How Does The AAMD Do That?
A Spotlight on Committees and Volunteers

By Dana Prestridge-Cole, CMD
Communications Committee Member

Have you ever wondered how things happen within the AAMD? Things like: How are all the meetings organized? Who compiles the material for our continuing education? How does our Journal get put together? Who monitors our group social media pages and coordinates communications? How do we find ways to recruit and keep our membership and volunteers? Perhaps you think the majority of functions are performed by people who are employed by the organization. I know that was my basic impression when I first joined AAMD years ago. Or maybe you don’t think much about it at all? Whatever the case may be, I’d like the honor of enlightening you. And if I’m really lucky, perhaps I can inspire you to consider joining me in becoming one of the many who make things happen in the AAMD—a VOLUNTEER. Yes, a great deal of the wheels turning within our organization work for free! And we love doing it. Would you consider joining us? My name is Dana Prestridge-Cole. I’m a volunteer member of the AAMD Communications Committee, and I want to give you some information about these wonderful opportunities.

There are several volunteer committees within the AAMD. You might have seen them on our website. Each one has a brief description of what they do. But those of us on the Communications Committee decided it didn’t really give a good look into what each committee contributes to the organization, or what a potential volunteer could expect to be doing, so we decided to change that. I sent out interview questions to the Co-Chairs of each committee so I could compile what each one does for the AAMD in a little better detail. I wanted to know what sort of time commitment each committee required, get a better description of what their real function was, and, most of all, find out what the volunteers get from giving their time and efforts. What would they say to a potential volunteer? To answer all those questions, I’d like to take you on a tour of each committee. For brevity, we’ve decided to break this article up over the next two editions of our newsletter, so stay tuned!

For the Membership Committee, I reached out to Co-Chair Felita James-Christie, CMD. She says: “The Membership Committee is one of the most important committees within the AAMD. Its primary responsibility is to serve as a collective voice for all members of the organization. In other words, its sole function is to communicate important issues and concerns of the members to the Board of Directors and develop ways to improve overall member benefits.” The committee recently completed the New Member packet, which contains all sorts of useful membership information for new AAMD members when they join. The committee spends about an hour a month on a conference call, then about 4-6 additional hours if they are working on a project. When asked about her personal experience with volunteering for the AAMD, she says: “It has given me an insider’s view of its inner workings and of how much our industry is changing as a whole. Dosimetrists are busier now than ever before, expected to do more with less, and finding time to volunteer has become a major challenge. I volunteer because I enjoy helping and learning from others. As a medical dosimetrist, it helps me to stay engaged, and feeds my passion and love for my career and its future. If the AAMD represents the brain of our profession, then the members represent the body. ‘Although the brain always knows what the body is doing, sometimes the brain needs a roadmap...”}

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to stay connected’. The Membership Committee can help us keep this connection—JOIN US TODAY!”

For the Nominations and Volunteer Committee, I contacted Catherine Gagne, CMD. She stated that this committee “attracts, mentors, and retains volunteers within all the committees. During elections, we try to increase member participation by vocalizing the importance of voting, clarifying committee roles and responsibilities, and increasing visibility of candidates through webinars and interviews. We are working on some new strategic initiatives given to us by the Board. These include increasing member engagement, investigating incentive programs for volunteers, developing programs for volunteer intake and training, and increasing participation in elections. We plan to do a ‘Meet and Greet’ to increase visibility of candidates through interviews and are brainstorming more solutions to these initiatives with our committee volunteers. Participants can expect to contribute about 2-4 hours a month of their time, with the busiest time of year being during the AAMD election”. When asked how volunteering has impacted her, Catherine says, “I feel more connected to my profession and involved within the greater Medical Dosimetry community. Volunteering for the AAMD is a rewarding experience. You meet wonderful people who are excited about their careers and who want to share their knowledge with you.”

