

# Assembly on Pulmonary Infections and Tuberculosis (PI-TB) Newsletter



## Message from the Assembly Chair



Assembly Chair:  
**Kenneth N. Olivier, MD, MPH, ATSF**  
[kenneth\_olivier@med.unc.edu]

### Assembly Officers

**Kelly M. Pennington, MD**  
Program Chair  
[pamela.mcshane@uthct.edu]

**Kristina Crothers, MD**  
Planning Chair  
[kcrothers@medicine.washington.edu]

**Charles Dela Cruz, MD, PhD, ATSF**  
Nominating Chair  
[delacruz@pitt.edu]

**Eva Otoupalova, MD**  
Web Director  
[eotoupalova@tulane.edu]

**Assembly Contact**  
Website: [Assembly on PI-TB](#)  
Email: [pitb@thoracic.org](mailto:pitb@thoracic.org)

Welcome to the website of the Assembly for Pulmonary Infections and Tuberculosis (PI-TB). The PI-TB Assembly represents clinicians, scientists, and public health practitioners from across the globe. Our assembly focuses on all aspects of pulmonary infections and host defense. At present, we have 943 primary members and 1971 secondary members.

We are one of the most productive and visible Assemblies within ATS. Our statements and guidelines are highly cited and have helped to establish and improve practice in the diagnosis and treatment of a wide variety of pulmonary infections, including community-acquired pneumonia, hospital-acquired/ventilator-associated pneumonia, and pneumonia in the immunocompromised host; tuberculosis and nontuberculous mycobacterial infections; fungal infections; and bronchiectasis. Our symposia and mini-symposia at the ATS Annual Meeting continue to provide some of the best opportunities for clinicians and scientists to be kept abreast of recent advances in the diagnosis, treatment, and control of respiratory infections. Thematic poster sessions allow interaction with some of the cutting edge research in these areas.

Don't miss this year's Assembly Membership Meeting reimagined with a more dynamic and interactive format. We've expanded the reception to create additional time for meaningful collaboration with your peers, along with a few engaging networking activities designed to spark new connections.

Assemblies continue to serve as a vital gateway for trainees, early-career faculty, and new members to become actively involved in the Society's work and community.

Assembly Chair  
Kenneth N. Olivier, MD, MPH, ATSF

**Assembly on Pulmonary Infections and Tuberculosis (PI-TB) Membership Meeting**

**Sunday, May 17, 2026  
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

**Orange County Convention Center, West Concourse  
W307, Level III**

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Message from the Assembly Chair .....1
- Planning Committee Report.....2-3
- Program Committee Report .....4-6
- Web Committee Report.....8
- Early Career Professionals .....8-9
- PhD and Basic and Translational Scientist Working Group Report .....8-9
- Science and Innovation Center Working Group.....9
- Pneumonia Working Group .....9
- Vaccine and Immunization Advisory Group.....9-10

## PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Kristina Crothers, MD (Chair) & Maha R Farhat, MD MSc (Co-chair)

The PI-TB Assembly Planning Committee fosters the development of Assembly projects, notably clinical practice guidelines, clinical statements, workshop reports and other reference documents, arising from the deep clinical and scientific expertise residing in the Assembly. The Planning Committee encourages and solicits proposals for such documents from the ATS membership, and reviews and evaluates submitted proposals and progress reports for projects already underway.

The PI-TB was again successful in achieving ATS support for project proposals for fiscal year 2026. ATS funded 37 of the 69 New/Renewal projects submitted for FY2026 and these include one new and three renewals PI-TB projects. The newly funded PI-TB project approved by ATS is entitled, "Treatment of Nontuberculous Mycobacterial Pulmonary Disease" and is led by Dr. Charles Daley. The committee considered four additional new project proposals and although not funded this year, the project leaders were provided with detailed feedback and were encouraged to refine the applications and reapply. The two workshop projects "Advances in HIV-Associated Pulmonary Disease" co-chaired by Drs. Bashar Staitieh, Crystal North and Ioannis Konstantinidis and "Operationally Defining Diagnostics and Therapeutic Outcomes for Early-stage Tuberculosis" co-chaired by Drs. Shivani Singh and Patricio Escalante were renewed. Additionally, the joint ATS/IDSA/CTS/ALAT clinical practice guideline project titled "Clinical Practice Guidelines Update -Diagnosis and Management of Hospital Acquired and Ventilator Associated Pneumonia" co-chaired by Drs. Marcos I. Restrepo and Barabara Jones was also renewed.

