ASN from A to Z: An Alphabetical Look at ASN’s Activities since Kidney Week 2014

1. ASN Strategic Plan That Will Lead the Society to the Next Level by 2020. The ASN leadership held a series of “listening sessions” with the society’s members during Kidney Week 2014. This valuable feedback—as well as input from ASN’s committees, advisory groups, and other panels—helped the leadership finalize a new strategic plan during the past year. Focused on building the profession, the new strategic plan will shape the society through 2020.

2. Blue Ribbon Panel on Career Development. Starting with a retreat in February, this panel is evaluating current professional development programs within and outside of nephrology to help ASN address key gaps to better support kidney professionals at all career stages.

3. Commendation. The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) in December awarded ASN Accreditation with Commendation, signifying that ASN is now among the top 16% of ACCME-accredited organizations providing continuing medical education.

4. Dialogue on Transforming Kidney Research through Discovery and Innovation. In September, ASN convened a summit to help shape the society’s efforts to galvanize the kidney community to advance research that enhances the lives of patients; include patients, families, and caregivers as stakeholders in the design and implementation of kidney research; engage new partners and facilitate collaboration among health professionals, scientists, and other stakeholders; and leverage breakthroughs to increase awareness of kidney diseases and to promote interest in careers in nephrology.

5. Endowment of Ben J. Lipps Research Fellowship Program. In four years, the ASN Foundation for Kidney Research fully endowed the Ben J. Lipps Research Fellowship Program at $20,000,000, guaranteeing that 20 nephrology fellows will receive annual funding in perpetuity.

6. Fellows in Nephrology: Building a Better Match. Working on a very short timeline, the ASN Match Task Force addressed the viability, integrity, and process of the nephrology match. As a result of the task force’s efforts, nephrology was the first specialty in the National Resident Matching Program’s Specialties Matching Service to adopt an “all-in” policy.

7. Giving Voice to the Kidney Community. ASN advocates for legislative and regulatory action to promote the highest quality patient care, increase funding for research, and to maintain the commitment to medical education. In 2015, this effort included working with the Senate Finance Committee’s Chronic Conditions Workgroup, crafting a bill with the US House of Representatives to expand telehealth options that advance patient safety and access to care, and advocating for the CKD Improvement in Research and Treatment Act to strengthen research funding and reduce health disparities.

8. Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Program Award. ASN partnered with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in February to support the career development of kidney scholars and future health care leaders from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

9. Innovations in Kidney Education Contest. ASN received 40 submissions for the inaugural contest intended to recognize innovative tools—including apps, videos, smart board talks, and games—focused on educating medical and graduate students in key concepts of nephrology.

10. Journals. JASN continues to maintain the highest impact factor among
ASN continues to publish three successful series (Re nal Immunology for the Clinician, Renal Physiology for the Clinician, and the Role of the Medical Director). The Kidney Health Assessment Program (KSAP), in March, ASN launched KSAP, a continuing medical education and recertification product that reviews the essentials of nephrology for fellows preparing for initial certification, practicing nephrologists preparing for re-certification, and practitioners looking to refresh their understanding of the core elements of nephrology.

Lafayette. On January 1, 2015, Richard A. Lafayette, MD, became the second Editor-in-Chief of ASN Kidney News, succeeding Pascale H. Lane, MD, FASN. Kidney News remains the most widely distributed newsmagazine.

Membership. With more than 15,500 physicians, scientists, and other health professionals, ASN membership has grown 21% since 2010.

Network of Minority Health Research Investigators (NMRI) and Student National Medical Association (SNMA). For the first time this year, ASN exhibited at the SNMA Annual Meeting and provided travel support for 15 participants to attend the NMRI Workshop, a network of current and potential investigators and technical personnel interested in minority health research, including individuals from traditionally underserved communities.

Online Products. ASN continues to expand distance learning opportunities, including the Board Review Course and Update Online, Dialysis Practice Improvement Module, Diallysis “Virtual Mentor” Curriculum, Early Career, and Diallysis: Resources for Nephrology Health Professionals, Educational Symposiums, Early Programs, Geriatric Nephrology Curriculum, Kidney Transplantation Practice Improvement Module, Kidney Week On-Demand, and Transplant Nephrology Core Curriculum (with the American Society of Transplantation).

Patient and Family Partnership Council of the Kidney Health Initiative (KHI). With more than 70 member organizations, KHI—ASN’s landmark collaboration with the US Food and Drug Administration—completed several more projects this year and established the Patient and Family Partnership Council to guarantee that the patient’s voice, experience, and involvement are meaningful and effective.

Quality Metrics Task Force. Through a series of regulatory efforts and dialogue with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, as well as engagement in the National Quality Forum endorsement process, ASN improved how the Medicare program evaluates the quality of patient care in the ESRD Quality Incentive Program. In its quality advocacy, ASN focuses on the importance of transparency, the use of measures based in rigorous evidence, and need to maintain flexibility for nephrologists to deliver individualized patient care.

Recertification. ASN continued to raise concerns about maintenance of certification with the leadership of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM). Throughout the year (in February, March, April, July, and September), the society also provided regular updates to its members about ABIM, MOC, recertification, and related issues. Additionally, ASN conducted a podcast interview in June with Paul S. Teirstein, MD, President of the National Board of Physicians and Surgeons.

Strategic Plan for Patient Care Advocacy. In February, ASN finalized a strategy for advancing legislative and regulatory policies to improve patient access to transplantation, expand telehealth, reduce health disparities, and reinforce the nephrology care team’s role in delivering patients the highest quality care.

Twitter Chats. Once a month, ASN participated in Twitter chats organized by Matthew A. Sparks, MD, FASN, and Joel Topf, MD. During the past year, these chats have focused on Ask the ASN President with Jonathan Himmeldiir, MD, FASN; ASN Kidney Week 2015 with Lloyd G. Cantley, MD, FASN; and Kidney Health Advocacy Day with Crystal A. Gadebeku, MD, and Michelle A. Josephson, MD.

Unifier. During Kidney Community Advocacy Day 2015, ASN brought together more than 100 representatives from 16 kidney organizations to visit over 120 congressional offices representing more than 30 states. These advocates joined forces on Capitol Hill and urged Congress to increase funding for kidney research and to cosponsor legislation supporting living donors.

Vulcan Mind Meld. Kidney STARS and TREKS are committed to ensuring that nephrology will “live long and prosper,” with more than 250 total medical students, residents, graduate students, and other trainees participating in both programs in 2015.

Workforce. Working with researchers from George Washington University, ASN released four reports about the nephrology workforce since last year’s meeting: The US Nephrology Workforce: Developments and Trends (November), The 2015 NRMP SMS Nephrology Match—ASN Brief Analysis (December), Findings from the 2014 Survey of Nephrology Fellows (January), and Analysis of the NRMP-SMS Nephrology Match for the 2015–2016 Appointment Year (March).

Table 1

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<th>ASN activity</th>
<th>From outside the United States</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kidney Week participants</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kidney Week abstract submissions</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASN submissions</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CJASN submissions</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook followers</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter followers</td>
<td>51%</td>
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**2015 “American Health + Wellness Award.”**

XPRIZE. ASN is working with the XPRIZE Foundation to research a prize competition that could potentially address kidney disease.

Yamagata. Japan. More than 35% of ASN members are from outside the United States, representing nearly 115 countries and including six members in Yamagata. As illustrated in Table 1, ASN is a global organization.

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