

SCT PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



**VALERIE DURKALSKI-MAULDIN,
MPH, PHD**
Society for Clinical Trials
President 2025-2026

Clinical Trials Day (May 20th) is a day that commemorates the clinical trial profession and advancement of human health made by clinical trials. Why May? It ties in with the date of the first documented clinical trial (James Lind's experiment on a Royal Navy ship to treat scurvy). So be sure to celebrate by thanking your clinical research team members, collaborators and trial participants, and continue to raise awareness of the important contributions of clinical trials.

The Annual SCT Meeting in May has been going strong for 47 years and I am really looking forward to this year's meeting! I hope you can join me in welcoming our two keynote speakers, Drs Cyrus Hoseyni and Brandy Fureman. Dr Hoseyni, Global Head of Quantitative Sciences & Pharmacology at J&J Innovative Medicine, will be giving the Curtis Meinert Lecture Monday morning presenting how quantitative sciences and AI can be strategically and responsibly used in clinical development and evidence-based decision making. Tuesday afternoon, we will hear from Dr. Fureman, Chief Outcomes Officer at the Epilepsy Foundation of America, during the Founders Lecture about how cutting-edge information capabilities, population health management and co-production can enable a new era for clinical trials. Fan Li and Cristina Murray-Krezan, Program Committee Chair and co-Chair, have collaborated diligently with their committee to provide a diverse and engaging program that will inform our attendees of the many facets of clinical trial design, implementation, analysis, and reporting. You will see interesting Invited Sessions, Contributed Talks and Posters as you review the program and plan your daily meeting schedule. We also have a full room of round tables during Monday's luncheon that is free to all attendees – please be sure to sign up for a table during the registration process. In addition, I look forward to seeing our award winners: Student Chalmers, Trial of the Year, Sylvan Green, and the RISE awardees. Remember that the annual meeting is meant to encourage conversation amongst colleagues, to exchange clinical trial-related successes and challenges and to spark new ideas as we continue to move research development forward and improve outcomes for patients. Take advantage of the numerous opportunities to meet new people, volunteer, gain new leadership skills and promote student and early career development.

VOLUME 37, #2

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SCT PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - CONTINUED

I also want to take a moment to sincerely thank the SCT members who volunteered their time this past year and worked closely with me during my term as President. How quickly one year flies by! Our accomplishments include an update to our annual meeting submission portal, updates to some of our governance documents, signed agreements for our 2028-2030 annual meeting locations (Charlotte in 2028, Toronto in 2029 to celebrate SCT's 50th!, and Baltimore in 2030), launch of the SCT Day of Giving, enhancements to our LinkedIn page and newsletter, continuation and growth of two SCT Special Interest Groups (Early Career and Academic DCCs), new and continued sponsorships, and many other outreach activities to promote our multidisciplinary, international membership. Thank you to our volunteers who made this happen and to our management company (EAI). I am looking forward to continuing to work with the Executive Committee on new initiatives as we welcome our next President, Dr. Alexia Iasonis, and President-Elect, Dr. Liz Garrett-Mayer. Congratulations to both of them!

*Sincerely,
Valerie*

APRIL 2026 ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



The April issue of Clinical Trials includes articles on a broad range of topics of interest to Society members.

Kim Boesen and colleagues examine publicly available, routinely updated clinical trial databases to assess their capacities for supporting systematic reviews, noting that individual participant data are still largely unavailable.

Erin Chase and colleagues report on a suicide risk management protocol designed to facilitate the inclusion of people experiencing suicidal behavior into clinical trials of mental health, a typically excluded group.

Jordon Wimsett and colleagues examine the ethical recruitment of women to intrapartum clinical trials, finding that a 2-stage consent process was acceptable to most patients & clinicians.

Erica Brittain and colleagues use theoretical arguments concerning stability to justify the use of anticipated events rather than total sample size in planning clinical trials.

Kylie Lange and colleagues outline a sample size calculator for clinical trials in which some participants are independent and others are clustered, such as for example multiple births.