Publications resulting from PI-TB projects in 2025 include the following:

- Saukkonen et al., "Updates on the treatment of drug-susceptible and drug-resistant tuberculosis: An official ATS/CDC/ERS/IDSA clinical practice guideline. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2025 Jan; 211:15. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med*. 2025 Jan;211(1):15-33. doi: 10.1164/rccm.202410-2096ST.
- Epelbaum et al, "Treatment of Invasive Pulmonary Aspergillosis and Preventive and Empirical Therapy for Invasive Candidiasis in Adult Pulmonary and Critical Care Patients. An Official American Thoracic Society Clinical Practice Guideline." *Am J Respir Crit Care Med*. 2025 Jan;211(1):34-53. doi: 10.1164/rccm.202410-2045ST.
- Jones et al, "Diagnosis and Management of Community-acquired Pneumonia. An Official American Thoracic Society Clinical Practice Guideline." *Am J Respir Crit Care Med*. 2025 Jul 18. doi: 10.1164/rccm.202507-1692ST.
- Bain et al., "Research Priorities for Noninvasive Sampling of the Lower Respiratory Tract during Acute Respiratory Failure: An Official American Thoracic Society Workshop Report. *Ann Am Thorac Soc*. 2025 Aug;22(8):1101-1114. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.202505-543ST.
- Samarasinghe et al, "Best Practices in the Development and Use of Experimental Models of Bacterial Pneumonia: An Official American Thoracic Society Workshop Report." *Am J Respir Cell Mol Biol*. 2025 Aug;73(2):178-199. doi: 10.1165/rcmb.2025-0322ST.

The Planning Committee strongly encourages Assembly members to start early to discuss and work together to submit proposals for Clinical Practice Guidelines, Clinical Statements, Policy Statements, Research Statements, Workshop Reports, and Technical Statements. New Clinical Practice Guideline projects should be specific and try to address limited PICO questions in the GRADE methodology in order to complete the process in a timely manner. To improve chances of preparing an application that is successful in the very competitive ATS selection process, advance preparation and discussion with interested parties is highly recommended. This may include soliciting input and/or participation from the Planning Committee, ATS methodologists and topic experts in the Assembly or elsewhere, as appropriate.

Information on submitting proposals is available on the [Project Application Resource Center](#). The application portal usually opens in July and the online applications usually must be submitted within the month. Please check the online portal for updated dates for the 2026 fiscal year application process. The Planning Committee recommends working on all projects well in advance to prepare a competitive application.

In addition to supporting project proposals, the Planning Committee also reviews and votes on nominations for the annual Assembly Awards. The PI-TB Peer Recognition awards celebrate the accomplishments and contributions to PI-TB and to ATS of individuals who are primary members of PI-TB. The awards will be presented at the PI-TB Assembly Membership Meeting to the following individuals:

- Ashley Losier, MD, Early Career Peer Recognition Award
- Sara Auld, MD, MS, ATSF, Mid-Career Peer Recognition Award
- Charles Dela Cruz, MD, PhD, ATSF, Senior-Level Peer Recognition Award

PI-TB participates in the ATS Rising Star Awards for Basic Scientific and/or Translational Research. This award recognizes early junior faculty with a trajectory of achievements in a scientific area of the PITB Assembly who demonstrates exemplary promise for a future of achievement. The awardees of the Rising Star Achievement Award will present their work at the Science and Innovation Center during the ATS International Conference. This year, the PI-TB Rising Star Awardees are:

- Hina Agraval, MSc, PhD
- Rishi Chanderraj, MD, MS

The reception for PhDs & Other Basic Science Researchers will take place on Sunday, May 17 from 2:00 – 3:00 PM. PI-TB will honor Dr. Agraval and Dr. Chanderraj along with our other three awardees at our Assembly Membership Meeting on Sunday, May 17th from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM. We hope to see you all there!

Thank you to the members of the Planning Committee and to those who submitted project proposals and award nominations. Your commitment, dedication and efforts are greatly appreciated.

#### **Assembly/Committee Project Applications for FY2027**

**Assembly members interested in submitting a Project application should start developing their ideas. Applications for NEW Assembly Projects for 2027 will be accepted July 1 through July 31, 2027.**

**If you have an idea or suggestion for a project application and need assistance, please contact your Assembly Planning Committee Chair, Kristina Crothers, MD at [kcrothers@medicine.washington.edu](mailto:kcrothers@medicine.washington.edu)**

**For questions regarding submissions, please see the Project Application Resource Center, or contact Miriam Rodriguez at: (212)315-8639 or [mrodriguez@thoracic.org](mailto:mrodriguez@thoracic.org)**

## **PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

**Kelly M. Pennington, MD (Chair) & Patricio Escalante, MD, MSc (Chair-Elect)**

We are looking forward to welcoming PI-TB members in person this May in Orlando, FL for the ATS International Conference. This year's program reflects the full breadth of pulmonary infections and strong engagement across all career stages, from early career investigators through senior faculty.

PI-TB remains one of the largest and most active assemblies within ATS, with consistently high abstract submission volume year over year. This cycle, approximately 540 abstracts were submitted, highlighting the continued productivity and scientific rigor of our membership. The depth and quality of submissions allowed for a diverse and balanced program that spans basic, translational, and clinical science.

The Program Committee devoted significant time and effort to the abstract review process, providing thoughtful scores and constructive feedback to ensure high-quality programming. We are deeply grateful to our committee members for their commitment and service to the assembly.

