

ASCI Ballot

Election for upcoming Council vacancies

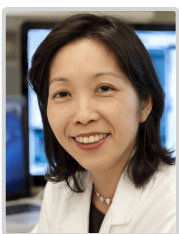
Vote item 1:

Vice President (term of office, 2024-2028)

Make 1 choice.

Heidi H. Kong, MD, MHSc [View profile](#)

NIH, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)



Physician-scientists are critical in advancing biomedical research to improve understanding and treatment of disease. ASCI's mission of supporting physician-scientists remains vitally important as physician-scientists face ongoing challenges and strive to mentor future generations. I am a tenured Senior Investigator and Section Chief in the Dermatology Branch and Director of the Translational Dermatology Unit, NIAMS, NIH. My research program investigates host-microbial interactions in multiple human disorders including inborn errors of immunity and studies the global rise of antimicrobial resistant organisms. As a current ASCI Councilor and member of the ASCI Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, I have worked closely with leadership, Council, and staff and am directly familiar with the different functions of ASCI, including committees, awards, membership nominations, and operations. Through my service within and outside ASCI, I have demonstrated a deep commitment to supporting physician-scientist career development, promoting equity and inclusion, and advocating for the physician-scientist career path. If elected Vice President, it would be a tremendous honor to work with the leadership and ASCI members to a) strengthen ASCI's outstanding programs supporting individuals at multiple career stages in the physician-scientist pipeline; b) bolster efforts to enhance ASCI's visibility and community; and c) expand ASCI's ability to address key membership concerns related to research support and administrative burdens. With the ever-accelerating advances in our understanding of disease pathology and therapies, it is critical to continue building ASCI's efforts to support the physician-scientist community.

Julie Anne Bastarache, MD [View profile](#)

Vanderbilt University School of Medicine



As a child growing up in a small town in Western Massachusetts, I could not have imagined that I would have the opportunity to run for ASCI Vice President. In fact, back then, I did not even know that the physician scientist career existed. I love my chosen career path but am well aware of the threats to the physician scientist and my awareness has been heightened during my years on the ASCI Council. Our numbers are not keeping pace with scientific demands and there are concerns that the physician scientist career will wane. We cannot let this happen. As ASCI President, I will focus my efforts on three main areas: 1. Fostering a sense of community within the society. I am committed to fortifying our sense of togetherness and purpose within ASCI through development of programs and tools for collaboration, mentorship, and advocacy. 2. Supporting programs to ensure a robust physician scientist pipeline. I will continue the remarkable programs established by my predecessors, paying special attention to those in our community with unique challenges including surgeon scientists and other procedure-focused physician scientists. I will promote diversity in all its forms and hope to encourage physician scientists

from underrepresented institutions and disciplines to nominate their colleagues for election to ASCI. 3. Engaging with the community and our leaders through outreach and advocacy. I will encourage all of us to be role models for children, teens, and young adults who, like my young self, might not yet know that such a meaningful, fulfilling and impactful career path exists.

Vote item 2:

Secretary-Treasurer Elect (term of office, 2024-2027)

Make 1 choice.

Aaron A. R. Tobian, MD, PhD [View profile](#)

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine



I would be honored to serve on the ASCI Council as Secretary-Treasurer to promote and advocate for physician-scientist careers. I am a Professor of Pathology and Director of Clinical Laboratories at Johns Hopkins Hospital. I have also developed a global health research program focusing on infectious diseases. Having served on the Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies Board of Directors for eight years, including being President, and setting a new strategic plan and fiscal management program, I have appreciated serving with colleagues and guiding the society.

Physician-scientists are critical to public health by improving patient care through new bedside practices, designing clinical trials, and developing new diagnostics, vaccines, pharmacologic agents. However, the number of physician-scientists has been decreasing as government funded research has decreased, administrative burdens have increased, clinical medicine has become more complex, and hospitals have focused on revenue. With unparalleled opportunities today to improve health, ASCI's mission is more relevant today than in 1908.

It is important that ASCI members understand and appreciate the value of their membership, and the society needs to improve communication and engage our members. ASCI should advocate to universities and the federal government for physician-scientist training programs and early career support. It is also critical to develop an inclusive and diverse group of physician-scientists across all disciplines of medicine and explore international collaborations. I would be honored to continue to strengthen ASCI to be able to continue the mission for the next century.

Goutham Narla, MD, PhD [View profile](#)

University of Michigan Medical School



I am a Professor of Medicine and Genetics at the University of Michigan and have been serving on the Council of the American Society for Clinical Investigation for the last three years. I am honored to be considered for the position of Secretary-Treasurer of our Society. My laboratory focuses on the study of tumor suppressor gene inactivation in cancer and to the translation of these findings into novel drugs. As a physician scientist, I oversee the care of cancer genetics patients, with a particular focus on identifying germline carriers of actionable gene mutations for risk management and therapeutic decision-making. Given the critical role that mentorship has played in my career, I have adopted a "pay-it forward" approach through my active participation in the mentorship of students, medical residents, and junior faculty. While there has never been a more exciting time to be involved in patient care and biomedical research, we are facing a challenging funding environment, workforce demands, work-life balance and an increasingly complex health care system. These headwinds are affecting physician scientist training, well-being, and job satisfaction. In spite of these challenges, I am very excited about the role of the

physician-scientist as there has never been a greater opportunity for us to translate findings from bench based research to the better clinical care of our patients. I seek to continue to serve the ASCI by leveraging my experiences to work with the ASCI membership, leadership and our greater physician scientist community to translate these ideas into practice.

Vote item 3:

Councilor (term of office, 2024-2027)

Make up to 2 choices.