Robert Lee and colleagues have developed a natural language processing tool to identify goals of care discussions from the medical record as outcomes in pragmatic clinical trials, demonstrating high sensitivity. Finally, if you are interested in the distinct roles played by clinical study coordinators and data managers in clinical trials,

Daniele Napolitano and her team propose that standardized training & collaboration are key to improving trial quality & efficiency.



COLIN BEGGS, PHD
Editor

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featured articles

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MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT



JESS ANDERSON, MS

Biostatistician
University of New Mexico Health
Sciences Center

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR JUNIOR RESEARCHERS JUST STARTING OUT IN THE FIELD OF CLINICAL TRIALS?

Having been in this industry for only 8 years I still feel like a junior researcher. However, I would suggest that you, the other junior researchers, try to find experienced collaborators that you work well with in a research field that is interesting to you. There are so many people to learn from, and everyone has their own niche that they would love to talk to you about.

WHAT IS ONE STRATEGY YOU HAVE USED TO MAINTAIN YOUR SANITY DURING THE RECENT MONTHS/YEARS?

I took many mini-vacations in the 2025, most of which were weekend camping trips to explore the state parks of New Mexico. Being in nature and disconnecting from work, news, and other responsibilities has been my best attempt at maintaining sanity. Whether it worked or not is still to be seen!

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

At this time, I'm a staff biostatistician in the Division of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Preventive Medicine at UNM HSC. I am also the current Director of the UNM Statistics and Data Coordinating Center which was co-founded by Dr. Cristina Murray-Krezan, whom many of you know, and Dr. Kimberly Page.

WHAT ARE YOUR PAST POSITIONS?

I began my career at UNM working as a research scientist under the direction of Dr. Murray-Krezan, and spent several years receiving her tutelage. Prior to UNM, I worked for 5 years as an actuarial assistant for the NM actuary at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NM. I've also enjoyed teaching introductory level math and statistics courses at several higher education institutions.

WHAT IS YOUR TRAINING?

Both my undergraduate degree in statistics and Master's degree, also in statistics, were achieved at Utah State University. I've continued taking upper-level statistics courses at UNM, and have recently been accepted into a PhD program in Health Equity Sciences within the UNM College of Population Health.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPECIFIC RESEARCH INTERESTS OR YOUR SPECIFIC INTERESTS WITHIN CLINICAL TRIALS?

I've been fortunate to be involved in several research studies, including clinical trials, working to support people who use drugs and people who are unhoused. This has become my passion, and I intend to continue contributing to research that supports these and other underserved communities.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES (OUTSIDE OF WORK)?

I'm sort of a 'Jack of some trades' when it comes to hobbies, and it doesn't matter to me whether I'm good at them as long as I'm having fun! I enjoy riding my motorcycle, reading, crocheting small stuffed animals/creatures, cross-stitch and embroidery, painting, and doing art projects with my two kids. I'm currently DIY-ing a big update to my backyard where I'm learning a lot about grass removal and how to pick plants that are native to New Mexico. Birdwatching is probably next as I get into my 40's.

WHAT ROLE(S) DID/DO YOU PLAY IN SCT?

Within SCT I've been a member for a few years, and have had the opportunity to present and attend multiple conferences. The majority of work I'm currently involved in is less focused on clinical trials, so I've had less time and opportunity to really engage in this community.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT BEING INVOLVED IN CLINICAL TRIALS?

The statistics and science behind clinical trials fascinates me, and it can be so exciting to declare outcomes with a higher degree of certainty. I've enjoyed programming data entry forms to include randomization, and interacting with a final dataset is always a treat!

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT ATTENDING THE SCT ANNUAL MEETING?

People I've met at SCT Annual Meetings have been wonderful to be associated with. I also enjoy being exposed to how clinical trials are being implemented across many disciplines.

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT



BARBARA H. BRAFFETT, PHD
Epidemiologist
George Washington University

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT ATTENDING THE SCT ANNUAL MEETING?