As a reminder, all PI-TB programming is driven by proposals and abstracts submitted by our members. We encourage you to begin networking, mentoring, and developing ideas now for ATS 2027. Continued engagement directly influences the number and diversity of sessions our assembly is able to offer.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Orlando and thank the PI-TB community for another outstanding year of collaboration and scholarship.

**ATS 2026 International Conference  
Assembly on Pulmonary Infections and Tuberculosis (PITB) Sessions**

Session Code	Session Title	Session Type	Session Date	Session Time
PG8	BRONCHIECTASIS AND NTM PULMONARY DISEASE: ETIOLOGIES, COMPLEX CASE MANAGEMENT, AND UPDATED GUIDELINES	Postgraduate Course	5/15/2026	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
A68	WHEN THE LUNG BECOMES A WAR ZONE: PNEUMONIA, ARDS, AND IMMUNE CHAOS	Thematic Poster Session	5/17/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
A69	THE FRAGILE HOST: PULMONARY INFECTION ACROSS STATES OF IMMUNODEFICIENCY	Thematic Poster Session	5/17/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
A70	THE COMEBACK NOBODY ASKED FOR: TB	Thematic Poster Session	5/17/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
A71	LATE BREAKING SCIENCE IN PULMONARY INFECTIONS AND TUBERCULOSIS	Thematic Poster Session	5/17/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
MTE5	BRONCHIECTASIS: A SILENT STORM BEHIND THE COUGH	Meet the Expert	5/17/2026	10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
A92	FUNGAL INFECTIONS IN PULMONARY AND CRITICAL CARE: UPDATES ON EPIDEMIOLOGY, MYCOLOGY, AND MANAGEMENT	Scientific Symposium	5/17/2026	2:15 PM - 3:45 PM
A108	ACUTE TO LONG COVID: PHENOTYPES, MECHANISMS, AND LONG-TERM CARDIOPULMONARY CONSEQUENCES	RAPiD Poster Discussion Session	5/17/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM
A98	THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE MAGIC: RE-ENGINEERING HOST AND MICROBIAL DETERMINANTS OF NTM DISEASE	Mini Symposium	5/17/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM
B11	QUESTION EVERYTHING: RETHINKING CONVENTIONAL APPROACHES TO CAP	Scientific Symposium	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 10:45 AM
B69	MYCOBACTERIA UNMASKED: HOW TB AND NTM RESHAPE THE LUNG AND INFLUENCE DISEASE OUTCOMES	Thematic Poster Session	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
B70	OPPORTUNISTIC CHEST INFECTIONS IN HIV AND NON-HIV IMMUNODEFICIENCIES: BACK TO THE FUTURE	Thematic Poster Session	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
B71	MIMICS, MASQUERADERS, AND MEDICAL MISDIRECTION	Thematic Poster Session	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
B72	DEEP ROOTS AND DARK SPORES: ENDEMIC AND OPPORTUNISTIC FUNGAL LUNG DISEASE	Thematic Poster Session	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
B73	THE INFECTED CHEST: MODERN CHALLENGES IN BACTERIAL LUNG AND PLEURAL DISEASE	Thematic Poster Session	5/18/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
B90	DECODING BACTERIAL PNEUMONIA: INTEGRATING HUMAN TRIALS, TRANSLATIONAL IMMUNOLOGY, AND NEXT-GEN MODELING TO ADVANCE PRECISION MEDICINE	Scientific Symposium	5/18/2026	2:15 PM - 3:45 PM
B107	PRECISION PHENOTYPING AND EMERGING THERAPIES IN BRONCHIECTASIS AND RELATED INFECTIONS: THE NEW FRONTIER	Poster Discussion Session	5/18/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM
B99	REDEFINING TUBERCULOSIS TARGETS AND CARE: PRECISION DIAGNOSTICS, HOST IMMUNE RESPONSE, AND LONG-TERM LUNG OUTCOMES	Mini Symposium	5/18/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM
C12	MYCOBACTERIA RE-IMAGINED: GAME-CHANGING DISCOVERIES IN TB AND NTM SCIENCE	Scientific Symposium	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 10:45 AM
C27	PULMONARY FUNGAL INFECTIONS: MODERN CHALLENGES FROM MEDICINE'S MOST ENDURING LEGENDS	Poster Discussion Session	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 11:15 AM
C28	LUNG INFECTION ODYSSEY: POPULATION-LEVEL OUTCOMES AND LONG-TERM PULMONARY SEQUELAE	Poster Discussion Session	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 11:15 AM
C67	THE LUNG UNDER ATTACK: NEW WAYS TO DETECT, DEFEND, AND DEFEAT RESPIRATORY VIRUSES	Thematic Poster Session	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
C68	CAUGHT ON ACID-FAST AND FURIOUS: SURPRISING STORIES OF NTM DISEASE	Thematic Poster Session	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
C69	CHALLENGES FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM: PETS, PARASITES, AND PULMONARY PANDEMONIUM	Thematic Poster Session	5/19/2026	9:15 AM - 4:15 PM
C106	FIGHTING THE VILLAINS: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, BIOMARKERS, HOST RESPONSE, AND PRECISION PHENOTYPING IN TUBERCULOSIS AND NTM LUNG DISEASES	Poster Discussion Session	5/19/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM

