



# UPDATE

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA GASTROENTEROLOGY ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2022

## 2022-2024 OFFICERS

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Louis Bell, M.D. FACG  
SCGA President 2022-24

*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...* In 2022, we faced a pandemic killing over 1 million Americans, Russia invading the Ukraine, a worsening global economy with recession looming, threats to our own democracy & skyrocketing oil prices, not to mention the ever-present threat of climate change. Although not nearly as important, let us not forget the return of the Medicare 2% sequestration, either.

Now for the good news! The SCGA, which represents the interests of gastroenterologists in our state, has never been stronger. Our recent annual meeting was our most well-attended. We had 4 outstanding lectures by excellent speakers. Dr. Cory Siegel presented CDPATH, laboratory testing that can improve the care & outcome of Crohn's Disease patients. Dr. Louis Wilson, chair of the ACG's Practice Management Committee, spoke about corporate buyouts of GI practices (amongst other timely topics). Dr. Erin Foster of MUSC lectured on multiple IBD issues, & Dr Frank Berger, a researcher at U of SC, described new noninvasive colorectal cancer (CRC) screening tests. SCGA's administrative members participated in a forum to share mutual concerns & exchange ideas on how to solve them. Due to our consistent, growing membership & with the help of our corporate sponsorship program, the financial health of SCGA has never been better.

Looking ahead to the rest of this year, we anticipate an excellent CME program with MUSC this fall. We continue to support the SCGA Foundation, our sister organization focused on public awareness for CRC screening programs. We also hope to expand our website to better serve the needs of our physicians & patients.

After all the time & effort that Dr. John Corless has put into this organization, I know his presidency will be a hard act to follow. The Association thanks you, John, for your hard work. Thank you to all the other officers & councilors who volunteer their precious time to serve this organization, and to Shannon Johnson, our director & guiding light. I welcome this opportunity to serve as President for the next 2 years.

Please feel free to contact us with any concerns you may have regarding the practice of gastroenterology in South Carolina - that's what we're here for.

Sincerely,

Dr. Louis Bell, M.D. FACG

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*The purpose of the South Carolina Gastroenterology Association (SCGA) is to: promote the digestive health of South Carolinians, to foster the development and fellowship of physicians and medical professionals with similar interests in the practice of gastroenterology and endoscopy, and to maintain the highest standard of clinical practice in gastroenterology and endoscopy.*



## CALLING ALL GI PRACTICE ADMINISTRATORS

Join in the conversation & connect with your colleagues. This is an opportunity to share mutual practice management related concerns & exchange ideas on how to solve them. Quarterly Zoom calls are planned for SGGA practice administrative members.

### FIRST CALL

Wednesday, July 13  
12:00 - 1:00pm

## VIRTUAL CME OFFERINGS

New Advances in the Diagnosis & Management of NASH  
PCME

Tuesday, August 2nd  
7:00 - 8:00pm

Don't Get Stuck in the Middle: Evidence-based Management of Eosinophilic Esophagitis  
PCME

Thursday, November 3rd  
7:00 - 8:00pm

MUSC Grand Rounds  
Wednesdays 7:00 - 8:00am



## ANNUAL MEETING

The 2022 SCGA Annual Meeting was held at the Spartanburg Marriott on Saturday, April 23rd. This was our first in-person meeting in over 2 years! This was well attended by both gastroenterologists and GI practice administrators. The program kicked off on Friday, April 22nd by sharing in fellowship with a member social and an educational dinner program with guest speaker, Dr. Jose Nieto. Our Saturday meeting had a robust agenda with cutting edge topics and it featured speakers, Dr Corey Siegel, Dr Louis Wilson, Dr Erin Forster and Dr Frank Berger. We wrapped up the meeting with a membership business meeting and a new slate of officers for 2022-2024.

