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# NEWS & VIEWS

*Advancing Scholarship in Laboratory Medicine*

Spring 2011

## [NACB President's Message](#)



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Guidelines and Recommendations for Laboratory Analysis in the Diagnosis and Management of Diabetes Mellitus, the most recent NACB guideline, edited by David B. Sacks will be published in late May 2011.

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Have you visited the NACBLOG? See the most recent blog hit statistics and learn more about recent blog posts.

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Don't miss these NACB events at this year AACC annual meeting! Mark them on your calendar now.

# NEWS & VIEWS

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## **NACB President's Report - May 2011**



**Ronald J. Whitley, PhD, DABCC, FACB**  
**President**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President this year and to work closely with other Academy officers and directors. I see a lot of wisdom and talent on the Board, and together we pledge our continuing efforts to ensure that NACB remains strong and effective.

Celebrate! Yes, 2011 is a special year for NACB as we permanently become the Academy of AACC. For some of us who have been around NACB for a long time (30 years for me), this merger is applauded as the next forward step in uniting our efforts to advance the practice and profession of clinical biochemistry. If you are coming to Atlanta this July for the AACC Annual Meeting, please join us Wednesday noon, the 27th, for the NACB awards luncheon and celebration party. As we expand our mission as the AACC Academy, we will need to identify current fellows (and recruit new ones) who can serve on scientific advisory groups, offer advice on position papers/statements, represent the Academy on appropriate AACC committees, represent AACC on committees of other professional societies, and help with other strategic initiatives. To this end, I have asked our Membership Committee to join me in creating a searchable database of fellows with expertise/interest in specific subject areas. Stay tuned for details as this project unfolds.

Have you blogged recently? Don't know how? Then visit our website and join the conversation. Since the January launch of the NACBLOG, we have had over 53,000 hits with "Jurassic Lab" still holding the record - over 3800 hits! If you are unfamiliar with our blog, it is a weekly online discussion of scientific issues and challenges to contemporary clinical lab practice. We are always looking for new topics and authors, so 'come blog with us'.

One of the highlights of our annual meeting is awarding colleagues for outstanding contributions in research, to our profession, and to the Academy. This year I was delighted to inform Susan Evans and Maria Pasic that they would receive the Dubin and Grannis awards at the noon luncheon on July 27th. Peter Nowell will receive the joint AACC/NACB research award, and all three awardees will be recognized at the AACC Plenary Session on Monday the 25th.

This year we will continue to spotlight good science and noteworthy research presented at the annual meeting. Our NACB Distinguished Abstract Awards will be announced during the AACC Plenary Session on Tuesday the 26th. I would encourage you to visit the poster sessions, look for the blue ribbons, and congratulate the recipients. Some of these Distinguished Abstracts will also be presented on Tuesday afternoon from 2:30-5:00 PM in an oral session titled "What's

Novel in Biomarkers?" Since this event is not listed in your registration materials, be sure to add it to your meeting calendar.

Your Academy leadership continues to look into new areas of activities and to reassess long-standing practices. A few weeks ago the Board met near the Chicago O'Hare airport for its spring meeting. AACC President Ann Gronowski also joined the meeting by teleconference and shared several AACC strategic initiatives designed to increase the visibility of our profession. The NACB Board offered its enthusiastic support of these novel initiatives, and reaffirmed its commitment to collaborate with other professional clinical associations in developing patient-care guidelines.

Laboratory Medicine Practice Guidelines (LMPGs) remain a focus of Academy effort and attention. Ten have been published in the last five years and are available online for free. Eight are archived, and several have been translated into other languages. An update to the "Diabetes Mellitus" guideline is now complete and will be published on our website this summer, with co-publication in CCJ and Diabetes Care. It has become clear that we will need to update our procedures for guideline development, and this effort will be spearheaded by the joint AACC/NACB Evidence Based Laboratory Medicine Committee.

The Board plans to update at least two guidelines ("Thyroid Disease" and "Biomarkers of ACS"), and will explore development of a "Glycemic Control" LMPG as an appropriate next step to this year's Beckman Conference. The latter, by the way, was held last month in San Diego, and program evaluations indicate that this conference was one of the best ever! Planning and leadership were provided by several NACB fellows, so a big thanks to Steve Kahn and others on the organizing team.

