

# Message from the 2006 Program Chair

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Chair, 2006 IAMSE Annual Meeting Program Committee

In this era of tight travel budgets, basic scientists have to consider carefully how they spend those precious dollars. I am pleased to tell you there is one meeting on medical education guaranteed to give you top value, the annual meeting of the International Association of Medical Science Educators (IAMSE). What does the IAMSE meeting offer that other meetings on medical education do not?

First, and most important, the focus: Basic Sciences. This conference is directed toward all individuals who teach within a medical environment, with a particular focus on those responsible for the basic medical sciences. These are defined as subjects arising from the traditional disciplines of Anatomy, Behavioral Sciences, Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology, and Physiology. At this meeting you can meet with colleagues who share your passion for your basic science discipline; learn what other basic scientists are doing in curriculum development; learn what the future holds for medicine and what we need to be thinking about so our students are ready to meet the challenges.

Second, Networking. In addition to colleagues from your discipline, you will meet those from other disciplines from around the world. Typically, medical educators from as many as 30 countries attend IAMSE meetings. Not surprisingly, we share many of the same issues with respect to educating students. Other attendees include course and clerkship directors; academic physicians; deans for medical education, academic affairs, and faculty development; CME directors; educational psychologists; and, more recently, students. There are many opportunities to meet with colleagues and the plenary presenters and session leaders. And there are two social events which provide a more informal setting for networking. The first is the opening reception where flags are displayed from each country represented by educators at the meeting. Then there is the Gala. The Galas at the last three IAMSE meetings featured a cowboy band, a Mardi Gras parade, and a mariachi band with plenty of food and beverages to go around. You will have to attend to find out what the Gala will be like for this 10<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

Third, the Program. As in previous IAMSE Annual Association Meetings, internationally recognized speakers, interactive small group focus sessions, hands-on workshops, computer demonstrations, individual research and curricular innovations presented through posters and, commercial educational product exhibits will highlight this event. International experts will present on a wide range of topics including Professionalism; Implications of Technological Advances for Curriculum Development; Integrating Genomics into Medical Curricula; and External Forces Driving Health Science Education. Posters play a prominent role in the meeting. Through this venue, basic science educators present their efforts to enhance student learning. You are invited to submit an abstract describing an innovation you have implemented in your course or curriculum. Another highlight of the meeting is the daylong courses in faculty development presented by internationally known medical educators on the Saturday before the meeting begins. Examples of this year's courses are Becoming an Effective Course Director; Integrating Genomics into Medical Curricula; Teaching Communication Skills to Health Science Students; Supporting Students in Learning; and Research in Medical Education. Sign up early for courses since the number of participants is limited. Finally, the annual IAMSE debate sets our organization apart from others. This year, debaters will examine the role of research in achieving the mission of medical education institutions.

Fourth, the Locale. IAMSE will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on the beautiful island of Puerto Rico hosted by the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine. The meeting will be held 15-18 July in the Caribe Hilton in San Juan. Puerto Rico offers many attractions for site seeing or just relaxing on the beach. Check out the meeting web site at [www.iamseconference.org](http://www.iamseconference.org).

The IAMSE Annual Association meeting provides basic science educators a place to meet colleagues from around the world and to receive an intense faculty development experience. There is no basic science education meeting where you will get more for your travel fund dollar than the annual meeting of IAMSE. Come with your sleeves rolled up and ready for work. See you in San Juan.