

The Abstract Edition

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Welcome to Denver and the Annual Scientific Meeting of the AsMA. Within the pages of this month's journal are printed all the abstracts accepted for presentation at our forthcoming conference in the "Mile High City." Many will be reading this edition of the journal ahead of the meeting itself although some will see it for the first time in Denver. Perhaps readers will be looking up their own submissions. They now have a publication of reference in which an aspect of their work is printed. I would like to congratulate all those in that group and to those that were unsuccessful on this occasion, my thanks and commiserations. The size of the meeting is fixed a long time ahead and there is limited capacity. However the process of abstract submission is valuable in itself and constructive feedback will help improve things another time.

For those presenting, you can now get an idea of the location and timing of your "slot". It is an opportunity to see the abstracts of other presentations that will be contained within your session. This is likely to include papers on similar topics to your own and attract a knowledgeable audience. While this can seem daunting it is highly valuable, with the opportunity to evolve ideas for future work and even potential collaborations.

The size of this month's journal reflects the number, range, and variety of material to be brought together at the scientific meeting. Now, with the journal to hand, it becomes possible to plan your days to get the maximum value from the many slide sessions, panels, and posters available to you. Downloading the meeting app will help and provide up to the minute news about this complex programme. Some timetabling clashes are almost inevitable but we will do everything possible to keep the time slots aligned. It is quite permissible to slip from room to room to facilitate your "wish list". In that regard I would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to some "unsung" heroes. Co-Chairing sessions can be an interesting but sometimes challenging task. Encouraging discussion while maintaining control of the event requires concentration, wit, charm, and a sound knowledge of the topic under discussion. That individuals are willing repeatedly to fulfill this annual task is an indication of the generosity of members and Fellows.

Poster presentations are a further important part of the scientific content of our meeting. The opportunity to examine at your own pace the material presented and have a one-to-one conversation with the author offers a different, and arguably better, encounter. The way posters are presented allows you to focus quickly on the particular topic of interest although I suggest that there is considerable value to be had in spending some time taking in the breadth of material offered. Authors elect to present in poster form for a number of reasons but for some the chance to discuss their work in detail can be a significant advantage. The abstracts for all those posters are within these pages and I recommend them to you.

Each of our scientific meetings contains keynote, plenary lectures. The Association now has three eponymous lectures that commemorate the leadership and guidance of our forebears. They are opportunities to bring gifted teachers and communicators before our community. The individuals chosen to give such lectures are picked because of their knowledge, experience, and skills. Each have something valuable to impart to our attendees. This year I am especially proud and grateful to the leaders in our field who have agreed to contribute in this particularly demanding way. The opening plenary presentation, the Bauer lecture commemorates the founding father of our Association. This year the lecturer will be a celebrated member of a very select group, that of physician-astronaut, Dr. Michael Barratt. Mike is board certified in internal and aerospace medicine and having served as a NASA flight surgeon has become an experienced astronaut with considerable spaceflight and EVA time to his credit. His contributions to teaching space medicine are substantial, reflecting considerable insight into the medical challenges of microgravity and space exploration. On the second day of our meeting the newly appointed U.S. Federal Air Surgeon, Dr. Mike Berry, will give the Reinartz lecture. Newly appointed but a highly experienced and respected Past President of this Association, Mike takes up his appointment at a time of considerable controversy and change in the medical oversight of airmen and women. Few could even approach Mike in terms of skill, knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm for the challenging duties he will now fulfill. Finally, the third plenary presentation, the Armstrong lecture on Thursday, will be given by Dr. Kevin Fong. Kevin is a renowned visionary communicator of the highest calibre. His explanations of science and medicine are frequently sought by the BBC among others and shown in a string of ground-breaking programmes. In 2015 he gave the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures, a series of live lectures to young people started in 1825 by Michael Faraday.

I am grateful to all participants for their willingness to impart their knowledge, experience, and vision to enhance our meeting. I believe that our annual scientific meeting will deliver outstanding scientific learning opportunities as well as providing that unique "AsMA family" environment to meet colleagues from around the world community of aerospace medicine.



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