For the Career Services Committee, I reached out to Ashley Walsh, CMD. She says that the CSC is “a committee that seeks to identify areas within our profession and society that might have career questions and looks to provide answers.” Those questions can be any of the following:
1. How do I prepare for an interview? The CSC created an AAMD portal in the online interview program Interview Stream, where one can record oneself answering interview questions, send them to others for review or ask the committee to review.
2. What type of salary should I expect? The CSC has helped with the past few salary surveys and has compiled the data published into a Salary Calculator one can use as a quick tool. The CSC is looking to help people navigate their career path, whether they are entering the workforce or changing jobs whether one has years of experience or relatively new to the field.” The CSC recently updated the Salary Calculator based on the 2017 Salary Survey Report that was published earlier this year. You can find this tool under the Career Services tab on the AAMD website.

As for the time a volunteer can expect to spend working on projects for the Career Services Committee, Ashley says, “We have a monthly conference call that is scheduled for 1 hour, and we follow up on tasks we are currently working on and discuss new projects we are moving towards. I think a member could expect at most 1 hour of work done outside the call, but most months it will be less. And usually the work can be spread out over the month so one can fit it into their schedule. Around graduation is the busiest time, our Interview Stream tool is assigned to students who are finishing their degree so they can practice interview questions. Sometimes we, as the committee, are asked to review their answers and provide feedback.” The CSC has reached out to some recruiting agencies to “gain some insight from their expertise on resumes, examples of behaviors and responses employers love to see and examples of mistakes that are common.”

When asked about her volunteer experience, Ashley says, “I had no idea how many people work behind the scenes to research and create tools for the benefit of all our members. It’s a great group of volunteers who want to help advance our profession. I believe it has helped make me a well-rounded dosimetrist. I understand more about my profession and professional society, which supports me in my day-to-day job. We are really excited to bring in some new volunteers! A committee is only as good as its volunteers, and we are excited for some new ideas and collaboration opportunities.”

In summary, there are many opportunities available to volunteer and become a part of your professional organization. It takes all of us, working together, to make AAMD what it has become. What direction would you like to see AAMD head in the future? The best way to get your ideas out there and make things happen is to join us in volunteering your time for a committee. “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.”—Max Lucado. I invite you to find your ‘something’ today!

For more information on how to volunteer, visit: https://www.medicaldosimetry.org/membership/volunteer-opportunities/ and click on the link for the volunteer application. If you have specific questions about volunteering, please contact Catherine Gagne, Nominations and Volunteer Committee Co-chair at: clkgagne@gmail.com
Dear Members,

With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, I’d like to take a moment to thank you all for the difference you make in our patient’s lives with your daily work, and also to update you all on the progress of our Strategic Plan initiative.

The Board of Directors has been working diligently on several aspects of our Strategic Plan over the last several months. We had identified the need for a new strategy for our Regional Meetings that better served our members and was more observant of our Annual Meeting locations. To that end, we’ve just announced that our next Regional Meeting will be April 5 – 6, 2019 in Charlotte, NC. The Board has also modified the position of Regional Director. Previously, the Regional Director was appointed by an election among the Regional Representatives only. This has been changed, and now the Regional Director will be elected by all voting members. The Regional Director will also be more active in working with the Regional Representatives to determine the best location and timing for our Regional Meetings. Nominations are now open for this new Regional Director position.

Another aspect of the Strategic Plan that we had identified was the need to reach out to our sister professional organizations and form stronger bonds with them. You hopefully have seen the joint statements that we have released with the Medical Dosimetrist Certification Board (MDCB); if not, please check them out on our website. We have also appointed a formal AAMD representative to the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM), Brian Napolitano, and we are currently working with the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) to develop further practice guidelines for Medical Dosimetrists. My “to do” list includes drafting letters to several other of our sister professional societies to continue this effort.

Respectfully submitted,
Lee Hales, BSc, CMD
AAMD President

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Calling All AAMD Members: Renew Your Membership Early for a Chance to Win!

By Felita James-Christie, CMD
Membership Committee Co-Chair

Colleagues, it is now time to renew your annual AAMD membership for 2019. By doing so, you ensure your access to the AAMD’s rich source of continuing education activities, which helps you maintain your coveted CMD certification status, and professional development resources to help you advance your career.

