

**MI-ASM Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 14, 2007**  
**Wayne State University**

The MI-ASM board meeting was held at Wayne State University immediately following the Spring MI-ASM meeting.

**Members present:** Kris Baumgarten, Mary Ann Cardani, Michael Cohen, Daniel Clemans, Allan Hudson, Don LeBlanc, Silvia Rossbach, Jeff Ram, Mike Ryan, Audra Swarthout, Jim Vandenbosch, Judith Whittum-Hudson

**Members Absent:** Ralph Gorton

**Call to order:** The meeting started at 2:45 p.m.

**The Minutes** of the January 23, 2007 meeting were approved.

**Welcome of new board members:** Welcome Audra Swarthout from Delta College! Audra will be the new Community College liaison (previously Paul Pagano). Jeff Ram will be the new University liaison (previously Mike Ryan, who will be President-Elect).

**Fall Meeting 2007.** Mike Ryan and Dan Clemans will replace Mike Huband on the Meeting Planning Committee. For the fall meeting, we have already booked two speakers: Dr. Mark A. Miller, McGill University, who will speak about *Clostridium difficile*, and Dr. Duane Newton, University of Michigan, who is interested in the “Development of molecular assays for the diagnosis and management of infectious diseases” (citation from his website). It was discussed to have a third speaker with a topic involving extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR TB). It was also suggested to check the ASM Branch Lectureships Program (formerly known as the Waksman Foundation for Microbiology Lectures Program) for speakers with appropriate topics. Mike C. suggested Leonid Heifets, MD, PhD, from the Division of Mycobacterial and Respiratory Infections at the National Jewish Medical and Research Center, Denver, CO.

**Improvement of meeting registration page.** Jeff suggested to fix the glitches of the registration page. He thinks that \$500 or \$1000 are perhaps enough to have a student working on it, but Jeff will find out the exact amount, before we will discuss this matter further by e-mail. It was discussed whether the web registration should be completely separated from maintenance of the web site. Unfortunately, Ralph was not present to give his views. Jim remarked that presently the website is “low-tech” enough in order to be managed by a board member.

Mike Ryan tried to find out what the motivations are for the corporate sponsors to attend our meetings. Their main goals seem to be to get into contact with researchers. Thinking about how we can help, Mike came up with the idea to have a box to be checked behind the name of each registrant, in which registrants can check whether they want to be

contacted by our corporate sponsors. Only when this box is checked, we can give out the addresses.

**Approval of Wayne State University Student Chapter.** A motion was made to approve a MI-ASM Student Chapter at Wayne State University. However, nobody had seen a constitution. Thus, a motion was made to approve the Wayne State student chapter, pending approval of the constitution.

**Education Outreach.** Daniel Clemans reviewed the proposal that was funded by the National-ASM. \$2000 were given to the MI branch to improve teachers education in respect to microbiology education. Daniel needs help with this, but there was little response. It was suggested to have an RFP (request for proposals) to K-12 teachers, but then a better idea seemed to be to send this RFP to our membership. For example, one can think of a graduate student who would be interested organizing a one-time workshop or designing a teaching unit to bring microbiology close to K-12 teachers. We want to circulate a draft RFP via e-mail (Daniel, Don, Jeff, Mike R?)

**Meetings in 2008.** Daniel discussed venues and topics for meetings in 2008. Current keywords are metagenomics and microbiome. Daniel is interested in having the overarching theme of microbiome in health and disease at one meeting and the microbiome of the soil (or terrestrial and/or aquatic environments) at the other meeting. Daniel had heard an excellent talk by Dr. Jo Handelsman, University of Wisconsin – Madison, about bacteria in the gut of gypsy moth larvae and their interactions with Bt toxin. She would be a great speaker for a meeting with an environmental focus. The microbiome of the human gut is also a hot topic with speakers such as Dr. Jeff Gordon. Michael Gilmore, PhD, currently director of research at the Schepens Eye Research Institute and professor of ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School was also suggested as possible speaker. Mary Ann will e-mail the board members the summary of the comment sheets collected during lunch hour. A possible venue for spring 2008 is the former Parke-Davis (soon to be the former Pfizer site) in Ann Arbor and for fall 2008 MSU or the Pfizer Animal Health facility in Kalamazoo was suggested. Silvia will contact Jeff Watts about it. (Silvia did, but no response yet, perhaps Mike C. can contact him as well?).

It was suggested and agreed upon that the student helpers from Wayne State will get some money for pizza (\$25 – 50).

**Fee structure.** The current fee structure for membership and meeting registration is too convoluted. Don will circulate via e-mail a suggestion for a new fee structure, which then will be discussed.

Mike C. suggested to grow the number of corporate sponsors and to tap into the new biotec companies sprucing in Michigan. Silvia will be able to contact a few of those that have been recently founded in the Kalamazoo area.

Don will be on time with submitting proposals for funding from national ASM. Silvia will forward him previous proposals.

Mike R. suggested setting up a long term structure for financial success of the branch, possibly by setting up a foundation, similar to the already existing Gerhard Foundation. Alan will look into this.

**Next board meeting.** Don will send out possible dates via e-mail targeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June. Lansing was suggested as location, but we will need Ralph's input for finding a suitable restaurant.

Meeting adjourned 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Silvia Rossbach