

# Southern Society for Clinical Investigation

Official Journal - *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*



Gailen D. Marshall, Jr., MD, PhD – President  
Don C. Rockey, MD President-Elect  
Vin Tangpricha MD, PhD – Secretary-Treasurer  
David M. Guidot, MD – Past President  
Jesse Roman, MD – Editor, *AJMS*  
Sarah McCann – Managing Editor, *AJMS*

Website - [www.ssciweb.org](http://www.ssciweb.org)

Executive Director  
Joan G. Kemp  
Southern Society for Clinical Investigation  
6359 Tribute Lane  
Dora, AL 35062  
205-648-8429 (ph); 205-566-6090 (cell)  
Jkemp5@tulane.edu

April 1, 2019

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am honored and humbled to serve as the 2019-20 President of the Southern Society for Clinical Investigation. I have been privileged to be a member (and now Fellow) of this organization for the past 14 years. We have experienced many challenges but have demonstrated great resilience as the premier clinical research organization for internal medicine in this part of (and arguably the entire) country. The list of past presidents reads like a Who's Who for Internal Medicine. I am particularly privileged to serve in the footsteps of Dr. David Guidot who has a passion for our organization that is not exceeded by anyone that I know. My own passion for the future of the SSCI has grown tremendously in the past year thanks to David's role model of servant leadership.

Our annual Southern Regional Meeting in New Orleans this past February was outstanding as always. This was our largest meeting on record with more abstracts (728) and registrations (838) than ever before. At our annual business meeting, a bylaws change was approved by the membership that redefines membership categories in the SSCI. We will now have three membership categories – Member, Fellow and Emeritus - that will hopefully encourage greater participation across the breadth of individuals who represent our specialty. In future letters, I will outline the what and why for each category and how people can join the SSCI and then move up the membership ladder to Fellow. So, the future is bright indeed for the SSCI.

I want to take a few lines to share with you my vision for our organization and where I hope to make a meaningful contribution in my year as President. As those of us with graying (or thinning) hair all know, the practice of internal medicine and its subspecialties has evolved significantly over the past 2-3 decades. Technology has exploded in all areas. Our trainees are smarter, better prepared, and more technology oriented than we seniors have ever been. Clinical practice has evolved from being based largely on observation (see one-do one-teach one) to evidence-based medicine to the rapidly developing precision medicine approach to care. All these are based upon the desire to practice personalized medicine which, although not a new concept, has potentials never before realized because of available new technologies and those who both develop them and implement them clinically.

These new developments occur because of the desire and ability of a broad spectrum of investigators, from preclinical basic, to clinical, to implementation, and to population researchers working together in the fascinating realm of translational science. This is the prime opportunity for team science to succeed in developing approaches to care for the diseases of patients for whom we care as well as strategies to prevent these diseases all together by developing and initiating wellness strategies. There are those who generate the data to develop new diagnostic and therapeutic strategies, and there are those who teach our trainees these strategies. I can think of no better venue than the SSCI and our annual Southern Regional Meeting as an organization with a place to marry these translational scholars together for the common purpose to developing and implementing new approaches to caring for our patients.

Accordingly, one of my main goals during my presidential tenure is to constitute a task force to develop approaches to translational scholarship where basic scientists reach out to explain and discuss important concepts and mechanisms in a way that is understandable and engaging to clinician investigators and educators. Likewise, the clinical trialists will strive to share their findings as well in order for the more basic, as well as population scientists, to gain practical appreciation for recognizing clinical caveats and modifiers that impact how research findings can be pragmatically implemented. The population scientists will share their expertise to position these research data in terms of implementation among patient populations and impact on society through population science. Finally, the clinician educators will become engaged in the entire translational spectrum to lend their expertise in methodology to effectively share information with one another - from T0 to T4 investigators, our clinical and research trainees and, ultimately, the public we all serve. It is my sincere desire that we continue to evolve into an organization where basic, clinical, and population investigators and clinician educators are engaged in their own areas of expertise but also have strong desire to meet and interact with one another as a team to gain perspective and mutual respect for our common end product -new, more effective, personalized approaches to patient care and wellness using the principles of precision medicine.

If you have ideas and/or comments regarding this proposal or you would like to volunteer to be even more involved in this developing process, please feel free to reach out to me directly at [gmarshall@umc.edu](mailto:gmarshall@umc.edu) or call me at 601-815-5527. I look forward to sharing with you the products of this task force as it applies to our annual meeting, ongoing programs, our scientific journal – *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, and other components of SSCI. This great organization can be the leader in communications and collaborations about translational science between our subspecialties and general internal medicine investigators and clinicians for the benefit of our patients. I invite you to join me as we walk down this exciting pathway together.

With sincere appreciation and best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Marshall', written in a cursive style.

Gailen D. Marshall, MD, PhD, FACP, FSSCI  
2019-2020 President  
Southern Society for Clinical Investigation