Did you know if you renew your membership before December 31, 2018, your name will be entered into a drawing for one of these prizes:

- A Member Plus Upgrade
- An Annual Meeting Registration (valid for 2019 or 2020)

SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR! RENEW TODAY – THANK YOU!
Is this Your Year to Run for AAMD Elected Office?
By Adam Brown, CMD, and Catherine Gagne, CMD
Nominations and Volunteer Committee Co-Chairs

What an exciting time to be a member of the AAMD! You can feel the enthusiasm for the 2019 Election! We are thrilled to have some great nominees willing to serve to help better our society. If you have ever had a desire to be a part of the leadership of this great organization, please consider the appointments available for the 2019 election. The positions for which we will be accepting nominations for the 2019 calendar year are listed below.

• President-Elect
• Member at Large
• Regional Director
• Region I Representative
• Region II Representative

To be eligible for nomination, the nominee must be a current AAMD Full CMD in good standing. For the Regional Representative position, the candidate must reside in one of the states covered in that region. All positions are three-year terms, beginning on August 1, 2019 and ending on July 31, 2022. Position descriptions have been recently updated and can be found on the AAMD website.

All nomination online applications need to be completed by December 31, 2018. Elections will take place in the spring of 2019. In addition, the AAMD is always in need of great volunteers, so even if you are not interested in the above positions there are many other ways to serve this great organization.

If you would like to nominate someone for one of the open positions, please contact the AAMD Nominations and Volunteer Committee Co-Chairs: Adam Brown (abrown@revenuecycleinc.com) or Catherine Gagne (clkgagne@gmail.com).

AAMD Career Center will allow you to:
• Search and apply to more medical dosimetrists jobs than in any other job bank.
• Upload your anonymous resume and allow employers to contact you through AAMD’s messaging system.
• Set up Job Alerts specifying your skills, interests, and preferred location(s) to receive email notifications when a job is posted that matches your criteria.
• Access career resources and job searching tips and tools.
• Have your resume critiqued by a resume-writing expert.

The premier resource to find top medical dosimetrists jobs

jobs.medicaldosimetry.org
Getting to Know the People Who Represent Us

By Jessica Stanulus, CMD
Nominations and Volunteer Committee Member

Adam Brown, Nominations and Volunteer Committee Co-Chair, had the opportunity to sit down and meet with Lee Hales and Keitt Mobile at the Radiation Oncology Conference (ROC) Niagara that Roswell Park and the AAMD put on. We wanted to know a little more about the people who represent us on the AAMD.

Lee Hales is the current AAMD president for 2018-2019. He got into the medical dosimetry field after obtaining a biology degree and not having a lot of career prospects. He stumbled upon an ad for a radiation therapy certificate program and applied and was accepted. During his radiation therapy training, he developed a love for dosimetry. He worked as a therapist for six years and then transferred to an OJT dosimetry position. The ability to make a difference in a patient’s course of treatment by using his skills is what makes Lee passionate about the medical dosimetry field. When Lee was asked what his favorite plans are to plan, he answered: “Anything unusual. And his least favorite is probably breast plans as he’s done a million of them. When Lee isn’t busy in dosimetry, he enjoys hockey, gaming, and family time. His favorite weather is sunny and warm but not too humid as he likes to spend as much time outside as possible. If he could only eat three things for the next year, they would be cheese, meat, and beer. Lee mentioned that the AAMD would like to expand its scope to offer more to our international colleagues. We put him on the spot and asked what passion and qualities did he bring to the board to help represent the AAMD members well. He answered by saying he has over 20 years in the field, which allows him to represent the AAMD members well as he’s worked in many different environments. He’s pretty level headed and doesn’t make decisions without considering all the available data. We’re lucky to have him volunteering with the AAMD, and if you see him out give him a shout out.