The problem of finding champions to author rigorous and time-consuming evidence-based LMPGs remains a concern. Recently, the Board reflected on the development of white papers and consensus statements requiring less effort to produce. An exciting new NACB product emerged from our discussion "Expert Opinion in Laboratory Practice." We will soon select topics and identify Academy fellows to help author these expert opinions. Again, stay tuned for details.

Have you ever used the Nominal Group Technique for brainstorming ideas? Try it sometime. To get you started, here is a helpful website: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief7.pdf>. This technique seemed to work at the recent Board meeting, and we were able to identify and prioritize over 50 topics for future LMPGs, white papers, Beckman conferences, and annual meeting symposia.

Did you know that NACB has not increased dues since 1990? Overseeing the Academy budget is one of the jobs of the Board, and, alas, the time has come for a modest increase in dues, from \$60 to \$80 beginning in 2012. Once every 22 years is not so bad I think.

This spring newsletter is one of three to be published in 2011. Uttam Garg is our new editor assisted by Doug Stickle. Our thanks go to Alex Rai for his many years of faithful service in this role. Alex, however, is not out of a job, and he has agreed to serve on the refocused Media and Publications Committee. So many others - the chairs & members of our vital committees, the officers & members of the Board, and the NACB staff - are all making amazingly significant contributions to our Academy. Thank you for your loyal service. Particular thanks also to NACB Executive Director Penny Jones, who is one of the most gifted and wonderful individuals I have known - it is a privilege to work with her.

See you in Atlanta!

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## **NACB Announces 2011 Award Winners**

The NACB Awards Committee announces the 2011 NACB awards to the following recipients:



**AACC/NACB Award for Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Chemistry in a Selected Area of Research**

Peter C. Nowell, MD  
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA



**Alvin Dubin Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Profession and the Academy**

Susan A. Evans, PhD, FACB  
Beckman Coulter, Brea, CA



**George Grannis Award for Excellence in Research and Scientific Publication by a Young Investigator**

Maria Diamandis Pasic, PhD  
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, CN

The NACB Awards Committee includes David Koch, PhD, Chair, Barbara Goldsmith, PhD, Dan Hoefner, PhD, and Salvador Sena, PhD.

Details of the award categories may be found on the NACB website:  
see <http://www.aacc.org/members/nacb/awards/pages/default.aspx>

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## **Commentary on NACB's First "Standards of Laboratory Practice"**



It has been 17 years since NACB published its first "Standards of Laboratory Practice." Dr. Lawrence A. Kaplan, pictured above, editor of "Laboratory Support in Assessing and Monitoring Nutritional Status" (1994), kindly agreed to provide us with commentary on the document's inception, process and impact:

I became President-elect of the NACB in 1994. Having been watching my fellow clinical chemists for some 15 years, I understood that their full capabilities were being grossly underused. I wanted to develop a device that would showcase their knowledge and their scientific and practical know-how.

I needed to try out the idea beforehand and I looked for help from Larry Bernstein, who is one of the best chemists on laboratory aspects of nutritional issues that I know of. He was chairing an industry-sponsored meeting on nutrition-laboratory issues in South Carolina that I was able to participate in. I found that the meeting was well-focused with lots of back-and-forth discussion among the industry-invited participants, which included laboratorians, nutritionists, and physicians. The discussion was free-wheeling and truly, no question was so obtuse that it wasn't fully answered. Dogma was both preserved and vigorously attacked. Given the high value of the final discussion, I asked if Dr Bernstein and I could turn it into an NACB standards document. No one objected and I drafted a document which went through a number of rounds of editorial revision. With Larry Bernstein's encouragement I was able to publish this document in 1994 as the first NACB Standards of Laboratory Practice (SOLP), "Laboratory Support in Assessing and Monitoring Nutritional Status." It took about six months from the end of the meeting to publication and the basic approach of an open meeting with a publication of recommendations seemed feasible.