The breadth of it. Seeing how clinical trial methods are being applied across so many different disease areas and disciplines. The networking has also been one of the best parts; a good example is the UNICORN network, which grew out of connections made through SCT and has become a meaningful collaborative community.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR JUNIOR RESEARCHERS JUST STARTING OUT IN THE FIELD OF CLINICAL TRIALS?

Seek out meaningful problems and don't be afraid to take on challenging questions early in your career. The best opportunities often come from stepping into areas of uncertainty and learning as you go.

WHAT IS ONE STRATEGY YOU HAVE USED TO MAINTAIN YOUR SANITY DURING THE RECENT MONTHS/YEARS?

Getting outside and spending time with my friends and family. Whether it's a ski trip or just a walk around the block, stepping away from the screen has been the most reliable reset I've found. I can't always make it work, but when I do, it helps.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

I'm a Research Professor of Epidemiology at George Washington University (GWU), Milken Institute of Public Health, based at the GWU Biostatistics Center in Bethesda, MD. I serve as Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) of the Coordinating Center for two large, multi-center, NIH-funded projects: the Diabetes Control and Complications Trial/Epidemiology of Diabetes Interventions and Complications (DCCT/EDIC) study, which has followed a cohort of individuals with type 1 diabetes for more than 40 years, and the DISCOVERY study, a prospective observational cohort examining risk factors for type 2 diabetes in youth.

WHAT ARE YOUR PAST POSITIONS?

I have spent the majority of my career at the GWU Biostatistics Center, working my way up from a Research Associate to my current rank under the mentorship of Dr. John Lachin (SCT President 2002-2003) and later Dr. Scott Evans (SCT President 2024-2025). Along the way, I've taken on progressively greater scientific and leadership responsibilities, growing from conducting analyses and supporting day-to-day coordinating center operations to leading multi-site NIH-funded clinical studies.

WHAT IS YOUR TRAINING?

I started as a math major at the College of Holy Cross, then earned my M.S. in Statistics from the University of Rhode Island before landing in Epidemiology for my Ph.D. at GWU – where I had already been working at the Biostatistics Center for several years.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPECIFIC RESEARCH INTERESTS OR YOUR SPECIFIC INTERESTS WITHIN CLINICAL TRIALS?

My work focuses on the lifecourse epidemiology of diabetes, examining how risk factors and complications evolve over decades in well-characterized cohorts of both adolescents and adults. I'm particularly interested in understanding how complications develop as interconnected processes rather than as isolated endpoints, and how early exposures shape long-term outcomes. For example, how poor glycemic control in adolescents with type 2 diabetes influences health trajectories into early adulthood, how cumulative metabolic exposures in type 1 diabetes affect brain structure and cognitive function, and how sex differences modify cardiovascular risk in ways that are not fully addressed by current clinical guidelines.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES (OUTSIDE OF WORK)?

I like to ski, travel, and knit – though the knitting mostly happens on planes, so the three tend to go together.

WHAT ROLE(S) DID/DO YOU PLAY IN SCT?

I've been a member since 2005 and have presented at and attended multiple annual meetings. I have also served on the SCT Membership Committee since 2023, most recently as Co-Chair.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT BEING INVOLVED IN CLINICAL TRIALS?

For the last two decades, my work has been anchored in large, longitudinal observational cohort studies, which share a lot of the same methodological challenges as clinical trials. I especially value the opportunity to generate evidence that directly informs clinical care and long-term patient outcomes.

EARLY CAREER & FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE GATHERING — PHOENIX

Sunday, May 17 · 5:15–6:15 PM MST

Ocotillo B

Join us to connect with fellow Annual Meeting attendees and learn more about SCT. This gathering is open to anyone who considers themselves early career, new to SCT, or new to working in clinical trials.

You can add this event when registering for the Annual Meeting — keep an eye out for the option on the registration form. Please share this invitation with anyone in your network attending this year.

Questions? Contact [Megan McCabe](#)

UNICORN NETWORK GATHERING — PHOENIX

Tuesday, May 19 · 5:30–6:30 PM MST

Palm 2AB

The **UNI**versity data **COoR**minating ce**N**ters (UNICORN) Network brings together leaders of Academic Data Coordinating Centers (DCCs) to advance the discipline of data coordination. Join us in Phoenix to:

- Discuss data coordination approaches and best practices
- Share DCC management and leadership strategies
- Connect with peers leading DCC activities across institutions

To learn more about UNICORN, visit unicorn-dcc.org.

