Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As my Presidency of the World Allergy Organization (WAO) comes to an end, I want to express my sincere thanks for the opportunity to serve as President. During my 2014-2015 Presidency I was honored to work with an incredible Board of Directors who are leaders in the field of allergy, asthma, and immunology. With this team of leaders, and with the help of our many volunteers, WAO continued to progress forward and I’d like to share with you some of the many accomplishments from the past two years.

Scientific Meetings
WAO hosted the 3rd WAO International Scientific Conference (WISC 2014) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the XXIV World Allergy Congress (WAC 2015) in Seoul, Korea, and the 2015 WAO Symposium in Miami, USA. These meetings provided incredible scientific value to the allergy and immunology community worldwide.

The meetings would not be successful without the contributions of our participants, volunteers, speakers, and of course our host societies, including the Brazilian Association of Allergy and Immunology (ASBAI), the Korean Academy of Asthma, Allergy and Clinical Immunology (KAAACI), and their mutual collaborating partner, the Asia Pacific Association of Pediatric Allergy, Respirology and Immunology (APAPARI).

Through great effort and sustained collaboration, I know our scientific programs will continue to exceed expectations in the future, including the WAO International Scientific Conference (WISC 2016) in Jerusalem, Israel.

Councils & Committees
The Committees and newly created Board Councils have worked tirelessly the past two years on various projects and papers. The newly implemented Board Councils had the opportunity to have discussions in person, helping them better refine membership on our committees and define the manuscript process within WAO. This has resulted in the completion of 28 projects since 2014, including many articles that were published in the WAO Journal.

Educational Outreach
Though initiatives like the World Allergy Training Schools, World Allergy Week, and the Collaborative on Severe Asthma, WAO and our many volunteers have been able to spread education and awareness to clinicians, researchers, and patients throughout the world through various mediums.

WAO held five World Allergy Training Schools in 2014-2015. WAO and ACAAI leaders held programs in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (20-22 June 2014), Maputo, Mozambique (14 August 2014), Sochi, Russia (9-10 October 2014), Havana, Cuba (26-27 May 2015), and Seoul, Korea (14 October 2015). In 2016, the Emerging Societies Program Committee looks forward to hosting additional programs; to learn more about the Emerging Societies Programs, visit: http://www.worldallergy.org/esp/

WAO’s World Allergy Week has continued to thrive and grow thanks to participation from our many Member Societies and volunteers worldwide. After a successful World Allergy Week 2014, which was focused on “Anaphylaxis – When Allergies Can Be Severe and Fatal,” the next World Allergy Week in 2015 kept the positive momentum going with the theme, “Airway allergies – a human and economic burden.” I look forward
to seeing this initiative’s continued success with World Allergy Week 2016: “Pollen Allergies - Adapting to a Changing Climate: Climate change worsens allergies globally”.

Website
As part of WAO’s initiative to provide online resources to the global allergy/immunology community, and to align the growth activities of WAO with the needs of our member societies, the newly designed WAO website at www.worldallergy.org was launched in 2015. The Web Editorial Board began their strategic planning last February, under the project leadership of Juan Carlos Ivancevich, Web Editor-in-Chief, and Dana Wallace, Deputy Editor. As a result of their evaluation of the strengths, weakness, and opportunities of the WAO website, the Editorial Board redesigned the website to offer easy access from smart phones, tablets, and computers. This was a tremendous and time-consuming effort. Congratulations to all of those who contributed to what is truly a significant design update.

World Allergy Organization Journal (WAO Journal)
In January 2014 two newly appointed Chief Editors, Alessandro Fiocchi and Erika Jensen-Jarolim, took on the leadership of WAO’s flagship publication, the WAO Journal. The Journal is online-only at www.waojournal.org, as well as open access, and their leadership along with the collaboration of the WAO Journal Editorial Board has kept the journal developing as an important resource for allergists/immunologists. I would like to congratulate Alessandro and Erika on the accomplishment of a key initiative this year, which was to launch a new pro-con series on topics of common interest in allergy/immunology but with differing points of view. Debates in Allergy Medicine has launched this month with the publication of its first debate topic on food intolerance. More debates are underway, and I look forward to the continued dialog this series will offer our field.

In closing, I’m excited for Professor Mario Sanchez Borges to take over as the President of WAO in 2016-2017. I have full confidence that Professor Sanchez Borges will continue the positive momentum and I know, as he transitions into the Presidency, that he will fulfill his duties as President admirably.

Sincerely yours,

Lanny J. Rosenwasser
President, World Allergy Organization

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Keep track of all WAO activities at:

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