C96	LUNG-SPECIFIC IMMUNITY IN VIRAL INFECTION: FROM REAL-TIME HOST RESPONSES TO NOVEL ANTIVIRAL STRATEGIES	Mini Symposium	5/19/2026	2:15 PM - 4:15 PM
D17	NAVIGATING THE IMMUNE THEME PARK: TARGETS TO TAME LUNG INJURY IN BACTERIAL PNEUMONIA	Mini Symposium	5/20/2026	8:15 AM - 10:15 AM
D107	ZEBRAS OF THE LUNG: RARE INFECTIONS, IMMUNE EXTREMES, AND DIAGNOSTIC PLOT TWISTS	Poster Discussion Session	5/20/2026	11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
D84	EAT. KILL. SURVIVE. THE MACROPHAGE-NTM STANDOFF	Scientific Symposium	5/20/2026	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

## WEB COMMITTEE

Eva Otoupalova, MD (Chair) and Andrew Thomas Roth, MD, MS (Co-Chair)

Over the past year, the PITB Web Committee has remained highly active in advancing the society's digital presence and outreach. We continue to maintain and grow engagement across multiple platforms, including **X**, **LinkedIn**, **Bluesky**, and the **PITB website**, ensuring timely dissemination of society news, educational content, and opportunities for collaboration. We also continue to publish our **PITB newsletter**, providing regular updates to members and highlighting key initiatives, events, and accomplishments across the community.

This year marked a leadership transition with the appointment of our new co-directors, **Dr. Manuel Villegas** and **Dr. Andrew Roth**, who have brought fresh vision and momentum to the committee's efforts.

In addition, the Web Committee has provided ongoing support for the **PITB PINE webinar series**, which has seen strong and growing participation. Our largest webinar this year was attended by **over 100 participants**, reflecting sustained interest and impact.

Across our digital platforms, we have made a concerted effort to **highlight early-career and mid-career professionals**, amplifying their work, achievements, and leadership within PITB and the broader TB and respiratory research community. Finally, we continue to collaborate closely with U.S. and international respiratory and TB-focused societies, including **CHEST**, **IDSA**, **The Union**, the **British Thoracic Society**, and others, to amplify shared priorities in education, research, and global lung health.

Find all of The Assembly's social media channels in one place just one click away via Linktree: [https://linktr.ee/ats\\_pitb\\_assembly?utm\\_source=qr\\_code](https://linktr.ee/ats_pitb_assembly?utm_source=qr_code)  
Linktree is a simple landing page that holds all our important links so you can easily connect with everything we do. You can also scan the QR code below to access it instantly



Be sure to follow us at **@ATS\_Assemblies** for news on webinars, deadlines, and other things you might have missed in your inbox!

## EARLY CAREER WORKING GROUP

Zhenmei Zhang, MD and Ioannis Konstantinidis, MD, MS (Co-Chairs)

The PI-TB Early Career Working Group connects, supports and creates opportunities for junior members within our assembly. Our early career programming continued throughout the year:

**Teaching Competition:** Since the initial teaching competition launched in 2019 within the PI-TB assembly, the teaching competition has grown to an ATS-wide assembly event. Dr. Reid Eggleston represented the PI-TB assembly at ATS 2025 International Conference and won second place! Please continue to encourage any junior members interested in medical education to participate in this exciting competition.

**Pulmonary Infection Network of Experts (PINE):** Since its beginning in February 2021, PINE webinars highlight different pulmonary infections with events held near World Pneumonia Day, World HIV Day, and surrounding recent pulmonary infections publications for journal clubs. These webinars feature interactive case-based formats and allow a forum for junior members to present with senior expert discussants and engaged audience. Special thanks to Dr. Divya Reddy for her hard work and dedication to PINE.

**Mentoring Program:** The PI-TB Mentoring Program matches junior and senior assembly members with shared professional interests. The Mentoring Program will continue this year with networking opportunities at the conference, along with ongoing virtual-hybrid opportunities. We appreciate the many volunteers for mentors who are generous with their time, advice and guidance to our assembly mentees. Application process is available each year on the ATS website.

**Apprenticeship Program:** The Apprenticeship Program allows junior assembly members the opportunity to apprentice and observe the standing committees of PI-TB assembly. This program provides insight into the Program, Planning and Web committees. Following a successful apprentice year, the selected delegates may earn their own seat on these committees.

Members: Zhenmei Zhang (co-chair), Ioannis Konstantinidis (co-chair), Eva Otoupalova, Divya Reddy, Christina Thornton, Gail Stanley, Dan Belz, Neelima Navuluri, Andrew Roth, Reid Eggleston, Ben Wu, Christine Kang, Alexandria Imperato, Robert Flowers, Cecilia Chung, and Amy Wolfe. A special thanks to recent members who have rotated off the early career working group including Bashar Staitieh, Layla Barkal, Shivani Singh, Masfique Mehedi, Maria Tupayachi Ortiz and Mansi Chaturvedi.

