The Gift of Mentorship

Five years ago, as part of an “introductions” exercise for the new members of the Executive Committee of the Council, Jack Hastings, asked each of us to include comments about how we came to be on the Ex Comm. What opportunities were we given, what challenges did we face, was there someone in the Association we looked to for advice? It led to some interesting insights about our fellow Executive Committee members and, despite the differences in our backgrounds, there was a common theme that ultimately brought us all together.

Never one to leave someone else’s good idea on the table, I asked this year’s Executive Committee to indulge me when we met for the first time in late August. We began the meeting with each presenting a brief biography of our professional experiences. Included was a discussion of our experiences within the Association, beginning with our initial introduction to the AsMA family. Just like the 2007 Executive Committee, this year’s Ex Comm arrived from different directions, with distinctly diverse backgrounds. We are a mixture of physicians and scientists, clinicians and researchers. We come from across the United States and around the world. As one would expect, we reflect the diversity of our Association and you are well represented by the perspectives, expertise, and passion they bring to the table.

For some, the path to Aerospace Medicine was more direct than for others. America’s manned space program was the inspiration that drove a number of us to careers at NASA. For others, AsMA was less a destination than a destiny. Starting as military pilots, two discovered Aerospace Medicine via indirect routes. For others still, it was more serendipity – an unexpected assignment or educational opportunity. Regardless of the path, each of us expressed a passion for the specialty, mindful of the true joy that comes from the meaningful practice of a career that we love. While most dreams were fulfilled, there were some early goals that were not achieved. Still, no words were spoken of missed opportunities, of broken promises, nor of regrets for how our careers had evolved.

Earlier I mentioned a “common theme” the 2007 Executive Committee discovered during our oral biographies. Not surprisingly, that same theme appeared at this year’s meeting. All of us, members of two Executive Committees separated by 5 years, recognized and appreciated that we were each beneficiaries of the gift of mentorship.

None of us found AsMA on our own. Each of us could identify an individual, many years ago, who took the time to introduce us to the Aerospace Medical Association. Some were invited to join; others were told that “not joining” was not an option. Handed an application, we were told it was time to join the professional organization of our chosen profession. “You want to be a physiologist, then join AsMA!”

For most of us, the mentoring didn’t stop when our membership application was accepted. Many of our initial mentors continued to serve as guides, demystifying the complexities of a large professional organization. They identified opportunities. In my case, I was the beneficiary of a few mid-course corrections (also know as a “dope slap”) over the years. Our mentors shared our joy when a child was born; they shared our pain when a loved one passed. Along the way, I picked up new mentors (I needed a lot of supervision), building a network of colleagues and friends that is one of my most cherished “possessions.”

I have had the privilege of introducing a handful of folks, typically new to the military, to our AsMA family. I accepted their initial respectful “Sir’s” knowing that before long we would be fast friends on a first name basis. I watched them grow and assume increased responsibility as they gained the knowledge and experience that would enable them to step into leadership positions in the future. Although I started as their mentor, I invariably found that I gained as much, if not more, from our relationship. Their gift was energy and enthusiasm, questioning and challenging of the status quo. Couldn’t we do it better, and if so, why weren’t we.

I know many of you currently serve, or have served as mentors to one of our fellow members. You know the joy such a relationship brings. For those not currently serving as a mentor, I would challenge you to look around your local community. Try to identify a colleague who is not involved with AsMA. Introduce them to our organization. Welcome them to join. The gift you’ll receive is well worth the investment!

Finally, from your Executive Committee, to those who took the time to mentor us, you have our deepest appreciation!

As always, I’d love to hear your thoughts. Please contact me at pgmerchant@mac.com.

Glenn
AsMA was deeply saddened to hear of the death of Neil Armstrong, astronaut and first man to walk on the Moon, on August 25, 2012.

Armstrong was born in Ohio in 1930. He received a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from Purdue University and an M.S. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Southern California. He also held honorary degrees from various universities.

Armstrong served as a naval aviator from 1949 to 1952 and then joined the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) Lewis Research Center in Cleveland. He served in several positions over the years, such as engineer, test pilot, and astronaut, for both NACA and its successor, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). As a test pilot, he flew over 200 different types of aircraft and was the project pilot on many pioneering high-speed aircraft. He became an astronaut in 1962 and was assigned to the Gemini 8 mission as command pilot. As such, he performed the first successful docking of two vehicles in space in March of 1966. Following this, he became Deputy Associate Administrator for Aeronautics at NASA Headquarters in Washington, DC. From 1971 to 1979, he was Professor of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Cincinnati. From 1982 to 1992, he was chairman of Computing Technologies for Aviation, Inc., in Charlottesville, VA.