REGISTRATION FOR SCT 2026 ANNUAL MEETING IS STILL OPEN!

Please join us! This year's theme is:

"Advancing Public Health: Clinical Trials in an Era of Cutting-Edge Information Capabilities"

May 17 - 20, 2026

Arizona Grand Resort & Spa

Phoenix, Arizona

Our Annual Meeting brings together the clinical trials community from academia, the pharmaceutical and device industries, government agencies, medical groups and clinical research entities.



[Click here to learn more about SCT's 2026 Annual Meeting and to register.](#)

Highlights include:

- Cutting edge pre-conference workshops by leaders in the field
- Invited sessions, targeted sessions, contributed sessions, and poster presentations
- Curtis Meinert Keynote Lecture delivered by Cyrus Hoseyni, PhD titled "Quantitative Sciences and Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Considerations for Strategic and Responsible Application in Clinical Development"
- Founders Lecture delivered by Brandy Fureman, PhD, FAES, titled "How Cutting-Edge Information Capabilities, Population Health Management and Co-production Can Enable a New Era for Clinical Trials"
- Annual Thomas C. Chalmers Student Scholarship competition
- Sylvan Green Award presentation by Nuru Noor titled "PROFILE Trial - Disease Modification With Early Treatment in Newly-Diagnosed Crohn's Disease"
- Exhibitors showcasing publications, technology innovators and other resources for clinical trials
- Discussions of timely issues and research experiences among colleagues in the field
- Presentation of the SCT Class of 2026 Fellows
- Presentation of the 2025 David Sackett Trial of the Year Award
- Roundtable small group discussions on a wide range of topics
- Networking with your colleagues

We're looking forward to seeing you this May in Phoenix.

SCT'S 2026 ANNUAL MEETING: CALL FOR SPONSORS/EXHIBITORS



May 17-20, 2026



Phoenix, AZ, US



Interested in sponsoring or exhibiting?

Exhibitors receive a 15% discount on sponsorship rates, making this an even greater opportunity to maximize visibility and impact

SCT MEETING 2026

The Society for Clinical Trials (SCT) Annual Meeting brings together individuals from throughout the clinical trials community to share insights, advance innovation, and shape the future of clinical research –and sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are now available.

Contact the SCT team at info@sctweb.org for full details, availability, and deadlines. Or reach out to:

- Margaret Gamalo (meg.gamalo@yahoo.com)
- Xiaotian Chen (xiaotian.chen@abbvie.com), or
- Valerie L. Durkalski-Mauldin (durkalsv@muscedu)



Whether you're exhibiting or not, SCT offers a range of high-visibility options to help your organization connect with attendees, including:

- Branded meeting bags, lanyards, and notebooks
- Refreshment breaks and welcome reception sponsorships
- Onsite Final Program advertising distributed to every attendee

Let's continue advancing excellence and innovation in clinical trials—together

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY IN SCT'S PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS!

If you have not yet registered for the upcoming SCT Annual Meeting, May 17-20 in Phoenix, please register soon and plan to attend one or more of the great pre-conference workshops taking place on Sunday, May 17. Just indicate the workshop(s) you'd like to attend when completing your online meeting registration.

If you have already registered for the meeting and want to add a pre-conference workshop to your registration, please:

1. Complete the [registration form](#) and indicate the specific workshop you'd like to attend, and
2. Submit the form with your payment information to registration@sctweb.org for processing.

For a full listing of the pre-conference workshops, [click here](#).

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY IN A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION!

If you're planning to attend the upcoming SCT Annual Meeting May 17-20 in Phoenix, we encourage you to participate in the small group, moderator-led, informal roundtable discussions that will take place over lunch on Monday, May 18th. There is no additional charge to attend and the complete list of topics is available [here](#).

