



The American Association for Cancer Education: Continuing International and Global Relevance

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The American Association for Cancer Education (AACE) was founded in 1967 as a reorganization of an earlier group known as the Coordinators of Cancer Teaching (CCT). The CCT operated between the years 1947 and 1966, consisting of the directors of cancer education programs in US medical schools, funded by the NCI under the leadership of Margaret Hay Edwards, M.D.. The AACE has become “a worldwide organization with both health caregivers and professional educators as members” (Hill, 1987). One of the association’s primary goals is to “enhance cancer knowledge within the framework of the medical school curriculum” (Wood, 1975). The AACE promotes cancer education and provides the opportunity for members to advance programs for cancer prevention and control, early detection, therapy, and rehabilitation. The mission of the organization is to: ***Champion the highest standards for cancer education through evidence-based practices to achieve quality outcomes.*** And its vision is to ***Achieve excellence in education to reduce the burden of cancer worldwide.*** These two pillars are operationalized through focused activities including professional **education and training, patient/community education and outreach, clinical practice and research.** Importantly, the AACE maintains, today more than ever before, a keen and evolving international and global reach. AACE’s growing “international” (with at least one other country) and “global” (involving the entire world) collaborations and linkages, are an existential imperative with increased globalization in all facets of life.

To that end, the annual International Cancer Education Conference (ICEC) is organized in partnership with AACE, the Cancer Patient Education Network (CPEN) and the European Association for Cancer Education (EACE). The purpose of this joint effort is to support cancer educators in

learning the best practices for cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship. The ICEC is an international conference which is attended by many international educational leaders. During the 2019 ICEC, 9% of attendees were from outside of the USA including Australia, Canada, Germany, Israel, Pakistan, Palau, Poland, and South Korea. The 2020 ICEC conference with its theme “*Using Cancer Education to Address Social Determinants of Health,*” was a virtual forum that attracted international cancer education communities. The growing global dimensions of cancer control have also motivated AACE to advance global cancer control through education, research, and knowledge translation in global oncology practice.

AACE has established many global collaborations and networking linkages with prestigious global cancer education organizations such as EACE, Union for International Cancer Control’s (UICC), African Organisation for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC), Oman cancer education group led by Dr. Al Kharusi and others. The AACE has created channels to support global initiatives that facilitate international collaboration, global multi-directional knowledge transfer, and effective partnerships in cancer education and cancer control globally. AACE Global Cancer Education Committee members have strong educational and research collaborations with countries such as Oman, Egypt, and low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) in Africa and other parts of the world. A signature program funded by the AACE is the Research, Education, Advocacy, and Direct Service (READS) Grant Program, an annual collaborative pilot grant mechanism that provides small grants to active AACE members in good standing who champion the highest standards for global cancer education through evidence-based practices to achieve quality outcomes. The grants are intended to assist AACE members in becoming more involved in research, education, teaching, and advocacy as well as direct service on national and international levels.

Importantly, as the COVID-19 pandemic in many countries worldwide ensues (albeit somewhat decreasing), it is

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important to highlight the educational activities that AACE has developed during this challenging time. The AACE Membership Committee has initiated AACE Engagement Lounges, which are Zoom meetings focusing on topics relevant to the work of our members, especially how our work is being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Three Engagement Lounges have been held to date. The first Lounge, held on April 16, 2020, was related to NCI-Funded Summer Programs during COVID-19. The second Lounge, hosted by two AACE leaders Drs. Charles Moore and Clement Gwede and co-sponsored by the Emory University Urban Health Initiative, was on May 14, 2020 on the topic of Using Cancer Education to Address Social Determinants of Health in the Era of COVID-19. The most recent was conducted on August 6, 2020, and focused on Tools and Activities for Interactive/Applied Learning at a Distance. These Engagement Lounges were highly evaluated by the participants and are available to all our AACE national and global members in the AACE member webinar library on the website. The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has starkly illustrated a deep international and global impact on cancer education with

disruptions in training, prevention and control, and cancer care. Thus, there remains further need for global collaborations to strengthen common and harmonized dissemination and implementation of evidence-based efforts.

Finally, the work reported in this supplemental issue of the Journal of Cancer Education highlight the importance of international cancer education. Many of the manuscripts contained herein are authored by AACE members or global leaders, and are aligned with the mission and vision of the AACE. As such, as international cancer education efforts and global collaborations continue to grow, the AACE, ICEC, and other global partners aspire to orchestrate and maintain harmonized global cancer education efforts.

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