



# THE AMERICAN BOARD OF TOXICOLOGY

## DABT NEWS

Winter 2021

### **THE DOSE** (aka, President's message)



As I prepared to write this year's ABT President's message, I started to reflect on all the things that did not happen over the past twelve months, and to paint a picture of doom and gloom that could be written by anyone that reads world news. But this would not have been helpful, nor would it accurately depict the accomplishments and adaptability of ABT in the presence of great uncertainty. As you will see in Don's Treasurer's report, expenses were kept below revenues for the year. We also researched the pros and cons and cost implications of moving to a testing center model for conducting the annual ABT exam and are excited to say this will begin with the 2021 ABT exam. We also continued to add to our arsenal of exam questions with the help of the dedicated Question Writing committee, and explored new ways to enhance ABT's outreach. So even though we were disappointed to delay conduct of the next ABT exam until 2021, many important activities continued to proceed on track or ahead of schedule.

As many of you can appreciate, becoming a Diplomat of ABT takes us down a common path that begins with high stress (as we prepare for the board exam), huge relief and pride (when we receive notification that we passed the exam), confidence (when we apply to positions that say, "DABT preferred"), and ultimately a sense of camaraderie as we progress through our career with colleagues and friends that have charted a similar course. Along these lines, like many of you, I deeply missed the opportunity to see everyone at the 2020 SOT meeting at which we consistently host an overly-popular reception as well as a highly engaged exhibitor booth. If you have ever visited the booth, you will have noticed the steady stream of people fighting for coveted carpet space, and the smiles you invariably see on faces of the neighboring booth attendees who love the peripheral foot-traffic they get.

So if you are like me, you will take a brief time to reflect on the missed opportunities of 2020/2021, but will attempt to spend far more time thinking about how much you will appreciate moving into the post-COVID era, and embracing the positive changes that have been accelerated by it. I thank Susie and Laurie in the ABT office for their organization, dedication, and fun they bring to serving on the board. I also thank the past and present Board members who have set the foundation for a credentialing organization that has and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of toxicologists and the broad array of fields they serve. It has been a career highlight and distinct honor to have served on the board over the past four years, and as ABT president in 2020-21.

*Drew Badger*  
*President, 2020-21*

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# Treasurer's Report

Last year was a very challenging year for all of us. Because of COVID-19 safety concerns, the board decided not to offer the certification examination in 2020. As a result, revenue from certification examination fees was approximately half of the budget total. The board and Masten Management reduced expenses accordingly, including the cancellation of the summer board meeting. I am pleased to report that we were able to keep expenses below revenue for the year. Our 2020 revenue was \$220,228.50, and expenses were \$206,571.82.



At the end of the first quarter, our investment account was down 14.18%. However, thanks to a dramatic stock market rebound and the prudent management by our investment advisors, Lynx Investment Advisory, LLC, our investment account had a positive return of 16.12% for the entire year. On December 31, 2020, the investment account had a value of \$757,344. Since Lynx became the investment advisor for ABT in September 2016, our investment account has had an annualized rate of return of 10.24% and has increased in value by \$264,140. While past performance does not guarantee future returns, I am confident that our portfolio is being effectively managed to maximize returns while at the same time limiting risk.

The Board has approved the 2021 ABT budget of \$376,165 in revenue and \$370,152 in expenses, with an anticipated surplus of \$6,013. The budgeted revenue is a large increase over 2020. The board expects a larger than normal number of candidates will sit for the examination because the examination was not offered in 2020. Expenses are also projected to be much higher than in 2020 because of the higher number of examination takers and the increased costs associated with the new electronic examination format. The Board continuously monitors revenue and expenses to ensure that we are being good stewards of the organization's finances.

I am at the end of my term on the ABT board. It has been an honor to serve ABT as your treasurer over the last 3 years. I am very proud that we were able to spend less money than we received each year, while also being able to grow our investment account significantly. This financial success was the result of the efforts of Masten Management, Lynx Investment Advisory, and the Board. I am very thankful of the support these individuals provided me over the last 3 years. They made my role as treasurer easy.  
Respectfully submitted,

*Don Stump*  
*Treasurer*

## 2020 Certification Exam Cancellation

As with many events in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ABT certification examination was cancelled. This was a difficult decision for the Board and the first time since the first examination in 1980 that it was not administered. All eligible candidates were automatically given an additional year of eligibility. The examination cancellation led to the Board deciding to move forward in transitioning from the paper/pencil format to a computer-based examination administered at testing centers. For more information regarding this change, be sure to read the article on page 4 of this newsletter. Many thanks to all those who have spent countless hours proctoring the examination over the years. The Board would like to extend a special thank you to our international proctors: Shin-Young Park, KS Rao, M.R. Srinivasan and Adam Woolley.

# Recertification Reminder

Classes of 1982/87/1992/1997/2002/2007/2012/2017

Diplomates in the above classes will begin the recertification process this year. The schedule for this year is as follows:

Letters mailed, Email notice sent	January 25, 2021
Completed application and fee due	March 31, 2021*
Literature Review Info Emailed	May 10, 2021
Literature Review Answers Due	July 9, 2021
Committee Review	Summer 2021
Results sent to Diplomates	Fall 2021
Corrected Deficiencies Due	June 1, 2022
Recertification Letters/Stickers Sent	December 1, 2022

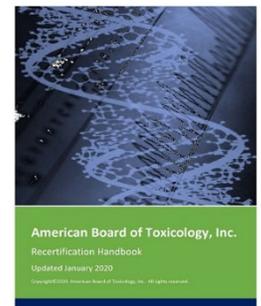
\*After March 31, 2021, a late penalty of \$150 is assessed. ABT is not accountable for any lost or undelivered mail. All fees are non-refundable.

