



## SCCT Presidents Page: A Productive Year - the Work of Many



The past year has been a very productive and transformative year for SCCT. As president I have been fortunate to be working with many outstanding physician and scientist leaders in our field, as well as 6 staff (for the greater part of the year) and the Executive Director, Joanne Olson, who is co-authoring this column.

Some of the most significant accomplishments of SCCT this year are reversals of prior trends related to our budgeting and membership. These trends may have been at least in part due to economic downturn, but the reversal is significant and is certainly due to the strong work and persistent efforts of SCCT's staff, leadership, committee members and many member volunteers. Last year, we saw the first budget surplus after 5 years of budgeted investments drawing from our reserves, which were necessary at the time. It is timely and encouraging to see this reversal.

**Membership.** Membership grew by 9% in 2018 after several years of decline to reach over 2,700. This was in part supported by membership grants supporting certain membership categories for Technologists and Trainees.

**Transparency and Member Engagement.** The open applications process for seats on SCCT committees – designed to broaden member engagement in our Society – is now active and saw about 90 applicants for 30 open positions across the Society's 9 committees. SCCT's member engagement and contributions to the Society and our mission are nothing short of extraordinary. Members serve in over 125 positions on our Board and committees. More than 300 faculty shared their expertise at meetings, courses and workshops over the past 12 months. Another 26 serve on the JCCT editorial board. Along with dozens of members who serve as peer reviewers, on writing groups for SCCT guidelines and on writing groups and peer reviewer groups for partner societies, nearly 25% of our members are actively contributing to the Society. Thank you!

**ACCME Accreditation.** SCCT has successfully retained ACCME accreditation this year after a long and difficult process. This allows us to continue to be the provider of the CME credits for our educational activities.

**Guidelines.** The guideline committee is led by Dr. Ghoshhajra and has been very productive this year. SCCT members completed and published a Women's Imaging Expert Consensus document in 2018 and a much-anticipated Computed Tomography Imaging in the Context of Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) / Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) Expert Consensus Document in 2019. There are currently 4 active writing groups nearing completion of their work on documents covering CT perfusion, atherosclerosis, occupational health, and coronary CTA, led by Drs. Ghoshhajra, Shaw, Chen, Slim,

and others. The pipeline is rich, featuring a number of additional topics. SCCT is also proactively engaging as a leader in the field with several other cardiology and radiology societies in developing joint guidelines and appropriate use criteria.

**The Journal.** JCCT has gained increasing importance over the past years. Under the leadership of Dr. Achenbach, the number of submitted manuscripts has increased 30% between 2015 and 2018 and the total number of Full text usage (the sum of PDF downloads and HTML views) via ScienceDirect, JCCT.com, or Clinical Key has steadily increased from 60k in 2014 to more than 95k in 2018. The current Editor in Chief, Dr. Min and his editorial board, 37% of which are based in 10 countries outside the U.S., have had a great first year with a refreshed look and feel of the journal, and we are looking forward to the team continuing the successful evolution of our journal. JCCT launched its own social media feeds to complement SCCT's Twitter and Facebook feeds. JCCT's Twitter feed achieved over 1,000 followers in less than a year.

**Stakeholder engagement.** The Corporate Relations Committee is led by Dr. Leipsic, and has strengthened appropriate industry partnerships while maintaining the highest ethical standards. At RSNA in Chicago SCCT hosted a stakeholder breakfast, which was well attended by key SCCT partners despite the early hour, opening a dialogue on mutual goals for improving access to cardiac CT in the U.S. and globally. The SCCT Advisory Council was established, which provides our partners an appropriate channel for engagement with the SCCT leadership and collaborate on key issues to move the field forward. A capacity-building campaign has been initiated to increase resources and deploy sustained initiatives to position cardiovascular CT as a frontline test in the U.S. and overseas.

**Advocacy.** Under the direction of advocacy committee chair Dr. Thomas and in collaboration with the FIRST committee, SCCT produced an interactive payer policy map for the SCCT website. This is updated quarterly and shows policies across all 50 U.S. states for Medicare and 4 specialty benefits managers as well as BCBS and 5 other large private insurers. If you haven't seen it, please check it out at SCCT.org.

Additional activities of the committee and staff include, but are not limited to, a billing analysis under CMS OPPS and creation of a billing education strategy in order to move reimbursement to appropriate levels in the next 2-3 years, recruitment of a director of advocacy and payer relations, and engagement of multiple societies in efforts to achieve national and international CAC coverage.

**Education.** Facilitated by the Education Committee, chaired by Dr. Nicol, SCCT has produced nearly 25 live and online educational events (meetings, hands on workshops, CTA academies, courses, a symposium and webcasts) over the past year, and the CME Committee

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and staff, led by Dr. Williamson, reviewed and accredited 180 CME credit hours.

The Dublin Winter Meeting in January, chaired by Dr. Nicol, attracted over 250 attendees from 25 countries and 5 continents, plus a Technologist course attended by over 55 people and a Level 2 course with 70 attendees. Planning is underway for winter meetings in Tel Aviv in 2020, led by Dr. Rubinshtein, and Sao Paulo in 2021, led by Dr. Bittencourt.

SCCT's online education was enriched by on-demand content from the annual scientific meeting, the Board Review Course, and a dozen newly created webcasts on topics ranging from protocol optimization as part of a series aimed at technologists to anomalous coronary arteries to spectral CT. We now have over 150 content offerings in the online learning center. Thanks to efforts by Education Committee leaders Drs. Maroules and Ferencik and others, all content is searchable by filters and keywords.

**International regional committee (IRC)** members in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, India, and many other locations organized meetings or presented SCCT sessions at national and regional meetings.

**FIRST.** Under chair Dr. Fentanes leadership, the FiRST committee created the "Future Focus" video series on YouTube, featuring leaders in the field providing insight on the technology, industry and vocation of CCT. The committee also developed and launched a comprehensive

"state of CT training" survey; results will help guide SCCT's education and collaborative efforts in the U.S and internationally.

**Technologists.** Chair Patricia Dickson has worked with the committee to create SCCT's first podcast series, focusing on career matters in the U.S. and internationally. The Technologist membership has more than doubled this year to nearly 200.

**Verification.** Under chair Michael Winkler, the committee has streamlined processes for Level 2 and 3 verification, moving to an on-line application and reducing processing and review time from 6 weeks to only 15 days.

As you can see, SCCT is a dynamic, highly productive, and thriving organization that is successful because of the enormous effort of so many talented member volunteers and the hard working small group of staff members. It has been a privilege and honor to serve and work so closely with the executive committee Drs. Villines, Blankstein, Nieman, Williamson, Ghoshhajra, and Achenbach, and the Board members Drs. Blanke, Branch, Chinnaiyan, Chow, Ferencik, Maroules, Nicol, Pontone, Slim, and Patricia Dickson over the past year. I know that SCCT will continue to thrive under the capable leadership of president elect Dr. Blankstein.

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