## PHD AND BASIC AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENTIST WORKING GROUP REPORT

Jennifer Honda, PhD, ATSF & Benjamin Wu, MD, MSc (Representatives)

The Ph.D. and Basic and Translational Scientist Working Group (PBTS WG) has been in existence since January 1, 2019, and resides under the Assembly on RSF, which is the administrative home for the PBTS WG. The PBTS WG is currently led by two co-chairs, Jarrod Barnes, PhD., ATSF, and Claudia Staab-Weijnitz, Ph.D., ATSF who are supported by immediate past co-chair Richard Johnston, Ph.D., ATSF. The working group is made up of representatives/liaisons from all fourteen ATS Assemblies, which meet to find ways to enhance the value of ATS membership for basic and translational scientists, specifically Ph.D. scientists. During this past year, our goal was to continue growth of the WG and increase participation of our members within their home ATS committees/assemblies.

We are active in continuing the success of previous years by promoting our mission, which is "To advocate for science and discovery by promoting basic/translational research throughout all channels of the ATS." The PBTS WG meets monthly via Zoom to discuss issues of importance to (1) non-clinical ATS members (i.e., Ph.D. scientists) and (2) research-intensive physician-scientists. We are extraordinarily active in developing programs for this constituency and in devising strategies to recruit more Ph.D. scientists to the Society, increase Ph.D. participation in ATS, and promote basic and translational research within and outside of the International Conference. Below are highlights of our successes, which were driven by member led sub-committees.

**1. International Conference Proposals.** This subcommittee, chaired by Jill Johnson, Ph.D., ATSF (Assembly on RSF), is focused on generating and/or sponsoring proposals for the 2026 International Conference including post-graduate courses, scientific symposia, and meet-the-expert seminars which focus on basic and translational science and scientists. In total, PBTS members submitted or sponsored 11 proposals by the PBTS WG. Six of these proposals were accepted for presentation at this year's International Conference and include:

Session Code	Session Title	Session Type	Session Date	Start Time	End Time
B90	DECODING BACTERIAL PNEUMONIA: INTEGRATING HUMAN TRIALS, TRANSLATIONAL IMMUNOLOGY, AND NEXT-GEN MODELING TO ADVANCE PRECISION MEDICINE	Scientific Symposium	Mon 05/18/2026	2:15 PM	3:45 PM
B93	LIVING LANDSCAPES: HOW LUNG MICROENVIRONMENTS ORCHESTRATE HOST RESPONSE DURING LUNG INFECTIONS	Scientific Symposium	Mon 05/18/2026	2:15 PM	3:45 PM
C82	LUNG FIBROSIS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERVENTION	Scientific Symposium (Basic Science Core)	Tue 05/19/2026	2:15 PM	3:45 PM
C86	VASCULOPATHIES IN PULMONARY DISEASE ? THE DARK SIDE OF THE LUNG	Scientific Symposium	Tue 05/19/2026	2:15 PM	3:45 PM
D86	LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: INTERCELLULAR COMMUNICATION DRIVING LUNG DISEASE	Scientific Symposium	Wed 05/20/2026	11:00 AM	12:30 PM
MTE32	MODELING THE DISEASED LUNG MICROENVIRONMENT: EXPERIMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR COMPLEX CO-MORBID CONDITIONS	Meet-the-Expert Seminar	Tue 05/19/2026	10:45 AM	11:45 AM

**2. Communications.** The Communications Subcommittee, chaired by Reshed Abohalaka (Assembly on CP), maintained the webpage for PBTS WG, which details the WG's mission and activities and is found on the Assembly on RSF website (Ph.D. and Basic and Translational Scientist Working Group). This group was instrumental in helping us create an Immediate Past-Chair position for the PBTS WG, which is highlighted on our WebPage. Communications has also been working on launching a LinkedIn group, **NERRD** (Network for Respiratory Research and Discovery) for all respiratory/pulmonary researchers who want a community to share knowledge and stay informed. Our goal for the upcoming year is to have our LinkedIn group fully functioning and active to help spread the word and promote our research agenda.

**3. Awards.** The Awards Subcommittee, chaired by Amali Samarasinghe, Ph.D., ATSF (Assembly on PI-TB), wrote letters in support of five individuals for the 2026 ATS Respiratory Health Awards. This year we were able to sponsor five nominations for different awards.

**4. Survey.** The Survey Subcommittee, chaired by Janette Burgess, Ph.D., ATSF (Assembly on RSF), distributed a survey internally to our PBTS WG members to better understand the needs of the group and how to focus our goals and initiatives for the upcoming year. The results helped us to develop more webinars, facilitate internal reviews and sponsorships of proposals, and increase member participation throughout ATS and IC.