## ABT Mailing Address Alert

During the pandemic, many Diplomates have been working from home for extended periods of time. The ABT office has received countless calls asking about recertification letters and stickers. Please note that all correspondence sent by mail is sent to the mailing address designated by Diplomates in their online account. Diplomates may want to consider updating their mailing address to their home address. The address listed as Directory Address is the only one viewable in the searchable directory.

## Helpful Recertification Information

If you haven't logged into the ABT website recently, you may not have seen the latest version of the Recertification Handbook. There are new CE opportunities and points for some of the previous activities have been adjusted. Also available is a new video explaining the basics of recertification. We hope you will take a look! Feedback is welcome. The Outreach Committee plans more information videos, including one that is geared completely toward Continuing Education and how to enter activities into the website. If you have other suggestions, please email the ABT office at [info@abtox.org](mailto:info@abtox.org).



## 2021 Annual Mixer Meeting and SOT Booth

Due to the annual SOT meeting being held virtually this year, the Board is sad to announce that ABT will not be attending as an exhibitor nor having an annual mixer meeting. Due to the enormous amount of traffic at the booth and the large numbers who attend the mixer, trying to conduct these activities virtually would likely prove frustrating for all. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2022!

# Electronic Examination Administration in 2021

Making the switch from a paper-based exam to an electronic exam has been a long-term strategic goal of the ABT for several years. In the years following the 2016 strategic planning meeting, several significant advancements have moved the ABT forward. These initiatives included completing the first practice analysis, revamping the examination format, and restructuring the recertification examination. The Board is excited to announce that beginning in October of 2021, electronic examination administration can finally be added to the list after having languished as cost-prohibitive for so many years.

As with so many other aspects of life, the COVID-19 pandemic put on hold the hopes of earning their DABT for almost 300 eligible candidates. The cancellation of the 2020 exam was not a decision made lightly. Ultimately, in the chaos and uncertainty of late spring and early summer, the board could not justify the costs associated with planning for an exam that could still be cancelled at the last minute should conditions not improve. As part of this decision, the board authorized an RFP for electronic examination vendors, to ensure that no matter what the future might hold with respect to social distancing and travel restrictions, the ability to hold an examination in 2021 would not be at risk.

The vendor ultimately selected was Metacred, a company that aggregates small clients like ABT, thereby providing more affordable access to the international testing networks managed by large testing organizations. Candidates will be able to choose from more than 600 computer-based testing locations all over the world. Electronic examination administration remains significantly more expensive than a paper-based examination; thus, the board was compelled to raise the examination fee by an additional \$200 in order to ensure the exam continues to pay for itself in any given year. This was also not a decision made lightly and there was significant discussion regarding the benefits of electronic examination weighed against the financial impacts for individuals. However, while the actual examination fee is higher, most candidates will not be incurring the significant travel costs involved in traveling to one of five sites where the examination was previously offered. In addition, travel time will be reduced or eliminated. Due to ongoing uncertainty regarding local social distancing requirements and anticipated corporate travel bans, the decision to move to electronic examination was made to ensure that an examination will occur in 2021. The increased examination fee was approved based on the boards' fiduciary responsibility to ensure financial good governance of the organization.

Please check out the FAQ and 2021 Candidate Handbook available on the ABT website for more information.

## Outgoing Board Members

It is time to bid a sad farewell to members of the ABT Board of Directors who will complete their terms on April 1. It has been a long four years, yet it went by in the blink of an eye! The retiring Board Members have made a significant contribution to the American Board of Toxicology. The remaining Directors on the Board wish to express their appreciation and commend their colleagues for a job well done.



Jack Snyder, Drew Badger,  
Rob Mitkus and Don Stump

## CERTIFICATION EXAM 2021

October 13, 2021

Application Deadline:  
April 30, 2021

# Recertified Diplomates

The following Diplomates were elected to the Board of Directors and began four-year terms on April 1, 2020:



Alex Eapen



Nathan Pechacek



Elizabeth Roberts

## Second Practice Analysis Underway

The Board has again contracted with ACT ProExam to conduct the second practice analysis study of the knowledge required for general toxicology. Certification industry best practices call for repeating a job analysis regularly to ensure the certification examination content specifications reflect current practice. The project is well underway and a task force of ten volunteers has been meeting regularly. It is a diverse group including both certified and non-certified toxicologists. Once they have updated a delineation of practice, it will undergo further review by more volunteers, ultimately resulting in an online survey. Be on the lookout for the survey announcement and link later in 2021. If you want to know more about the process, the open access article that was published in *Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology* is available online. Click [here](#) to go to the link.

## In Memoriam

We are sad to convey the loss of the following Diplomates and former Diplomates.

- Finis Cavender, Class of 1981
- Jerry B. Hook, Class of 1980
- Mark Seefeld, Class of 1986
- Francis Weir, Class of 1981
- Hanspeter Witschi, Class of 1980

## Forty Year Diplomates

As you likely already know, the first ABT examination was given in 1980. There were 217 toxicologists who earned the right to use DABT after their name. Of the 217, there are 21 Diplomates that remain certified. They just completed their **eighth** recertification cycle. We would like to salute their 40 years of certification!

## **CONTACT US**

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