

## Minutes of NgoRS Officer and Board Meeting (October 12th, 2023)

### Present:

C. Genco (President)  
J. Edwards (President-elect)  
A. Criss (Treasurer)  
C. Wadsworth (Director of NgoRS Communications)  
N. Weyand (Secretary)  
A. Potter (Past At-Large Trainee member)  
E. Garcia (At-Large Trainee member)  
K. Seib (At-Large Member)  
M. Christodoulides (At-Large Member)  
O. Harrison (At-Large Member)  
H. Seifert (Past President)

**Summary:** The officers of the NgoRS Board and Board Members met virtually on October 12th, 2023 (1400 h, EDT). The major topics of discussion included 1) a review of the mentoring lunch at the recent Boston IPNC; 2) a general review of the IPNC including the gonococcal research workshop; 3) NgoRS seminar series, conference, registrations, and logo.

**1. IPNC 2023 Mentoring Lunch at Boston IPNC:** Past At-large Trainee member, Aimee Potter reported that the lunch was fully attended (60 in attendance, including 12 career representatives, students and post-docs. 16 responded to a post-lunch survey (70% of respondents were NgoRS members). Six tables were set up allowing 10/table. Each attendee was able to rotate to two tables. In general, survey respondents were positive about the event. They liked the networking nature of the workshop in comparison to panel discussions held at other conferences. Positive feedback was also received about the small size of the event, range of career paths featured, the concrete nature of advice received, ability to make contacts in industry and government; being able to learn how to transition to a new career path. Suggestions for improving the mentoring lunch included a recommendation to have smaller groups (the tables were too big; a group size of five was discussed to better have one-on-one discussions), a request for more diverse career paths (i.e. science writing, medical science liaison, policy writer), invite more career representatives from the local area, and allow rotations to three tables. It was noticed that some attendees stayed at the same table for both rotations and dominated the conversation. It was discussed that mechanisms to promote more individual interactions are wanted.

### **2. IPNC 2023 Meeting review:**

- a General,** Treasurer A. Criss liked that the conference app did not crash. Question asked: Could an app be found that promotes more effective direct messaging between attendees?
- b Gonococcal research workshop:** A summary of the workshop will be written with the hope of posting it on the NgoRS website. The workshop had cordial and respectful discussion.
  - i** Community needs included having standard strains for use in serum bactericidal assays (SBA) and other assays (e.g. opsonophagocytosis). A standardized positive control is desired so work between different labs can be more easily compared and allow inferences across the field. An example of note is that Public Health England created lyophilized standard strains to serve as benchmarks for SBAs conducted by the meningococcal community. NgoRS would like to promote having standardized tests that can be conducted by independent labs.

Standardized MIC measurements were mentioned as another example of standardization. NgoRS wants to advocate for standardization of gonococcus assays (i.e., phagocytosis, opsonophagocytosis, SBA, drug discovery, etc).

- ii **A task force** is needed to keep momentum going on these goals raised at the workshop. President-elect J. Edwards will regroup with T. Rudel to revisit some of these goals and utilize the NgoRS website to help the community with resource lists. Discussion by the committee encouraged listing commercial resources (Pel-Freeze, Quidel, etc) on the website while remaining neutral. NgoRS should charge vendors to post their products on the website. Past President H. Seifert, stressed the need to have a responsible person in charge of reaching out to the community for resources and materials and the need for curation and quality control. At-Large Member M. Christodoulides mentioned the need for standardized protocols, flow charts and lists of caveats. He is willing to help curate. He was recently asked by Springer to edit a follow-up volume of Ngo protocols but mentioned he thought it would be better to convert protocols to a consistent format for posting on the NgoRS website. We need more people to come forward with protocols and a way to solicit what methods NgoRS members would like to see on the website.

### 3. NgoRS related discussions:

**a Web-based discussion series** Treasurer A. Criss initiated this discussion. The series could have topics led by a moderator. Topic examples mentioned included T cells and humanized mouse models. Would NgoRS be willing to brand this? Note: Past President H. Seifert, noted his disappointment with the lack of basic knowledge about the organism displayed at the recent IPNC.

**b NgoRS Seminar series.** What do we want to do with it? Continue or suspend until the next NgoRS meeting? The discussion leaned toward suspending but it was suggested that one seminar or web-based discussion be considered to maintain momentum from the IPNC gonococcal workshop.

**c NgoRS conference planning.** President-elect J. Edwards feels strongly we need an NgoRS conference. The next conference needs to be virtual due to time constraints. This could be run as last time by reaching out to labs with invitations to participate without abstract submissions. May 2024 was proposed as a possible date that does not clash with the next two IPNCs (projected to happen in Spring 2025 and Fall 2026). The hope was expressed that NgoRS could have an in-person meeting in 2027. A putative committee was formed including M. Christodoulides, O. Harrison, J. Edwards; E. Garcia and K. Seib also volunteered to help. H. Seifert can get a 500 seat webinar approved via Northwestern. President C. Genco suggested a theme be chosen for the meeting. At-Large Member K. Seib expressed the hope for a broad array of topics to be allowed.

**d NgoRS registrations.** It was noted that 3-4 new members joined NgoRS during the time period of the IPNC conference.

**e NgoRS logo:** Treasurer A. Criss advocated for holding a logo contest to promote interest in the society. Prizes can be awarded. One idea was to provide a travel award to the winner. Only NgoRS members will be permitted to vote on logo submissions.

Respectfully submitted,

N. Weyand, Secretary, NgoRS