

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine Elects Four Highly Accomplished Medical Genetics Professionals to its Board of Directors

BETHESDA, MD – April 11, 2024 | The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine (ACMGF) announced today that Marilyn C. Jones, MD, FACMG; Harry Ostrer, MD, FACMG; Lisa G. Shaffer, PhD, FACMG and Katie Johansen Taber, PhD were elected to the Board of Directors of the ACMGF. The ACMG Foundation is a national nonprofit foundation dedicated to facilitating the integration of genetics and genomics into medical practice. The board members are active participants, serving as advocates for the ACMG Foundation and for advancing its policies and programs.

ACMG Foundation President Nancy J. Mendelsohn, MD, FACMG said, “We are pleased to welcome these four new members to the ACMG Foundation Board of Directors. Individually and combined they bring a new perspective along with their individual deep expertise. We are grateful for their enthusiasm and willingness to serve our genetics and genomics community.”

Marilyn C. Jones, MD, FACMG

A Past President of the ACMG (2007-2009), Dr. Marilyn C. Jones is the Clinical Services Chief of the Genetics and Dysmorphology Division at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego and a Distinguished Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine. She has served as the Medical Director of the Helen Bernardy Center for Medically Fragile Children for more than 40 years. With expertise in providing detailed patient phenotyping to aid gene discovery, Dr. Jones’s career has focused on identifying underlying causation among patients with cleft and craniofacial disorders. In 2020 she received the David Bixler Distinguished Scientist in Craniofacial Research Award from the Society for Craniofacial Genetics and Developmental Biology, as well as the David W. Smith Award for Excellence in Genetics and Birth Defects Education from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

“I am honored for the opportunity to serve the ACMG again through participation in the Foundation Board of Directors. The Foundation provides many of the resources that help the College move forward its agenda to help both the public and its members,” said Dr. Jones.

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Harry Ostrer, MD, FACMG

Dr. Harry Ostrer is Professor of Pathology and Pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. From 1990-2011, he was the Director of the Human Genetics Program at New York University Langone Medical Center. His academic focus is in studying the genetic basis for common and rare disorders and developing new functional genomic technologies. Dr. Ostrer is also a long-time investigator of the genetics of the Jewish people and Hispanic and Latino people. In 2007, he organized the Jewish HapMap Project, an international effort to understand origins, migration and disease predispositions by mapping and sequencing the genomes of Jewish people. At his start-up company, Morgan and Mendel Genomics, Dr. Ostrer advises about translating the findings of novel functional genomic discoveries into tests that can be used to identify people's risks for having cancer or for predicting cancer's response to therapy.

"My professional career has been entwined with creating opportunities for others in medical genetics by training them, sometimes through training programs that I created. But part of passing the mantle of achieving 'better health through genetics' for everyone is to support even larger and scalable opportunities," said Dr. Ostrer. "I am delighted to have the means to do so by joining old and new friends on the Board of Directors of the American College of Medical Genetics Foundation, whose philanthropic mission is to fund new programs and research."

Lisa G. Shaffer, PhD, FACMG

Dr. Lisa G. Shaffer is founder and the former CEO of Genetic Veterinary Sciences, Inc. (DBA Paw Print Genetics), a canine, feline and avian genetic testing company serving breeders, veterinarians and owners. The company was acquired in 2021. Prior to that enterprise, she was co-founder, President and CEO of Signature Genomic Laboratories, the first diagnostic laboratory to offer clinical microarray testing for children with developmental disabilities. The recipient of numerous accolades for her entrepreneurship and business savvy, Dr. Shaffer was previously a tenured Professor of Molecular and Human Genetics at Baylor College of Medicine (1991-2002) and in the School of Molecular Biosciences at Washington State University (2002-2008). Dr. Shaffer has authored more than 340 peer-reviewed medical papers and four books.

"I am very excited to be rejoining the ACMG Foundation Board of Directors and look forward to supporting the mission of the ACMG and helping to raise awareness of medical genetics and promote its achievements. Medical genetics touches every aspect of human health, and this is an exciting time to be a part of the Foundation," said Dr. Shaffer.

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Katie Johansen Taber, PhD

As the Vice President of Clinical Product Research & Partnerships at Myriad Genetics, Dr. Katie Johansen Taber's focus is on developing evidence and advancing initiatives to improve access to genetic testing in the areas of women's health, oncology and mental health. She leads a team responsible for clinical evidence strategy, real-world evidence development, clinical trial conduct and scientific publications. Prior to her current position, Dr. Johansen Taber was Senior Director of Clinical Development at the company's Women's Health business unit. Before joining Myriad Genetics, she served at the American Medical Association (2006-2017), where her work centered on educating healthcare professionals about the clinical implementation of genomics and precision medicine, and on identifying and managing precision medicine policy issues. Dr. Johansen Taber has held numerous positions on advisory committees and boards, including a current appointment on the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Roundtable on Genomics and Precision Health.

"I'm thrilled to be elected to the ACMG Foundation Board of Directors and I look forward to working together to improve access to genetic testing," said Dr. Johansen Taber. "The Foundation's focus on evidence-based guidelines development, education and advocacy are important initiatives in realizing the ability to provide genetics-informed care to all patients who need it."

ACMGF Also Announces New Board Position and Thanks Outgoing Board Members

In addition, Brynn Levy, MSc. (Med), PhD, FACMG, who joined the ACMG Foundation Board of Directors in 2019, was named to the newly created officer position of President-Elect.

The ACMG Foundation also thanked the following board members who recently completed their terms of service: Nasha Fitter, MBA; Evan Jones, MBA and, in particular, David A.H. Whiteman, MD, FAAP, FACMG, who joined the Foundation Board of Directors in 2014 and served admirably as its Vice President since 2017.

A complete roster of the ACMG Foundation Board can be found at www.acmgfoundation.org.

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ACMG Foundation for
Genetic and Genomic Medicine
Better Health Through Genetics™

About the ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine

The ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is a community of supporters and contributors who understand the importance of medical genetics and genomics in healthcare. Established in 1992, the ACMG Foundation supports the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) mission to “translate genes into health.” Through its work, the ACMG Foundation fosters charitable giving, promotes training opportunities to attract future medical geneticists and genetic counselors to the field, shares information about medical genetics and genomics, and sponsors important research. To learn more and support the ACMG Foundation mission to create “Better Health through Genetics” visit acmgfoundation.org.

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Genetics and Genomics are not just in our name, they are part of our mission.