

GAJE Steering Committee Meeting Report May-June 2010

The meeting was called to order by Filip Czernicki, Steering Committee (SC) Convenor, on 5 May 2010. The meeting took place via email for a period of approximately seven weeks, through 24 June 2010.

The following Steering Committee members participated in the meeting: Mariana Berbec-Rostas, Diego Blazquez-Martin, Frank Bloch, Sara Chandler, Lindi Coetzee, Filip Czernicki, Minna Kotkin, Catherine Klein, Bruce Lasky, Mao Ling, Sahar Maranlou, Tewodros Alefe Meles, David McQuoid-Mason, Celeste Romero, Skye Rose, Ed Santow, and Carlos Maria Varas. Sivanandan Sivakumar did not participate.

There were three items on the agenda:

- 1) GAJE conference site selection and update on planning for next conference
- 2) Plans for incorporation
- 3) Developments on the website

Most of the discussion concerned Items 1 & 2 on the conference site for the next conference and plans to incorporate GAJE in the US.

Regarding Items 1 and 2, the SC is in the process of selecting the site for the next conference and working out the details of how and when GAJE will be set up as a not-for-profit corporation in the US. Specifically, the SC took the following steps during the meeting about these two matters:

Item 1: Site of the next conference

Mariana Berbec, Chair of the Conference Site Selection Committee, reported on progress toward setting the next conference in Spain in June or July, 2011. With the help of SC member Diego Blasquez-Martin, she has been in contact with clinical faculty at Universities in Barcelona, Tarragona, and Valencia who have expressed a strong interest in co-hosting the next GAJE conference. Diego's university would also join the group as co-hosts. There remain a few details to work out, but the likely venue is at the University of Valencia.

The SC expressed unanimous support for having the next conference in Spain. The chief concerns now are the exact dates and duration of the conference, the availability of reasonable-cost lodging and food, and the type of facilities that will be available for conference sessions. While the overall theme of the conference will be decided by a Conference Planning Committee, our Spanish colleagues have already come up with a number of interesting and socially important current topics that can be featured in sessions and field trips. Mariana will continue to follow up on this and has asked for a

formal proposal that sets out the answers to the key remaining questions. She will report back on her progress to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be entitled to finish negotiations on the conditions of the conference organization, but the final decision will be made, hopefully soon, by the SC – probably in a special session.

Item 2: Incorporation

Barbara Schatz, Chair of the working group on formalizing GAJE's status, has secured the pro bono services of the New York law firm Sullivan & Cromwell to assist GAJE in this process. She and Bruce Lasky, the SC liaison to the working group, have been in communication with Joseph White at Sullivan and Cromwell, who asked for responses to a series of questions to get started on the proposed governing documents and an application for tax-exempt status. The basic idea is to organize GAJE as a Delaware not-for-profit corporation with members. The current GAJE membership would comprise the membership of the new organization and the current members of the GAJE Steering Committee would comprise the Board of Directors of the new organization. The governance structure of the new organization would be as closely aligned with the current GAJE governance structure as is permissible under Delaware law.

Overall, the SC was fully supportive of the project and thanks Barbara, Joe, and Bruce for their work on this. Filip will forward to Barbara and Bruce the SC's preliminary responses and also the questions that SC still have about the process, which they will pass on to Joe. There is nothing further for the SC to do at this time. The Executive Committee will stay in touch with Barbara and Bruce as the process continues and can respond to any new questions in order to set up final conditions for the incorporation process. Hopefully a final plan for incorporation can be approved at the next SC meeting.

Item 3 Developments on the website

Regarding Item 3, there is nothing for the SC to do at this point. Frank Bloch reported (on behalf of Communications Committee Chair Skye Rose) on developments since control of the website and responsibility for the Newsletter were turned back to the CC by Street Law when its contract as General Secretary ended. Pending a full review of our options with the website and Newsletter, Frank has taken over as temporary "webmaster" and has updated certain key pages, including the Steering Committee page (that now has current members listed) and the page on Conferences (that now has a brief note on planning for the next conference – plus room for future announcements about the next conference – and copies of the full reports on each of the prior conferences). In the long run, the CC is going to have to make a decision about whether to have the site redesigned or if keep it essentially as it is now. CC member Ved Kumari recommended a design company in India that can do the job at a reasonable cost; a decision will be made and further work done to clean up and fully update the site by the time we announce the next conference.

As for the Newsletter, the key issues before the CC seem to be: 1) what value does the Newsletter offer in its current form, which in turn seems to depend on who would be willing to serve as editor and how much effort (s)he is willing to put into it; and 2) is there a different form the Newsletter could take? Everyone probably agrees that GAJE should continue to publicize GAJE events and others that would be of interest to GAJE members. The question is whether that should be done via a periodic Newsletter or instead through the listserv (which is done already to some extent), perhaps together with a page on the website for announcements and events.