**5. Road Map.** Last year, the Road Map Subcommittee assembled an inaugural "Road Map for Basic and Translational Scientists 2025," which highlighted post-graduate courses, scientific symposia, meet-the-expert seminars, and other events pertinent to basic and translational scientists at the 2025 International Conference. This year, the Road Map Subcommittee, led by Jennifer Casey (Assembly on RCMB), is excited to announce the availability of the 2026 RoadMap for those who might be interested! Stay tuned!

**6. ATS Opportunities.** The Equity and ATS Opportunities Subcommittee, under the leadership of Kelly Potter, Ph.D., R.N. (Assembly on NUR) and Susan Majka, Ph.D. (Assembly on PC), continues to advocate for parity for Ph.D. scientists in terms of membership and International Conference registration fees. This subcommittee put together a podcast (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPQ9extpd3Q>) in 2025, and plans to sponsor several webinars and podcasts for this year. Please be on the lookout for the PBTS WG events coming up in the next few months.

The goal for the PBTS WG is to obtain Section status in ATS to provide a home for Ph.D. and other basic and translational scientists, strengthen advocacy for their interests, and expand our footprint across the society. Additionally, we submitted one Assembly project proposal (RSF assembly) for the organization of a virtual international respiratory science conference (VIRSI), which was not funded, but received enthusiastic support by all ATS Assemblies. Lastly, the PBTS WG has extended our participation in the Networking Super Center Organizing Committee and the New Faculty Boot Camp (NFBC) by serving as lecturers and organizers in the program. In fact, Richard Johnston was invited to serve as the Ph.D. co-chair for the organizing

committee of the NFBC to help enhance Ph.D. participation and offerings. We will continue to advocate and promote the PBTS WG mission.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the PBTS WG or have questions concerning our mission and activities, please contact Tara Walsh (twalsh@thoracic.org), the ATS staff member assigned to the PBTS WG. Thank you all for your continued support!

### Reception for PhDs & Other Basic Science Researchers

**Sunday, May 17th from 3 - 5 p.m.  
Sunburst Room and Terrace  
Orange County Convention Center (West Concourse, Level III)**

The ATS Science and Innovation Center (SIC) working group and the PhD working group, would like to invite PhDs and other Basic Science Researchers to a special reception event. The reception will provide an intimate setting for networking while also allowing guests to mingle. Cocktails will be provided.

**Register Here: [Reception for PhDs and Other Basic Science Research | Education - Sessions - Session Detail | ATS 2026](#)**

## SCIENCE AND INNOVATION CENTER WORKING GROUP

Chiagozie Pickens, MD (Chair), Ioannis Konstantinidis (Co- Chair)

We are excited to be participating in the Science and Innovation Center (SIC) as chairs on behalf of PITB this year. The SIC began in 2012 as a collaborative proposal submitted by the Assemblies on Allergy, Immunology and Inflammation (AII), Respiratory Cell and Molecular Biology (RCMB) and Assembly on Respiratory Structure and Function (RSF) and PI-TB. The SIC is part of "The Networking Super Center" which includes the SIC among many others, and is housed under the International Conference Committee. "The Networking Super Center" is a shared space where organization and presentation space is shared among all centers to that encourage networking, and collaborations on topics. The SIC remains the central venue for basic and translational scientists to network and learn about emerging technologies. The overarching goal of the SIC is to foster collaboration between basic and translational scientists to network and learn more about emerging new technologies advancing research in respiratory, critical care and sleep medicine. The principles of the Center are Networking, Career Assistance, Education and Social Opportunities. The SIC is open to individuals interested in learning more about emerging technologies and innovative methods advancing lung research, and/or interested in learning more about scientific careers in academia and industry. This year, on behalf of the planning committee and our SIC chairs Carmen Mikacenic, MD and Filiz Korkmaz, PhD, we are excited to present the following updates:

**Social Media:** The SIC remains on social media at 'ats-sic.bsky.social.' Follow along with us for real-time updates during the ATS conference, and for important updates about sessions throughout the year.

**SIC Abstract Awards and Rising Star Awards:** The Rising Star Award recognizes an in-training or junior faculty member who has made meaningful scientific (basic, translational or clinical) contributions to the field. Rising Star Awardees are nominated by a sponsor and have presented their work in the form of a poster or oral presentation at ATS within the last 5 years. SIC Abstract awardees are selected by their Assemblies and have submitted an abstract of impactful and innovative research. Stay tuned for time and location details!

**PhD Reception:** Our PhD reception is well attended every year, and is an excellent opportunity for PhD researchers and other basic scientists to network and connect. This year's reception will be on Sunday, May 17 from 3-5 pm in the Networking Super Center (Reception area, Hall C (Level II, OCCC West Concourse)).

**Sessions on innovative methods and emerging technologies:** We have several innovative talks from an excellent panel of speakers scheduled for the 2026 ATS conference. Topics include: AI and omics in pulmonary research, strategies to enhance patient engagement in research and clinical care, conducting impactful pulmonary research in low- and middle-income countries, building cross-disciplinary research teams, getting engaged in clinical trials, translating pulmonary research for impact, and networking and portfolio building for early career scientists.

