

◆ Highlights of the 48th Annual Meeting

Southern Hospitality, Global Visions

Joy Moore
2004-2005 Program Chair

The 351 people who attended the 48th annual meeting of the Council of Science Editors in Atlanta this May were treated to both a warm southern welcome and the sense of being connected to an important global information network. This year's meeting theme was Communicating Science: Serving the Global Community, and the meeting focused on the role of science editing in education, policy, and clinical practice worldwide. In light of scientific publishing's recent obsession with philosophies and business models surrounding access to content, we decided to spend a few days focusing on not only the traditional elements of scientific editing, but also how what we edit and publish translates beyond our academic circles.

The conference started with an introduction to scientific editing for the airwaves. In her keynote address, Alison Richards, deputy supervising senior editor of the National Public Radio (NPR) science desk, explained how her team builds stories from research published in many of the journals that are run by CSE members, what their selection process hinges on, and why, if you want to make the news, you should aim to publish as many stories about dinosaurs, dogs, and cats as possible. Weird and wonderful, groundbreaking and insightful, NPR's science programming supports

science in America by raising awareness and exposing the public to the who, what, and why of research.

On Monday, the plenary talk was delivered by Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, who taught us about the UN's Millennium Project and its development goals for the next 10 years. His talk elegantly mapped the connections between scientific research, health policy, global outreach, and economics. The takeaway message was that diseases can be eradicated, agriculture can be invigorated, and the global community, not just remote villages, will benefit. Following on that theme, CSE launched its own Task Force on Science Journals, Poverty, and Human Development with an initial brainstorming session led by Richard Horton, Paul Bozuwa, and Sachs. CSE members were invited to contribute their ideas and encouraged to participate in the task force in any ways they can.

Tanja Popovic, acting associate director for science at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), was the second plenary speaker. Her lively and wide-ranging remarks provided an overview of CDC and its future directions and touched on how science editors can help to advance public health. Popovic noted that the newly approved structure of CDC includes a Coordinating Center for Health Information and Services. She also men-



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN WACHTER/CPS MEDIA

CSE opening reception

tioned a new emphasis on gearing health information for the public to the life stages of recipients, and she identified a strong interest in global communication. In addition, she emphasized the need to make clear the "So what?" in scientific papers.

The concurrent sessions made for difficult choices for many of us. The program committee did a fantastic job of creating sessions that focused on engaging topics, provided unparalleled practical insights and tips, and were delivered by excellent speakers.

The high caliber of our internationally known keynote and plenary speakers was wonderfully matched by the enormous contributions of local Atlantans. Among our concurrent-session panelists were representatives of Emory University, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*,

and the Carter Center. Our local-arrangements chair was Esmeralda Galan, of the American Cancer Society, who coordinated tours and provided valuable recommendations for what to see, do, and eat in and around Atlanta. It was wonderful to see the conference be so well embraced by people from the host city, and we're grateful for the support.

The buzz between sessions in the corridors and on the escalators at the Hyatt Regency was unbelievably positive. CSE has worked hard to establish itself as *the* conference for science editors, and thanks to the support of all who worked hard on this year's meeting, we continue to get better at what we do. We thought locally and globally, and we continue to make a contribution to the scientific community.