Armstrong was a member of the National Academy of Engineering, the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco, and the National Commission on Space from 1985-1986. He was Vice Chairman of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident and Chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee for the Peace Corp. He held decorations from 17 countries and received many honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Congressional Gold Medal, the Congressional Space Medal of Honor, the Robert H. Goddard Memorial Trophy, the NASA Distinguished Service Medal, the Gold Space Medal of the Federation Aeronautique Internationales, the American Astronautical Society Flight Achievement Award, and the AIAA Astronautics Award.

Members of AsMA were privileged to hear Mr. Armstrong speak to the Society of NASA Flight Surgeons at our Annual Scientific Meeting in May. He was passionate about the need for manned space exploration and the need for national goals that will unify the country as they did in the 1960s during the ‘space race.’ Some photos of that event are available on our SmugMug page at: http://aeromed.smugmug.com/Events/Neil-Armstrong/25023787_6qGp3z.

For the NASA biography of Armstrong and more about his life and achievements, please visit http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/about/bios/neilabio.html.

**In Memoriam: Neil Armstrong**

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For the NASA biography of Armstrong and more about his life and achievements, please visit http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/about/bios/neilabio.html.

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**for JAA/FAA Aero Medical Examiners**

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**AME Class 2**

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**AME Class 1**

Advanced Course 23  
7 – 15 December 2013

**Venue:** Lufthansa Aeromedical Center, Frankfurt Airport.

Application forms and further details under www.flugmed.org or www.eusam.org.
NSBRI Renews Space Life Sciences Graduate Programs at MIT, Texas A&M

by Brad Thomas, NSBRI

HOUSTON - The National Space Biomedical Research Institute (NSBRI) has renewed awards for its Graduate Education Program in Space Life Sciences to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Texas A&M University. In its seventh year, this innovative education program allows participating students to work toward a Ph.D. that focuses specifically on space life sciences. MIT and Texas A&M will each receive $1 million over a five-year period.

"MIT and Texas A&M are two leading academic institutions that have made significant contributions to the nation’s human spaceflight program," said Dr. Jeffrey P. Sutton, NSBRI president and CEO. "NSBRI is proud to continue support for graduate education programs at Texas A&M and MIT. These programs have been successful in training outstanding young scientists and engineers in space life sciences and in promoting research excellence in the next generation of space biomedical leaders."

Students participating in the Texas A&M University Ph.D. Training Program in Space Life Sciences earn a Certificate in Space Life Sciences. This is in addition to a doctorate in genetics, kinesiology, nuclear engineering (health physics), nutrition or medical sciences from the university.

The Bioastronautics Ph.D. Program at MIT is a part of the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology. This program combines training in space life sciences, aerospace engineering and space medicine.

In addition to training students, the NSBRI Graduate Education Program is developing and evaluating education modules at MIT and A&M that can be implemented at other accredited doctoral programs across the nation.

Each summer, students from the MIT and Texas A&M programs participate in an enrichment program in Houston. Summer activities include the week-long Summer Bioastronautics Institute at NSBRI Headquarters. The Institute features space life sciences and professional development lectures by NSBRI and NASA scientists and Baylor College of Medicine faculty.

Participants then receive a nine-week assignment at the Johnson Space Center. NSBRI, funded by NASA, is a consortium of universities studying the health risks related to long-duration spaceflight and developing the medical technologies needed for long missions. NSBRI’s science, technology and education projects take place at more than 60 institutions across the United States.

For more information about NSBRI, please visit www.nsbri.org.

Upcoming FAA AME Seminars:

Oct. 4-6, 2012
La Jolla, CA
CAMA †

Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 2012
Oklahoma City, OK
Basic *

Nov. 16-18, 2012 (tentative)
Denver, CO
O/O/E †

O/O/E = Ophthalmology/Otolaryngology/Endocrinology

* A 4-1/2 day AME seminar focused on preparing physicians to be designated as Aviation Medical Examiners. To sign up or for more information, contact your Regional Flight Surgeon.
† A 2-1/2 day AME theme seminar consisting of 12 hours of AME specific subjects plus 8 hours of subjects related to a designated theme. Registration must be made through the Oklahoma City AME Program staff. Please call (405) 954-4831 or (405) 954-4830.
‡ Seminar sponsored by CAMA. It is sanctioned by the FAA and fulfills the FAA recertification training requirement. Registration must be completed through CAMA or by calling (770) 487-0100.