## PNEUMONIA WORKING GROUP

Scott E. Evans, MD, ATSF & Charles Dela Cruz, MD, PhD, ATSF (Co-Chairs)

The PI-TB Working Group on Acute Pneumonia was established in 2015. The multidisciplinary panel represents domestic and international ATS members, including early career members, who are interested in topics related to the pathogenesis, diagnosis and management of acute pneumonia, as well as structural means to reduce patient risks for acute pneumonia. Due to the success of the working group in promoting and producing clinical practice guidelines and workshops that bring together thought leaders in pneumonia, this group has now been transitioned into a standing Advisory Group that does not require routine renewal to avoid sunseting.

There are several active assembly projects related to work from the Acute Pneumonia advisory group. The first ever workshop on Immunocompromised Host Pneumonia was completed in 2022 and the subsequent report was published in 2024. Workshops on Experimental Models of Acute Respiratory Infections and Post-infectious pulmonary complications were completed in 2023 and their associated reports are in revision and recently published, respectively. The updated clinical practice guideline on the Diagnosis and Management of Community-Acquired Pneumonia is underway. Plus, we are always open to new ideas from the ATS community for additional pneumonia-related projects to support.

This PITB Acute Pneumonia Advisory Group's overarching goal remains working to enhance the voice of ATS and the PITB Assembly as advocates for improved research and clinical outcomes for patients with acute pneumonia. The current goals of the working group following the latest renewal are:

- 1) To improve understanding of pneumonia in the immunocompromised host;
- 2) To enhance awareness of pneumonia and pneumonia complications by establishing connection with ATS communications/marketing, ATS patient education unit and ATS patient organization (PAR);
- 3) To develop a policy brief on pneumonia (including antibiotic resistance) for internal and external advocacy purposes;
- 4) To enhance opportunities for early career investigators to address acute pneumonia as their research focus and, secondarily, to encourage researchers to find a home in PITB.

The working group continues to update the [Top 20 fact sheet on pneumonia](#). These facts will be made into single panel infographics to be sent out to the ATS, the pulmonary and critical care community and the public at large through social media such as X and BlueSky. The goal of this initiative is to raise awareness of the importance and impact of pneumonia. We have partnered with Just Actions and Save the Children to enhance pneumonia advocacy efforts. Our group has participated in the initiatives of the Pneumo-Strategy, an international nonprofit group of experts focused on the knowledge and experience of countries most affected with pneumonia. The working group also works with the NHLBI and NIAID on research priorities and strategy related pneumonia.

## Vaccine and Immunization Advisory Group

Justin R. Ortiz, MD, MS & Tina V. Hartert, MD, MPH, ATSF (Co-Chairs)

The Vaccine and Immunization Advisory Group is delighted to return to PITB. It is co-chaired by Dr. Tina Hartert (Vanderbilt University) and Dr. Justin Ortiz (University of Maryland). Ongoing initiatives include the following:

1. We have supported ATS in joining the amicus brief, led by the George Washington University Law Clinic, in support of the AAP challenge to HHS vaccine policies (AAP v. Kennedy).
2. We have assisted ATS in assembling an ad hoc multi-society review panel to review available data and consider endorsing AAP, ACOG, IDSA, and AAFP vaccine guidance and schedules. This effort will be chaired by Drs. Hartert and Ortiz. The panel will address influenza, COVID-19, and RSV vaccinations; additional vaccines may be added to the panel's scope over time.
3. We have supported ATS in developing an evidence-based menu of open-access, immunization-related patient education resources to share with patients, families, and the public, including:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endemic COVID-19</li> <li>• Measles</li> <li>• Mpox</li> <li>• Pertussis</li> <li>• Pneumococcal Vaccines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respiratory Infections and Lung Health (text and video)</li> <li>• RSV in Adults</li> <li>• RSV Prevention</li> <li>• RSV in Babies and Children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vaccines: How They Work</li> <li>• What Is the Flu? (text and video)</li> </ul>
---	--	--

# 2026 Respiratory Health Awards PITB Assembly Colleagues - don't miss this!

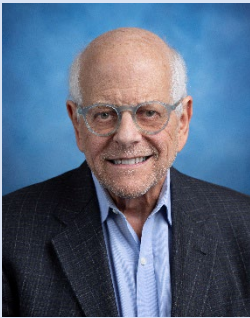
Congratulations to the recipients of the 2026 Respiratory Health Awards! 🎉



### World Lung Health – Payam Nahid, MD, MPH

Opening Ceremony – Saturday, May 16- 4:15 - 5:30 p.m.

Room: Orange County Convention Center - Chapin Theater (Level III - West Concourse)



### Don't Miss the 2026 Amberson Lecture - Sunday, May 17- 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. Orange County Convention Center - Chapin Theater (Level III - West Concourse)

J. Burns Amberson Lecture – Marc Peters-Golden, MD

Cyclic AMP vs. Fibrosis: Harnessing Homeostasis and the Power of Pleiotropy

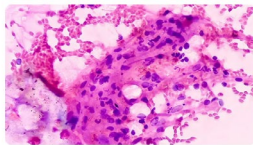
## Assembly Giving Is Live!

