14 – a time to honor blood donors for their generous gifts and remind people of the importance of blood donations.



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The Worldwide Mission to Advance Blood Safety and Hemovigilance

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunities I have had to advance blood safety and patient care. My passion for understanding the role of blood transfusions in medical care, particularly in reducing the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections in low-resource settings, has been the cornerstone of my career.

During the past 25 years, I have lived or worked in five low-income countries and established a global research program studying the risk for HIV transmission and the risk for other adverse events associated with transfusion. For the past 15 years, I have primarily worked in Uganda, collaborating with a number of non-governmental research organizations and the Uganda Blood Transfusion service. During this time, my research has revealed critical findings: transfusion reactions are common, bacterial contamination of platelet products is a significant risk, and more than 15% of asymptomatic Ugandan blood donors have malaria parasitemia.

Determined to address these challenges, I have worked with a number of colleagues to run a 2,000-person clinical trial evaluating whether pathogen reduction technology (PRT) could be implemented in Uganda and whether PRT could reduce adverse events and seven different transfusion-transmitted infections. While we are still awaiting the results, I am incredibly thankful for the doors that have opened during my career, each one affording me the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues as we make a difference in advancing the transfusion medicine community.

AABB's mission of *Improving lives by making transfusion medicine and*



Aaron A.R. Tobian,
MD, PhD

biotherapies safe, available, and effective worldwide can only be possible by supporting our peers across the planet, including in under-resourced nations. Here, they often grapple with limited resources and infrastructure, making our collaborative efforts even more vital.

In March, I experienced a full-circle moment when I returned to the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service with AABB's CEO, Debra BenAvram and others. Our time there was a reminder of the impact of our work and how critical it is for us to stay connected. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune-Byabazaire and her team at UBTS. Their unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental in the success of our efforts.

Across the AABB community, I see a strong dedication to making a significant difference in the health and well-being of deserving communities around the world. Thank you for doing your part in uplifting our practice and saving lives. ■

Aaron A. R. Tobian, MD, PhD
AABB President

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AABB Foundation Events at the 2024 AABB Annual Meeting

By AABB Foundation Staff
Contributing Writers

AABB and the AABB Foundation are already in the midst of planning for the 2024 AABB Annual Meeting, to be held Oct. 19-22 in Houston, Texas. As usual, the AABB Foundation will host a variety of events in conjunction with the AABB Annual Meeting, all of which promote scientific research, innovation, collaboration, and networking for the blood and biotherapies community.

The AABB Foundation serves the fields of transfusion medicine and biotherapies through grants, education, industry leadership engagement and recognition. Thanks to the generosity of our community, the AABB Foundation is fueling innovative research that strengthens the AABB mission of improving lives by making transfusion medicine and biotherapies safe, available and effective worldwide. Since its inception in 1983, the Foundation has provided more than \$11 million in grant funding to 200-plus investigators at the start of their careers, many of whom have become leading experts in their fields.

“The AABB Foundation is one of the many important aspects of AABB, and it plays an exciting and vital role at the Annual Meeting,” stated Jose Cancelas, MD, PhD, CABP, president of the AABB Foundation Board of Directors. “We’re looking forward to connecting with AABB members and Foundation contributors at our events this year and extend our special thanks to event sponsors for their commitment to supporting our vital scientific research mission.”

Here are just a few of the AABB Foundation’s events that attendees can look forward to at the 2024 AABB Annual Meeting:

Reception for Research – a Party with a Purpose!

Friday, Oct. 18

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Your donation and commitment to the AABB Foundation serves as your ticket to attend this fun networking event that celebrates and honors the newest Foundation research grant and award recipients – and all those who made it possible! Attendees can make a donation to the AABB Foundation during annual meeting registration or anytime online at aabb.org/foundation.

“Your participation helps support and honor researchers working to make a difference in the lives of patients and donors worldwide,” stated Cancelas. “Please join us!”

Institutions and companies are encouraged to attend the Party with a Purpose reception. For bulk ticket sales for your staff teams, please contact foundation@aabb.org.

Research Symposium

Saturday, Oct. 19

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

For more than four decades, the AABB Foundation has infused the transfusion medicine and biotherapies fields with innovative scientific research and pioneering leaders. This premier showcase brings that science into an interactive symposium program where the AABB Foundation grant and award recipients are featured among those presenting on their research work.

“The AABB Foundation is committed to encouraging the best and the brightest scientists to build and flourish in their careers,” stated Krystalyn Hudson, PhD, chair of the Foundation’s Scientific Research Grants Review Committee, which identifies promising early-career investigators for grant funding. “AABB Foundation-funded projects have led to advancements in treatments across many disciplines. It’s always exciting to hear about the research



activities and recent findings that can have a positive impact on patients and donors.”

Lunch will be provided at the Research Symposium. Registration is limited, and pre-registration is required.

Run for Research/Sleep In for Research

Sunday, Oct. 20

7:00 am – 8:30 am (Race ends at approximately 8:30 am or when the last participant finishes)

Lace up your sneakers for the annual Run for Research. Whether you run at a record-breaking pace or prefer a casual walk, what’s important is your participation. The Run for Research offers several convenient options for attendees to get involved while supporting the ABB Foundation mission. Registration proceeds help fund innovative scientific research and support the careers of future leaders in transfusion medicine and biotherapies. Institutions and companies are encouraged to participate in the run/walk. For bulk ticket sales for your staff teams, please contact foundation@abb.org.

In Person—Join us in the morning for a 5K run or 1-mile walk through the designated course in Downtown Houston. A grab-and-go breakfast and commemorative T-shirt are included with your registration.

Virtual—Want to run on your own time but still support the cause? Participate in our virtual walk/run on any day of the ABB Annual Meeting. Enjoy this flexible option as you complete your 5K or 1-mile race whenever and wherever you are. A commemorative T-shirt is included with your registration.

Sleep In—Hit the pillow instead of the pavement! Sleep in for research and still support innovative scientific breakthroughs and future leaders in the field with

your registration. A commemorative T-shirt is included.

Research & Development Summit

Monday, Oct. 21

8:30 am – 11:00 am

The Research & Development (R&D) Summit is your forum as an executive leader to contribute to the forward-thinking discussions that influence and impact the blood and biotherapies field. “Each year, we look forward to bringing together senior leaders and expert researchers for a dynamic dialogue during the annual meeting,” stated Axel Stover, PhD. Stover is one of several individuals who contribute to the planning and development of the R&D Summit. “A range of important topic areas like artificial intelligence, cell and gene therapy, disaster preparedness and donor recruitment are being considered for this year.”

Representatives from corporate, health care, regulatory and other institutions and facilities will be attending for discussions on pivotal topics driving progress and solutions in the field. Breakfast will be provided. Registration is limited, and pre-registration is required. ■



Thank you to the ABB Foundation event sponsors to date for their generous financial support.



For inquiries and ABB Foundation sponsorships, please contact foundation@abb.org.