The "Nutrition" SOLP was controversial because this was the first time that a clinical chemistry society established a set of recommendations on a specific clinical topic. Probably the most stand-out recommendations were the firm assertions that nutrition is a major problem in American society and that serum albumin must be replaced by prealbumin (or retinol) as a marker for protein-calorie malnutrition. The NACB's LMPGs have become international standards, and nutrition issues in specific populations are still a major problem, around the world and in this country, and should be recognized by the people who direct laboratories. Therefore, I would love to see the "Nutrition" topic re-visited as an LMPG.

I then asked the NACB board to have the 1995 NACB symposium follow this different, open format. With the help of a great meeting committee, led by Larry Demers and Carol Spencer, I was able to create a meeting format in which the experts would not lecture, but pose issues and let the meeting participants debate the points. Superb speakers were chosen by this committee and many have participated in later LMPGs on the topic of thyroid function testing. With the help of the speakers and committee members I was able to create the first SOLP derived from an NACB meeting, published about a year after the July meeting.

It is said (Lao-tzu, Chinese philosopher, 604-531 BCE) that "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." While the "Nutrition" SOLP was a very small step, it provided a foundation for concepts that could be brought into a full NACB meeting: a focused topic, a group of experts, almost unlimited discussion by all meeting participants, a set of standards with literature justification, many rounds of editorial review, and a listing in the final standard of both meeting participants and commentators. This process was successfully applied to the 1995 meeting on thyroid disease to produce

"Standards of Laboratory Practice: Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Monitoring of Thyroid Disease," which was extraordinarily successful; 50,000 copies of the published SOLP monograph were distributed.

We now needed to establish the SOLP as the routine NACB intellectual concept. Under the presidency of Myron Warshaw we had an SOLP on "Evaluation and Management of Newborns" -- and the NACB had now established itself as a standards organization.

The SOLPs and then the LMPGs have remained as NACB intellectual jewels, demonstrating the best of clinical chemists. If you have attended an LMPG meeting I am sure you have seen that the active participation of the audience is expected, nay, requested by the expert panel. I have been to many meetings where the discussion was very passionate indeed. Diverse views are taken into consideration by monograph editors and are often printed along with consensus recommendations.

So, 17 years later I am pleased to see that the basic concepts drawn from the "Nutrition" SOLP are still in use and serve today's LMPG processes. For a good parallel to the early hard going, I can recommend to you James A. Michener's short story, "Milk Run," from his "Tales of the South Pacific" (1946). Much of this background can be found at the AACC's Website: <http://www.aacc.org/members/nacb/Archive/Pages/History%20of%20the%20NACB%204.aspx>; History of the NACB The National Academy of Clinical Biochemistry: A Historical Perspective, by Myron Warshaw, Ph.D., FACB, in commemoration of the Academy's 25th anniversary in 2001, updated and edited by Charles D. Hawker, Ph.D., FACB.

## **New Laboratory Medicine Practice Guideline on Diabetes**



**David B. Sacks, MD, MB, CHB**

NACB's latest Laboratory Medicine Practice Guideline (LMPG) will be published on May 27, 2011: Sacks, DB et al, "Guidelines and Recommendations for Laboratory Analysis in the Diagnosis and Management of Diabetes Mellitus." The guidelines will also be published in the primary literature (Clinical Chemistry and Diabetes Care).

From the document's Executive Summary, key recommendations are made in the following areas: glucose, glucose meters, continuous minimally-invasive glucose analyses, noninvasive glucose analysis, Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM), urinary glucose, ketone testing, hemoglobin A1c, genetic markers, autoimmune markers, low levels of albuminuria (formerly microalbuminuria), and miscellaneous potentially important analytes (insulin, C-peptide, proinsulin, insulin antibody).

The full document will be posted on the NACB website in the near future: <http://www.aacc.org/members/nacb/lmpg/pages/default.aspx>

The NACB thanks LMPG authors David B. Sacks, Mark Arnold, George L. Bakris, David E. Bruns, Andrea R. Horvath, M. Sue Kirkman, Ake Lernmark, Boyd E. Metzger, and David M. Nathan.

