



## ***Annual Update 2021***

### ***Submitted by AHTF Chairman, James W. King, OTR, PhD, CHT***

As we continue to deal with the difficulties related to the world-wide COVID pandemic, my hope at this moment in time is that this message finds you and your family, friends, and colleagues to be safe and in good health. There is not a single one of us who has not experienced hardship of varying degrees, sadness due to illness, and even death of someone close to us. For everyone who has experienced loss, and for all, the American Hand Therapy Foundation (AHTF) wishes you patience, tolerance, and understanding as we continue to promote our profession and move ahead to enhance hand and upper extremity rehabilitation during these challenging times.

Despite these challenges, this year we have experienced amazing support from so many people who have generously donated their time, talents, and money to help AHTF achieve its goals and promote its mission, to improve patient outcomes by promoting evidence-based practice through funding clinical and scientific research and education. The year started with AHTF supporting the American Society of Hand Therapists' 2020 virtual annual meeting with a \$10,000 grant, in recognition of ASHT's on-going and unwavering support of the Foundation. AHTF and ASHT continue to work closely together to support each other and both organizations' goals.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed by volunteering and / or made a financial donation to the Foundation this year. We are only able to continue this great work with your contributions.

I am happy to announce that this year, AHTF engaged the professional services of Association Headquarters, Inc. (AH) (<https://associationheadquarters.com/>), a New Jersey-based association / foundation management group, as its first comprehensive management firm. We welcomed our new Executive Director, Anna Shnyder, who is already making an impact - helping the Foundation take rapid steps to expand and enhance our fundraising activities and administer our many grants and educational events.

I invite you to meet our Board of Directors (<https://www.ahtf.org/about/board>), who continues its selfless volunteer work – driving the Foundation's vision that all evaluation and treatment methods in hand and upper extremity therapy to be based on well documented evidence. Our Vice-Chairman, Gary Solomon is a tireless fundraiser and oversees AHTF governance. New board member and Secretary, Linda Klein, has enhanced the Foundation's organization and communication, while new Treasurer, Gretchen Bachman has overseen the Foundation's transition to the financial services at AH. Our two key oversight directors: Dorit

Aaron – Development, and April Cowan – Grants have, managed the Foundation’s complex fund raising and grant administration functions with expertise. All of our Board members contribute; Barbara Winthrop is chair of our largest fundraiser, Happy Hour with a Scholar (see you in St. Louis or virtually on October 9<sup>th</sup>!); Mike Epstein, an eminent hand surgeon, provides his wisdom and access to the physician community. Caroline Jansen is heading up AHTF’s practice survey to establish research priorities (hope you participated!). Marsha Lawrence is a well-connected member of the PT community, whose greatest accomplishment this year was the cataloging of AHTF’s impact - see for yourself the amazing impact that the Foundation has had on the way YOU practice (<https://www.ahtf.org/resources/#publications>). We want to welcome three new Board members, Alex Mackenzie, Marisol Monasterio, and Lisa Juckett, all of whom are already contributing to our success. The AHTF Advisory Board Chairman is our past chairman, Greg Pitts. Thank you to all for your contributions!

Many great people have contributed to AHTF’s success, but few greater than Elaine Fess, who retired from the Board this year after over 30 years of involvement and support of AHTF’s mission. We thank Elaine for the impact she has made on the Foundation and our profession. Elaine remains active on special projects for the Foundation, with our gratitude.

A few other highlights from this year (so far):

- We recently announced the first recipients of the joint AHTF – American Foundation for Surgery of the Hand grant. Visit our website for more information (<https://www.ahtf.org/grants/past-awardees/>).
- We recorded our very first podcast. If you haven’t listened to it yet, we invite you to do so now by clicking here: <https://www.ahtf.org/ahtf-funding-foundation-goals/>. This podcast was made possible through a generous collaboration with ASHT and their Hands in Motion Podcast series (<https://www.asht.org/podcasts>).
- We launched a new promotional video, all about the AHTF; and we invite you to listen by clicking here: [https://youtu.be/F2fjBqT\\_wA](https://youtu.be/F2fjBqT_wA).
- We successfully participated in the 2020 ASHT virtual Annual Meeting – including our scholar event which was virtual and presented without cost to over 1500 people!
- We launched the practice survey to develop our research agenda.
- We had a very successful virtual run fundraiser (<https://www.ahtf.org/2021-virtual-run-walk-for-hand-therapy-research/>), which continues to grow with the involvement of so many people and organizations around the country.
- We look forward to seeing you in person or virtually at our upcoming events, Happy Hour with a Scholar (<https://www.ahtf.org/ahtf-2021-happy-hour-with-a-scholar>) and the holiday Silent Auction extravaganza.
- We established the Chairman’s Fund, which will be a special fundraising effort headed by AHTF’s chair – the initial \$10,000 recipient of the fund is the Scientific Session at this year’s ASHT annual meeting.

As you can see, the Foundation continues to grow and serve the profession. We can only do this important work with your help. Please donate (<https://www.ahtf.org/donations/donate/>) to the American Hand Therapy Foundation today! Your contributions make a difference, and we promise to be good stewards of your contributions.

AHTF remains the only professional organization with the sole mission of supporting researchers to expand the scientific evidence for hand therapy, in order to enhance the quality of hand and upper extremity rehabilitation and optimize patient outcomes.

In its over 30-year history, AHTF has provided thousands of dollars in funding for over 100 projects. These projects have impacted our profession and many of your colleagues have been recipients of an AHTF grant or scholarship. The foundation is grateful to all who participate by donating to fund AHTF grants and volunteer their time to support the Foundation's mission and our collective professional future.