Keitt Mobile is the AAMD immediate past president. She started in x-ray and then progressed to radiation therapy. After she had been in therapy for a while, the dosimetrist at the time wanted to go part-time and offered to train her in dosimetry. Keitt always had an interest in dosimetry so this was a win-win for both of them. They ended up “job sharing”. This was back in the time of 2-D planning still. Keitt has been fortunate to see medical dosimetry progress from 2-D planning to what it is today. When asked what she is most passionate about in the medical dosimetry field, Keitt says: “People getting involved in their profession both in the work place and professionally. Many times, the medical dosimetrist is the overlooked team member of the department and the patients do not realize what a valuable role they actually play in their treatment. We need to be a more visible entity to the whole Radiation Oncology department. We also need to be involved professionally in our organization. We need to be part of the solution to the issues that are currently facing us instead of part of the problem.” Keitt loves SBRT and SRS planning as well as prostate planning. Breast planning is probably her least favorite. (I think we might have a trend here…) In Keitt’s free time, she loves to spend time with family and her crazy Irish setters. She also likes to run and spend time at the beach. She now resides in Florida and loves having access to the beach all year round.

We asked her what improvements she would like to see in the AAMD, and she said she would love to see more people get involved in the AAMD and run for office. She continued: “We can all bring so much to the table whether we from a big institution or from a small clinic. Everyone’s opinion is valuable.” She’s made lifelong friends as a result of being a part of the AAMD. She is very passionate about the AAMD as a whole. She realized a long time ago that she could either sit on the sidelines and complain or she could get involved and try to help our organization and profession move forward.

Keitt’s favorite weather would be spring or summer. She has a love for being outside. After living in the upper Midwest for the majority of her life and living nine months in grey gloomy weather, she is thriving on being able to be outside. She admits that it is hotter than hades 2 to 3 months out of the year, but the other 9 are glorious. Keitt found it hard to find just three things to eat for the year. She enjoys all food. Good shrimp and grits, Diet Pepsi, and a good steak would be on the top of her list. Give Keitt a hello and thanks for her hard work if you see her out and about.
When considering a new job or evaluating your current job there are many things to consider, and possibly, one of the biggest factors is salary. But how do you evaluate it? Looking at your pay compared to others with similar qualifications, living in similar regions to you, and working at institutions similar to yours is a great place to start. AAMD felt the same way, which is why the organization works to publish a Salary Survey every couple of years. This is a voluntary request for members to take 15 minutes and fill out the survey, so we, as a profession, can gauge where we fall in relation to our peers. The data is compiled by Michael Mills, PhD, and published for members on the AAMD website. This report is a great way to start the conversion with your current or future employer on why you feel a certain salary is fair and justifiable. This data is used for the Salary Calculator as well, which is a tool created by the Career Services Committee and is available on the AAMD website.

The AAMD Outstanding Achievement Award

Know someone who has made an impact on the medical dosimetry profession? Nominate him/her for the new AAMD Outstanding Achievement Award!

The AAMD Outstanding Achievement Award is bestowed upon individuals whose professional accomplishments have contributed to the advancement and promotion of the Medical Dosimetry profession. The individual’s contributions may be demonstrated by any or all of the following: AAMD Board of Directors’ service, AAMD committee service, publications in the radiation oncology field, professional presentations, education of Medical Dosimetry professionals, legislative efforts, service to the radiation oncology community. Nominees may be medical dosimetrists or other professionals who have helped to advance the Medical Dosimetry profession.

Recipients of the Outstanding Achievement Award receive a crystal award and recognition at the AAMD Annual Meeting and in the Medical Dosimetry journal.

Requirements for nomination: Significant contributions to the field of Medical Dosimetry as demonstrated by any/all of the following:

- AAMD committee service
- AAMD Board of Directors’ service
- Publication of articles pertaining to Medical Dosimetry
- Presentations at Local/Regional/National meetings
- Research activities within the profession
- Legislative efforts on behalf of the profession
- Tenure as an educator in a recognized Medical Dosimetry program
- Clinical instructor service

Nominations are due by December 31, 2019.
Download a Nomination Form here.
Email the completed nomination form to: aamd@medicaldosimetry.org.
Be sure to include “Outstanding Achievement Award” in the subject line. If you have questions about the award, contact Award Committee Chair Kristi Smith at ksmith@alyzenmed.com.
What’s New in AAMD Continuing Education?
By Jessica Stanulus, CMD
Continuing Education Committee Co-Chair