## DR. CORLESS: A PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL

**"May You Live in Interesting Times"** That title seemed fitting for a few farewell remarks on my term as SCGA President. At first glance it seems like a blessing, until the irony seeps in. Often referred to as a Chinese curse, there is no such saying in Mandarin; the closest expression is "Better to be a dog in times of tranquility than a human in times of chaos." After more than 2 years of pandemic-related chaos, I think we are all looking forward to some serious tranquility. SCGA faced challenging times as well, surviving the loss of in-person meetings while trying to remain relevant to our members and maintain financial stability. The enthusiastic support of SCGA members and corporate partners at our recent Annual Meeting in Spartanburg heralds a return to normalcy and the promise of better times ahead.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to our Executive Council members who volunteered their time in the busiest of seasons. I am especially grateful for the skill and unrelenting attention to detail of our Executive Director, Shannon Johnson, who continues to elevate this organization to new heights. And finally, best wishes to our new President, Dr. Louis Bell, under whose leadership SCGA will surely continue to prosper.

## 2022-24 SCGA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

For the next 2 years the Association will be represented by Dr Louis Bell of Hilton Head (President), Dr Chris Fyock, Greenville (Vice President), Dr Josh Watson, Mount Pleasant (Treasurer), Dr Rajeev Vasudeva, Columbia (Secretary), and Councilors: Drs John Corless, Charleston, Brenda Hoffman, Charleston, Chris Lawrence, Summerville, Andrew Pearson, Myrtle Beach, & Matt Thoma, Columbia. If you are an active member who is interesting in serving on a committee, please contact Shannon Johnson for more detail. Thank you to the Executive Council for being willing to serve and leading us so well!



- Columbia GI • Consultants in Gastroenterology • Digestive Disease Group • Elms Digestive
- Gastroenterology Associates • MUSC Health • Strand GI & Endoscopy Center • Sumter GI

**DRESS IN BLUE '22** Thank you to the following practices and endoscopy centers for supporting the SCGA Foundation by participating in this year's CRC awareness event! 45 is the new 50 tagline was splashed across social media pages for this year's Dress in Blue Day to bring extra attention to the lower screening guideline. A special thank you to the Colorectal Cancer Prevention Network for partnering with us to widen the reach across the state.

## ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

**ACG ADVOCACY** Drs Brenda Hoffman and March Seabrook participated in the ACG Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill on April 8 & 9th. They advocated for reform in pre authorization, Step therapy and Medicare reimbursement. They are pictured below with Representatives Nancy Mace and Joe Wilson.



### COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS DAY

On March 3rd Drs John Corless, March Seabrook & Raj Vasadeva joined with CCPN and ACS CAN advocates for the reading of the March Colorectal Cancer Awareness month proclamation by Lt Gov Pamela Evette. Dr Bryan Green served as Doctor of the Day.

**DOCTOR OF THE DAY** Each year SCGA member gastroenterologists serve as Doctor of the Day giving them a unique opportunity to educate the legislators about digestive health including colon cancer. Thank you to 2022 volunteers: Drs John Corless, Bryan Green and March Seabrook. Please consider serving as Doctor of the Day during the next SC legislative session (generally Jan - May).



## THANK YOU TO OUR 2022-23 CORPORATE SPONSORS

### PLATINUM

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### GOLD

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### BRONZE







South Carolina  
Gastroenterology Association

**ANNUAL  
MEETING**

# *Save the Date!*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023**

AT

**MARRIOTT MYRTLE BEACH  
RESORT & SPA  
AT GRANDE DUNES**

## **JOIN THE SCGA**

*We are here to support  
the interests of our SC  
gastroenterologists.*

To join the SCGA, text or call Shannon  
Johnson at (843) 530-3482 or email  
[sjohnson@scgastroassn.com](mailto:sjohnson@scgastroassn.com).



*Presented and Sponsored by:*  
Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology  
Medical University of South Carolina in  
collaboration with the SC Gastroenterology Association

## **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Update in Gastroenterology and Hepatology**

**September 17, 2022**

Charleston, South Carolina

For more information,  
please visit:  
[musc.edu/giCME](http://musc.edu/giCME)

