The 2019 ISBER Americas Regional Meeting: Times They Are A Changin'—Biobanks for the Future

William Schleif,¹ Rita T. Lawlor,² Allison Hubel,³ Zisis Kozlakidis,⁴ and Marianne K. Henderson⁵

SET AGAINST A THEMED TRIBUTE to the famous Minneapolis Bob Dylan, the International Society for Biological and Environmental Repositories (ISBER) will hold the 2019 ISBER Americas Regional Meeting on November 3–5, 2019, at the Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel, the Depot, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Minnesota is a significant health care and research hub in the Americas, as it is home to the Mayo Clinic, University of Minnesota, Medtronic, and United Healthcare, among many other medical firms and boasts a strong biobanking heritage. The theme of the meeting is *Times They are a Changin': Biobanks of the Future* and is chaired by Dr. Allison Hubel, Mr. William Schleif, and Dr. Rita Lawlor. ISBER is the leading international forum for addressing the technical, legal, ethical, and managerial issues relevant to repositories of biologic and environmental specimens.

In keeping with the theme, the regional program will focus on the evolving composition of biobanks and their progressive involvement in research. Biobanks now encompass much of the developing digital world and the regional meeting reflects this by focusing on digital biobanking and the collection of data for research from wearable technology. Biobanks have also expanded to developing living biobanks of cells, disease models, microbiomes, and reprogrammed cells, and there are challenges in maintaining these biobanks for future banking. This changing face of biobanking is highlighted by the addendum to the fourth edition of the *ISBER Best Practices*. This addendum builds upon previous editions of the *Best Practices* of 2005, 2008, 2012, and 2018 and focuses on the liquid nitrogen-based cryogenic storage of living biological and environmental specimens for research and clinical use.

The regional program will feature multiple plenary and concurrent symposia, educational workshops, corporate workshops, contributed articles, poster sessions, and roundtable discussions. The scientific program brings together key

speakers and stakeholders to share global perspectives on the current and prospective states of biobanking and addresses emerging topics in digital repositories, wearable data tracking, and living biobanks. Other key components of precision medicine and global health, such as sustainability, data sharing, and biospecimen quality, will also be presented in significant depth. Vendor members will be demonstrating their latest products, services, and technology developments in an interactive exhibit hall.

The preliminary program is already available, and can be accessed here (<http://meetings.isber.org/2019regional/preliminary-program>). A preconference *Biobanking 101* workshop (additional registration required) begins on November 3rd, which will introduce practical knowledge on constructing consents, cold chain management, and harmonizing repository practices, and is followed by a welcome reception for all attendees with roundtable discussions hosted by experts.

The theme of the conference, influenced by titles of Bob Dylan's extensive music catalog, is threaded throughout the meeting symposia:

- Bringing it Back... to the Community: Banking on Diversity & Sharing/All of Us Spotlight.
- All Along the Watch Tower: Wearable Data Tracking, Digital Health Solutions and Biobanking.
- Don't Think Twice, It's Alright! There Are Many Roads to Sustainability.
- "All I Really Want to Do"... Is Share Data with You: Regulations for Data Sharing and International Collaborations.
- Tangled Up in Trypan Blue: Living Biobanks.
- Forever Young? Biospecimen Quality to Ensure Longevity.
- Shelter from the Storm—Keeping Biospecimens Alive.
- Integrating Digital Biospecimens—Don't Leave Them "Blowin' in the Wind."

¹JHAC Pediatric Biorepository, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, St. Petersburg, Florida.

²ARC-NET: Centre for Applied Research on Cancer, University of Verona, Verona, Italy.

³Biopreservation Core Resource, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

⁴International Agency for Research on Cancer, World Health Organization, Lyon, France.

⁵National Cancer Institute, NIH, DHHS, Bethesda, Maryland.

The keynote speaker is Dr. Abasi Ene-Obong, CEO and founder of 54Gene, who will provide perspective on building a pan-African biobank to promote genomic diversity in population health research. Other elements of the program include an opening address from Ms. Debra Garcia, 2019–2020 ISBER President, networking opportunities, interspersed updates from the ISBER Shanghai 2019 conference, and three educational workshops vetted by the ISBER Education and Training Committee. Please join us for this important opportunity to learn with your colleagues as we

reflect on modern and future repository challenges in the closing months of ISBER's 20th anniversary.

Address correspondence to:

*William Schleif, MS, MT
JHAC Pediatric Biorepository
Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
501 6th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701*

E-mail: billy.schleif@jhmi.edu