If you've not already registered for the meeting (and pre-selected your preferred roundtable discussion topic) please [click here to learn more about SCT's 2026 Annual Meeting and to register](#). Don't forget the Early Bird registration discount ends at Midnight (CST) on Monday, March 23, 2026.

If you have already registered for the meeting but did not yet select a roundtable topic, please complete page B of the [registration form](#) with your full name and the roundtable topic you would like to add and submit to registration@sctweb.org for processing.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you this May in Phoenix!

REGISTER NOW

Registration: registration@sctweb.org

General Inquiries: contact@sctweb.org

THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 CORPORATE SPONSORS!

Gold Sponsor

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At Johnson & Johnson, we believe health is everything. Every day, our approximately 140,000 employees globally are building a world where complex diseases are prevented and cured, treatments are smarter and less invasive—and solutions are personal. For 140 years, we have aimed to keep people well at every age and every stage of life.

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UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

The University of Utah Data Coordinating Center (DCC) is a full-service Academic Research Organization supporting academic, government, and industry investigators. We provide end-to-end expertise in research design, data and project management, regulatory support, statistical analysis, and large dataset management, delivering a frictionless experience to improve patient outcomes.

Bronze Sponsor

STATA CORP

Stata statistical software provides everything for your data science needs—data manipulation, visualization, statistics, and automated reporting. Whether you prefer a GUI, a command line, or scripts, Stata puts the statistics you want at your fingertips. Stata is easy to use and has your back with world-class support.

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ABBVIE

AbbVie is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and delivering innovative medicines that address serious health conditions. By developing treatments across immunology, oncology, neuroscience, eye care, and aesthetics, etc., the company combines scientific research, advanced technology, and patient-centered innovation to improve health outcomes worldwide.

Silver Sponsor

BERRY CONSULTANTS

Berry Consultants ("Berry") is a scientific consulting company specializing in innovative clinical trial design, Bayesian analysis, adaptive trial implementation, and software solutions for the pharmaceutical and medical device industry. Berry's primary services include designing adaptive clinical trials, conducting comparative effectiveness research such as decision analysis and meta-analysis, providing strategic operational excellence and knowledge of advanced trial implementation, supporting interim analysis and trial updates during the implementation of adaptive trials, participating on Data Monitoring Committees, and the development and licensing of software solutions. These commercially available software solutions include QUOTES (Quantification and Optimization of Trial Expectations Simulator), ADDPLAN (Adaptive Design Planner), and FACTS (Fixed and Adaptive Clinical Trial Simulator) which is the most powerful, flexible, and fastest simulation tool on the market for advanced clinical trial design.

Silver Sponsor

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At Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, we are unified around our purpose: We use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than a century, we've been at the forefront of research, bringing forward medicines, vaccines and innovative health solutions for the world's most challenging diseases.

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ASA BIOPHARMACEUTICAL SECTION

The American Statistical Association is the world's largest community of statisticians, the "Big Tent for Statistics." It is the second-oldest, continuously operating professional association in the country. Since it was founded in Boston in 1839, the ASA has supported excellence in the development, application, and dissemination of statistical science.

Bronze Sponsor

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF BIostatISTICS

The University of Iowa Department of Biostatistics serves as home for the Clinical Trials Statistical and Data Management Center, the Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center Biostatistics Core, the Biostatistics Consulting Center, and provides leadership to the Statistics & Analytics Core of the Institute for Public Health Practice, Research and Policy.

INFORMATION ABOUT SCT



85 W. Algonquin Road
Suite 550 Arlington
Heights, IL 60005 (847)
427-8010

Executive Director

Kevin Bragaw

Program & Governance Manager

Lisa Aguado

contact@sctweb.org

www.sctweb.org 

@Society for Clinical Trials



Webmaster

John Nichols

Advisor to Executive

Committee

Domenic Reda

Newsletter Editor

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FUTURE SCT MEETINGS

Save the Dates - Upcoming SCT Annual Meetings



48th Annual Meeting
Chicago, IL, USA



49th Annual Meeting
Charlotte, NC, USA