For more information, you can visit the FAA’s site at: www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/designees_delegations/designee_types/ame/seminar_schedule/

Future AsMA Meetings

May 12-16, 2013
Chicago Sheraton
Chicago, IL

May 11-15, 2014
San Diego Hilton
San Diego

May 10-14, 2015
Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Hotel
Lake Buena Vista, FL

April 24-28, 2016
Rio Las Vegas Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, NV

Meetings Calendar

October 4-6, 2012; the Civil Aviation Medical Association’s (CAMA) Annual Scientific Meeting; San Diego Marriott La Jolla, La Jolla, CA. The theme for this year’s meeting is “Taming the Complex Aeromedical Examination: Flight Physician Preparedness.” For more information, please see CAMA’s website: www.civilavmed.com/.

October 22-24, 2012; 50th Annual SAFE Symposium; Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, NV. For further information contact: SAFE Association, Post Office Box 130, Cresswell, OR 97426; (541) 895-3012; safe@peak.org; www.safeassociation.com.


October 31-November 3, 2012; The 23rd International Symposium on the Autonomic Nervous System; Paradise Island, Bahamas. For info, contact: Anita Zeller, AAS Executive Secretary, American Autonomic Society, Phone: 952-469-5837, Fax: 952-469-8424; or visit www.america-nautonomicsociety.org.


50th Annual SAFE Symposium

October 22-24, 2012
Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, Reno, NV

For further information contact: SAFE Association, Post Office Box 130, Cresswell, OR 97426; (541) 895-3012; safe@peak.org; www.safeassociation.com.
AsHFA ROSCOE AWARD—Maj. Tom Dube, USAF, received the Aerospace Human Factors Association Stanley Roscoe Ph.D. Dissertation award. Maj. Dube could not attend the AsMA meeting this year, so the plaque was presented by the AFIT Chancellor, Dr. Todd Stewart, Maj Gen (Ret.), at the Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

FOCUS ON MEMBERS—Royce Moser poses with F-100 aircraft. Dr. Moser was featured in the article, “Taking a Medical Profile of Royce Moser” by Karin Kiewra, Harvard Medical Magazine, Spring 2012, p. 56.

NEW MEMBERS
Andropov, Dimitri, M.B.B.S., Nightcliff, NT, Australia
D’Orazio, Gary W., M.D., Warrensburg, MO
Duong, An T., Maj, MC, USN, Pensacola, FL
Gifford, Sheyna E., Philadelphia, PA
Hamm, Matthew, 2Lt, USAF, Washington, DC
Hunt, Shannon E., Seattle, WA
Johnson, Ewan D. M.D., Houston, TX
LaMar, Dan, Maj, USAF, MC, Beavercreek, OH
Langenberg, Matthew T., M.D., Warren, OH
Lewis, Brian J., Capt., USAF, MC, Mount Laurel, NJ
Marchant, Danny, Fayetteville, NC
Marshall, Jordan, B.S., Washington, DC
Morton, Robert, M.B.,Ch.B., Dunedin, New Zealand
Mour, Michael, COL, MC, ARNG, Plano, TX
Petrie, Daniel, Sqdn. Ldr., RAF, Stamford, UK
Smith, Katrina A., Ssgt., ANG, Southfield MI
Stork, Benjamin F., 2Lt, USN, Sarasota, FL
Tarpara, Kishan N., Grapevine, TX

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Member News
Colonel L. Mark Johnson, a Life Member of AsMA, has retired from the United States Air Force after 29 years of active duty service. He and his wife Susan are planning to move to Kansas City, Missouri. Mark will continue to work for DoD as a Medical Adjudicator on the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR).

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FOCUS ON MEMBERS—Royce Moser poses with F-100 aircraft. Dr. Moser was featured in the article, “Taking a Medical Profile of Royce Moser” by Karin Kiewra, Harvard Medical Magazine, Spring 2012, p. 56.