

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
IMMUNOLOGISTS



AAI President's Invitation to Virtual IMMUNOLOGY2021™

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to invite you to attend **Virtual IMMUNOLOGY2021™** being held on May 10–15! Together with Jeremy Boss, Past President of AAI, we all missed having the AAI 2020 meeting... and not just because we wanted to go to Hawai'i! To put things into perspective, the AAI annual meeting has been cancelled only four times in 108 years: three times during World War II (1943–1945), and then last year. As we are seeing signs of hope and recovery from a historic pandemic, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone back. This year's gathering holds special meaning because AAI members all over the globe are helping the world return to normalcy.



Our 2021 annual meeting is in a virtual format out of consideration for everyone's safety. This change was a formidable undertaking for a meeting with thousands of participants, and we are the first to recognize that "being virtual" is not the same as "being in person." But we studied other virtual meetings and have been thoughtful in crafting what we believe will be a very valuable experience—and there are some advantages that virtual technology allows:

- **All the science...and more.** We have as many lectures and sessions as an in-person meeting but, with this technology and its archiving feature, you will not miss any talks.
- **Archiving. *You can personalize your schedule!*** Lectures and sessions will be recorded and archived, and you can watch them later during the meeting or after the meeting has ended.
- **Accessibility.** The meeting program has been structured to help accommodate attendees' work schedules as well as time zone differences for registrants all over the world.
- **Cost savings.** The biggest expenses of attending a scientific meeting (travel and lodging) are unnecessary, and registration for student AAI members is the lowest in over 10 years.
- **Awards.** AAI again sponsored Trainee Abstract and Poster Awards for AAI member postdocs and students (over 320), as well as other career development awards. Also, 138 AAI minority

scientists, early career faculty, undergraduate faculty, and others were assisted with awards and grants supporting registration.

- **Poster presentations.** This virtual format will allow for abstract review, poster viewing, author presentations, and dedicated “author times” during which viewers can discuss results directly with the authors via video chat.
- **Exhibits.** The newest laboratory tools, techniques, and advice for your research can be explored through workshops, live chats with exhibitors, and more.
- **International participation.** We wholeheartedly welcome the continuous and enthusiastic participation of our international colleagues at **Virtual IMMUNOLOGY2021™**. Holding a virtual meeting will allow many more of our international members to participate.

Finally, a shout out to those at the AAI executive office who made **Virtual IMMUNOLOGY2021™** possible. The amount of work for a virtual meeting for thousands of attendees was insane, but the AAI staff made this happen! Please be sure to thank them when you get the opportunity.

Sincerely,
Jenny P.-Y. Ting, Ph.D.
AAI President