Calling All Presenters for Pre-recorded Webinars
Have you ever thought about presenting at a meeting but have been scared to do it in front of a live audience? Now is your chance to present via a pre-recorded webinar. We need AAMD members to help us in providing education to our members. You can add to your resume, enhance your professional skills, and give back to your peers. The AAMD provides an honorarium of up to $500 for your time and expertise. Who wouldn’t want to make a little extra money for the holidays? We would love to have some talks on SBRT, SRS, MRI linacs, pediatric patients, non-cancerous things we treat, such as trigeminal neuralgia or Dupuytren’s contracture, and planning and contouring tips and tricks. This is a great way to get involved with the AAMD. The Continuing Education Committee is asking for your help. Please reach out to AAMD Director of Education Cornelia Gallow at cgallow@medicaldosimetry.org if you would be interested in learning more or know someone who would be great at doing a talk and sharing their knowledge with the medical dosimetry community.

Enhancements to the AAMD CE Center
Next time you are on the AAMD website, visit the CE Center. We are making it more user friendly for our members. You are now able to search subjects for credits. Take a look at the recorded presentations, virtual meetings, and ProKnow contouring activities for CE credit. Try something new to add to your journal readings. Explore other ways to learn!

Need CE Credits and Want to Share Your Work?
By Madison Fletcher-Mason, CMD
Region V Representative

The AAMD 2019 Spring Regional Meeting will be held April 5-6, 2019 at the Hyatt House Center City in beautiful Charlotte, NC. This 2-day meeting will offer 14 MDCB/ARRT CE credits (anticipated). We are currently putting together our program and are pleased to invite you to share your knowledge with your medical dosimetry colleagues. Click Here to submit an abstract!

As a speaker you’ll receive:
• complimentary meeting registration
• one night of lodging
• up to 2 MDCB CE credits for a one-hour presentation
• valuable presentation experience for your daily work and your resume

Don’t want to speak? Don’t let that stop you!
Come and learn the latest tip and tricks in the radiation oncology while networking with your peers. Also, you’ll have a chance to meet with some of AAMD corporate partners. Bring the family and take advantage of not only the meeting, but also everything Charlotte has to offer!

Watch your email and the AAMD website for meeting updates and registration information.
Looking forward to seeing you in Charlotte!
The meeting is not just limited to education through speaking. We offer you the opportunity to share your knowledge with your peers through a poster presentation. Poster abstract submission is open until March 31, 2019. This is perfect for those who want to share their research but do not have time to put together a 50-minute presentation. The AAMD and ACC encourage all members to share their techniques and expertise. It is through education that we all become better at what we do.

Visit the AAMD website often for updated details about the 2019 AAMD Annual Meeting. We hope you can join us, and we can all be “California Dreaming….Surfing the Wavelength of Excellence!”

The Annual Conference Committee (ACC) is “California Dreaming!” We would like to invite all medical dosimetrists to join us for the AAMD 44th Annual Meeting, June 16 – 20, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency in Anaheim, California. The committee has received many exceptional abstracts and is in the process of finalizing the educational content of for the meeting. The AAMD and the ACC are committed to providing you with sessions that not only improve your skills, but also provide you new techniques that you can take back to your clinic. New to the annual meeting agenda this year, we will also be adding 30-minute case study presentations. This is an excellent opportunity for first time presenters or medical dosimetry students who want to present their case study reports. Thank you to all who took the time to submit an abstract. We recognize that you are as committed to the Medical Dosimetry community as we are.
2019 Educators Workshop and Students Gathering Events

The Formal Education Committee (FEC) is planning the next student gathering and educators’ workshop to take place in the morning of June 17, 2019 and the afternoon of June 18, 2019, respectively, during the 44th Annual AAMD Meeting in Anaheim, California, June 16 – 20, 2019. Medical dosimetry educators are encouraged to submit abstracts for continuing education talks during the educator’s workshop by contacting the FEC co-chairs via email.