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## NACBLOG Reminder



NACBLOG—the official blog of the NACB—publishes new posts every Tuesday morning. We invite you to read the posts and weigh in with your thoughts in the comments section: <http://www.aacc.org/members/nacb/NACBBlog/default.aspx>

The NACBLOG is sponsored by the National Academy of Clinical Biochemistry (NACB) to engage clinical laboratory professionals in discussion of contemporary laboratory issues and practice and, where possible, to present solutions and best practices. Topics for blog entries are identified by the NACBLOG Editorial Board and content is authored by NACB Fellows or other content experts. Editorial Board members are: Patti Jones, Mary Lou Gantzer, Bill Winter, and Alison Woodworth.

Since its launch in January 2011, the NACBLOG has received 52,951 hits. The most popular blog post so far was Jim Faix's Jurassic Lab with 3,816 hits and 38 comments.

### Helpful Blog Information:

- Miss a post? View it with by looking in the archives or by blog category—both of which appear on the right side of the blog web page.
- Do you have a suggestion for a NACBLOG post or a chemistry-related blog that should be added to the NACBLOG roll? Send them to Penelope Jones: [education@aacc.org](mailto:education@aacc.org).

Do you want to learn a little more about the NACBLOG icons and functionality? Check out About the Blog—a section designed to answer frequently asked questions: <http://www.aacc.org/resourcecenters/AACCBlogs/Pages/AboutNACBBlog.aspx>

The following is a list of blog posts and authors that have appeared since the blog's debut in January:

[Is it Time to Apply Biological Variation in Thyroid Screening?](#)

Martin Kroll, MD, FACB

[Will a 15% Total Error Tolerance Be Safe and Effective for Hospital Use Glucose Meters?](#)

By Brad Karon, MD, PhD

[Where Did the A1c Go?](#)

By William Winter, MD

## Clinical Mass Spectrometry: A Technology That Every Clinical Laboratory Could Utilize

By Michael Bennett, PhD

## Crisis Values: A Changing Landscape

By Fritz F. Parl, MD, PhD

## Why Can't We Get Our Test Results Harmonized?

By W. Greg Miller, PhD, and Gary L. Myers, PhD

## What is Live Blood Analysis?

By William Winter, MD, DABCC, FACB

## Procalcitonin: The Answer to the Sepsis Dilemma?

By Alison Woodworth, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## Does POCT Creatinine Meet Performance Expectations?

By James H. Nichols, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## Neonatal Bilirubin: Nomograms, Fractions, and Transcutaneous Measurements

By Stanley F. Lo, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## K2: Second Highest Mountain in the World or Another Type of High?

By Donald L. Frederick, PhD, DABFT, FACB

## Jurassic Lab: We Need a Place for Tests Whose Time Has Come (and Gone)

By Jim Faix, MD

## Is Code 128 an Acceptable Bar Code Standard for Patient Identification in Today's Health Care System?

By Corinne Fantz, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## What Is Pseudohyponatremia?

By Roger Bertholf, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## Is Use of Inpatient Glycemic Control Protocols Working At Your Institution?

By Stephen Kahn, PhD, DABCC, FACB

## Is A1c Inferior to Plasma Glucose for Detecting Diabetes Risk?

By William E. Winter, MD, FACB

## Estimating GFR: What's Wrong With Using Serum Creatinine Alone?

By Callum Fraser, PhD

## Explosive Growth of Send Out Testing: Can We Curb the Monster?

By Patti Jones, PhD, FACB, and Jason Park, MD

## High Sensitivity Cardiac Troponin Assays: Benefits and Challenges

By Allan S. Jaffe, MD, FACB

## Has the Time Come to Bid Adieu to Tests of Fetal Lung Maturity?

By David G. Grenache, PhD, FACB



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## **NACB Activities at 2011 AACC Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA**



Please join us for these NACB events during the 2011 AACC Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA

Tuesday—Thursday, July 26 to 28

NACB Distinguished Abstracts  
Georgia World Congress Center

Wednesday, July 27

12:30pm to 2:15pm

NACB Awards Luncheon and Membership Meeting

Hyatt Regency Atlanta International Ballroom, North

Register in advance for the luncheon in the special events section of the main AACC meeting registration form: <http://www.aacc.org/events/2011am/reg/pages/default.aspx>