2019 ASIP Election

POSITION: Education Committee Chair-Elect

Elaine L. Bearer, MD, PhD

Candidate’s Statement

The most critical issue in biomedicine today is how to integrate bench-science into clinical practice. Investigative Pathologists hold the key to solving this, when they are well-versed in medicine and devote attention to the translational potential of their experimental systems, tools and discoveries. Pathobiology graduate education is a pathway that can take us there.

As an academic physician in the tenure track, I have a 25-year commitment to biomedical education, and am passionate about pathology education for graduate students as well as medical students I believe that a basic understanding of pathologic processes is the first fundamental step in learning biomedical research and medical training for all graduate students, and that pathology also provides longitudinal integration across many investigative disciplines that seek to study human disease through bench experimentation. My PhD is in Experimental Pathology, which I studied as the first graduate of the combined MD-PhD (MSTP) degree program at University of California San Francisco. In addition to leading an NIH-funded research laboratory throughout my career, I hold Board Certification in anatomic pathology and practice clinical pathology for a small percentage of my time. My research has received continuous funding by NIH for over 25 years. My teaching experience began at Brown University, where as a tenured professor for 18 years I developed and directed both Pathology Courses for first and second year medical students, which were also pre-requisites for our NIH-funded Pathobiology graduate program, as well a graduate courses. As a member of Curriculum Committees at Brown and at UNM for both medical and graduate training programs, I have received 7 Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Education. I have developed several new graduate courses, including Cancer Biology and Computational Biology, and been an award-winning course director for our research ethics course, Responsible Conduct of Research at UNM. One of the courses I developed that I am most proud of was a cross-disciplinary training in pathobiology, clinical applications and engineering, team-taught across campus. Over 70 trainees have worked on individual projects in my NIH-funded laboratory.

I have been a member of ASIP since my own graduate school days, and became a member of the Undergraduate Medical Educators section (UMEDS) of the Association of Pathology Chairs where I was elected secretary and served as a member of council. I have served ASIP as member of the Program Planning Committee and of the Committee for Career Development for Women and Minorities, and organized and led a number of Symposia at annual meetings. At UNM in 2009 I was named Director of Education and Outreach for a large NIGMS Systems Biology Center grant, where I developed an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for trainees in the Center. I shared this IDP a to ASIP trainees and mentors at the annual ASIP meeting in 2018, XVIIIth Annual ASIP/AAA Career Development, Mentoring Program.
and Lunch: The IDP: Highway to Success. I have also given plenary lectures on pathology education at the Association of Pathology Chairs meetings, most recently in 2016.

Chair-elect of the Education Committee would be a wonderful chance to participate in the process of trainee engagement for the benefit of improving the translation of bench science to healthcare in the US. It would be a great pleasure, and honor, to serve ASIP as Chair of the Education Committee, where I would work collaboratively with other faculty educators towards further defining pathobiology as a discipline and set new goals for its education and dissemination.