Melanie Königshoff, MD, PhD, ATSF [View profile](#)

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine



I am honored to be considered for election to ASCI Council and I would be delighted to serve in this role. I am a physician-scientist and Associate Chief of Research in the Pulmonary Division at the University of Pittsburgh, with my translational and multi-disciplinary research program focusing on mechanisms of aging and regeneration in lung disease, with the ultimate goal of improving patient care. I received my training and worked as a physician-scientist in Europe and my experiences in different societal and academic systems underscored that collaborative, invigorating, and inclusive networks and societies, such as the ASCI, are essential for advances in biomedical sciences and public health. Teaching and Mentoring has been a basic pillar in my professional life and one of its most rewarding activities. I served as the founding director of the Physician-Scientist Training program within the nation-wide German Lung Research Center Academy and Mentoring Program. I am involved in divisional fellowship programs, departmental K-R initiatives, and currently act as co-director of our Pulmonary T32 program. I served in committees and leadership roles in renowned medical societies across the globe, in which promotion and support of early career scientist has been a major focus. We experience tremendous opportunities and challenges ahead of us with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence and a strain on physician-scientists. As their primary home, we must continue advocating and highlighting the importance of a strong, diverse, and open-minded physician-scientist workforce, who is able to adapt and grow in this rapidly changing environment.

Sanjay K. Jain, MBBS [View profile](#)

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine



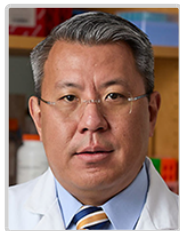
I am a Pediatric Infectious Diseases physician-scientist at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics, Radiology & Radiological Sciences. I have led various leadership roles at my institution currently serving as the Vice Chair for Basic & Translational Research, Department of Pediatrics and the founding director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Infection and Inflammation Imaging Research, an interdisciplinary research center. I am the PI of a NIAID-funded T32 grant that supports our Pediatric Infectious Diseases fellowship program. Additionally, I have served in leadership roles at various scientific societies, editorial board, review panels and serve as a reviewer for multiple scientific journals. My research is focused on microbial pathogenesis and I lead a multidisciplinary NIH-funded laboratory, where we have developed novel, clinically translatable imaging approaches for noninvasive, whole-body pathogen-specific detection of infections and to evaluate multi-compartmental antimicrobial penetration at infection sites. Over the years, I have mentored >70 clinical / research post-doctoral fellows, and graduate, medical, MPH and other students and remains passionate about providing cross-disciplinary training and opportunities to my mentees.

I strongly believe in the need for discovery and research in medicine, and to train and promote the next generation of physician-scientists. Given my record of leadership, program building, interdisciplinary research,

mentoring and my strong commitment to the mission of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, I would be honored to serve as a Councilor, which would be a privilege, one that would be both my duty and a pleasure.

Charles Dela Cruz, MD, PhD [View profile](#)

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine



It is humbling to have been proposed for consideration and election to the ASCI Council. I am a physician-scientist, pulmonologist, and critical-care intensivist who leads a solid research program studying host-respiratory pathogen interaction, lung injury and repair, using basic, translational and clinical study approaches. My most fulfilling career experiences have been those that championed the development and support of physician-scientists. Their foundational discoveries and the translation of their science ultimately benefit patients and the overall health of our society. Being a grateful beneficiary myself of exemplary mentorship, encouragement, and support throughout my career, I have continually sought opportunities to ‘pay it forward’ through the various leadership roles, which I have exercised at Yale, Pittsburgh, and within numerous professional societies. Physician-scientists face increasing challenges, including protracted periods of training, tight funding paylines, balancing institutional research and clinical responsibilities, and burnout. These challenges will continue to impact the physician-scientist community’s collective efforts to recruit, support, and retain a diverse and talented group of future collaborators, especially those from underrepresented disciplines. If elected to the Council, I would look forward to expanding my present work within ASCI’s DEI Committee, and becoming an even stronger advocate for the Society’s mission “to support the scientific efforts, educational needs, and clinical aspirations of physician-scientists to improve human health.” I would welcome the opportunity, as a member of the Council, to join with you all in championing the Society’s vital mission and helping to find new and sustainable ways—academically and philanthropically—to promote, fund, and advance the profession of the physician-scientist.

Olujimi A. Ajijola, MD, PhD [View profile](#)

University of California, Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine



Despite occupying a critical niche in our nation’s biomedical workforce, physician-scientists encounter an arduous path fraught with pitfalls at all career stages. Notwithstanding, enthusiasm amongst trainees for seeking careers as physician-scientists remains strong, in large part due to the ASCI’s efforts. It is with this lens that I humbly forward my candidacy to serve the ASCI community as a Councilor.

I am a physician-scientist and cardiac electrophysiologist at UCLA and serve as the Institutional Representative for the ASCI. My research laboratory studies the neurobiological bases of progressive heart failure and ventricular arrhythmias. I also serve as the Associate Section Chief for Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology. By far the most rewarding roles I have held are directly related to mentoring. I currently direct the NIH-funded Stimulating Access to Research in Residency (StARR-R38) program, co-direct the UCLA-Caltech Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) and serve as Associate Director of the UCLA STAR program.

My personal experiences, those observed from colleagues, and from mentoring physician-scientists across the entire spectrum (undergraduate to junior faculty) has shaped my perspectives on challenges and opportunities facing physician-scientists. This led me to propose a national program to expand the physician-scientist pipeline funded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine.

I will utilize these prior experiences to support the ASCI in its advocacy for physician-scientists, enhance the ASCI’s efforts to maintain a vibrant and robust community of physician-scientists, and deepen opportunities for mentorship of the next generation of diverse physician-scientists.