Student Writing Competition 2019

Once again, the FEC is assisting with the 2019 AAMD poster presentation and organizing the Student Writing Competition. Cash prizes are awarded to the top three scientific student papers. The poster display has an abstract deadline of March 1, 2019. The Student Writing Competition has an abstract submission deadline of April 15, 2019 and a final manuscript submission deadline of May 1, 2019. Students are highly encouraged to submit their research for display in the poster presentation and for consideration in the Student Writing Competition.

Links for abstract submission for both the poster presentation and Student Writing Competition can be found on the AAMD website under “Student Resources.”

Educators’ and Students’ Updates

The Formal Education Committee is looking for a new co-chair to start in August 2019. Educators are encouraged to apply for this great opportunity by contacting the current FEC co-chairs. The elected person will be trained by the current co-chairs to prepare for their role in 2019.

Educators are encouraged to inform their students about the AAMD Facebook page and contribute to the information about the profession that benefit all students through this page.

Mahsa Dehghanpour, EdD, CMD, is elected by the JRCERT Board of Directors to serve as the incoming board member starting April 2019. Mahsa will be replacing Laura Borghardt, MS, CMD, as she completes her terms in representing the medical dosimetry profession on the JRCERT Board.

AAMD and Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center Rocked Niagara Falls in September!

Thank you to everyone who participated in ROC Niagara conference for making it such a big success! The event featured educational sessions for nearly 200 medical dosimetrists and radiation therapists in attendance. A highlight of the conference was the Head and Neck Symposium, which featured presentations from physician, dosimetrist and radiation therapist perspectives.

We also very much appreciate the support of our sponsors - Varian and Elekta - and our exhibitors: .decimal, CIVCO, Huestis Medical, Klarity, MIM Software, Oncology Data Systems/MU Check, ProKnow, Qfix, LifeLine Software/RadCalc and Revenue Cycle.
AAMD Foundation Board Position

By Theresa Kwiatkowski, CMD
AAMD Education and Research Foundation Chair

Do you want to make a difference in your profession?
Each year, individuals dedicate their time and expertise to shape the future of the AAMD Foundation through board service. Board members provide the critical intellectual capital and strategic resources to power nonprofit success and strengthen the Foundation.

You could be one of those individuals.
Are you committed to sharing your time and talents to help make the dosimetry community a better place?
Do you have specialized skills and expertise that could benefit the Foundation’s board’s work?
Are you willing to be an enthusiastic advocate for an organization and encourage others to get involved?

Board of Trustee Member Job Description
1. Regularly attends board meetings and important related meetings.
2. Makes serious commitment to participate actively in committee work.
3. Volunteers for and willingly accepts assignments and completes them thoroughly and on time.
4. Stays informed about committee matters, prepares themselves well for meetings, and reviews and comments on minutes and reports.
5. Gets to know other committee members and builds a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus.
6. Is an active participant in the committee's annual evaluation and planning efforts.
7. Participates in fund raising for the organization.

Please submit your resume for consideration to: tmkwiat@aamdfoundation.org

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Bronze
By Felicia Lembesis, CAE
Executive Director, MDCB

2019 Annual Credential Renewal
Annual credential renewal is now available. To submit payment:
• log in to your account in the MDCB CE Center,
• proceed to the Learning Plan that includes the 2019 year.
• submit payment.
If your 5-year cycle ends in 2018, your 2014-2018 Learning Plan must be submitted to access the Learning Plan that includes 2019.

CMDs whose five-year cycle end on December 31, 2018 are reminded to submit learning plans for completion by November 30, 2018. Once Learning Plans are completed, the annual credential fee can be submitted. Certificates for practitioners who have met the requirements for credential renewal will receive a new certificate in mid-January 2018.

2019 Exam Schedule
Application opens: November 5, 2018
Early Application Deadline: January 11, 2019
Late Application Deadline: January 21, 2019 (U.S. Candidates Only)
Exam: April 4 – 6, 2019