A link for Assembly Giving can be found on each Assembly home page.



### Pulmonary Infection and Tuberculosis Assembly

\$0 USD total raised



ATS Abstract Scholarships are awarded to individuals based on the quality of abstracts submitted as reviewed by the Assembly Program Committee. The number of scholarships given varies from year to year, so your donation can really make an impact.

You can also choose to support Assembly Programs. To make a donation to the ATS Research Program, click [here](#). Every dollar counts!  
Contact Us [ATS Website](#)

#### Secure donation

Dedicate this donation (optional)

Give once  Monthly

\$1,000 \$500 \$250

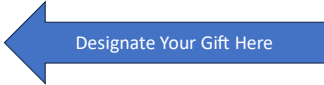
\$100 \$50 \$25

USD

Designate  
PITB Assembly Awards and Scholarsh...

ATS Research Program | All this donation tax deductible  
[Click here to designate your donation](#)

PI-TB Assembly Designations:  
PI-TB Awards and Scholarships  
PI-TB Programs



Each page has a link to give to the ATS Research Program.

## Advocacy Sessions

<b>Special Topic Sessions 12-1:15</b>		
<b>Sunday, May 17</b>		
<b>Session Code:</b>	<b>Session Title</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
<b>SPS3</b>	Advocating for Clean Air and a Better Climate - ATS Efforts in Environmental Health and What You Can Do	Alison Lee MD MS, Nick Nassikas MD
<b>SPS4</b>	Next Generation MDI Inhalers – Opportunities and Implementation Challenges	Mary Rice MD, William Feldman MD, Jyothi Tirumalasetty MD
<b>SPS5</b>	Coding and Billing Advocacy for ATS members	Dr. Frye, Dr. Ahasic
<b>SPS6</b>	Pediatric Pulmonary Advocacy in Action	Christy Sadreameli, Folashade Afolabi, Anna Volerman Beaser, Angela Metcalf, Devika Rao
<b>MONDAY, MAY 18</b>		
<b>SPS11</b>	Preserving the Pathway – Early Career Professionals Road to Research	Siri Vaeth, MSW, Hara Levy, MD, MMSc Andrew Herrin
<b>SPS13</b>	Clearing the Air: Mobilizing Tobacco Advocacy	Anne Melzer, MD, Sven Jordt, PhD,
<b>SPS15</b>	Navigating Health Policy in a Changing Landscape: Coverage, Workforce, and Advocacy	Andrew Herrin, Sharron Crowder, PhD, RN, ATSF, FAAN, Nicholas Kolaitis, MD, MAS, Mary McGowan, Denise Kent, PhD, APRN
<b>SPS16</b>	Florida and its Critical Needs	Michael D. Schweitzer, MD, Amanda Kovacich, William Miller

## Networking Super Center

Networking Super Center - ATS 2026: Learning Studio				
Dates/Times	Sunday, May 17	Monday, May 18	Tuesday, May 19	Wednesday, May 20
7:00 - 8:00 AM	PRDS Ceremony	How to Work with Industry in 2026	From A-to-I & 0-to-Omics: An Introductory Field Guide to AI & Omics Research in Lung Diseases	High-Tech, Human-Centered: Practical Strategies for Integrating Ultrasound, AI, and Digital Tools Without Losing the Patient
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Teaching in the ICU @ Night	Getting Engaged in Clinical Trials: Pathways and Strategies for Budding Trialists	From Science to Storytelling: How to Use Narratives to Advocate for Change	Widen Your Net, Broaden Your Path: Networking and Portfolio Building for Early Career Scientists
10:00- 11:00 AM	Conducting High-Impact Pulmonary Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries	Elevator Speech Workshop: Sharpening Your Professional Identity	Diagnosing and Addressing Learning Disabilities in Trainees	Models and Techniques to Map the Influence of Extracellular Matrix Across the Lung
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Advocacy Roadmap: A Path to Career and Advocacy integration	AJRCCM, AJRCMB, AnnalsATS, ATS Scholar Combined Journal Talks Journal editors	Legislation, Implementation, Outcomes, and the Path to 50 States: Stock Albuterol Policies	Reliable Lung Sounds: Practical AI at the Point of Care
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Navigating Prior Authorization Challenges and Finding Solutions	Breathe Easy: The Scope of Pediatric Pulmonary Fellowship Training in the United States	Finding Your Team: Networking Across Disciplines for Stronger Science	Survive, Then Thrive: Innovations in Post-ICU Recovery with Team-Based Care
1:00-2:00 PM	Strategies for Success in Leadership	Strategies for Patient Engagement in Research & Clinical Care: PAR Expertise and Support	Who I Am Matters: The Impact of Intersecting Identities on Workforce, Research, and Health Outcomes	
2:00 - 3:00 PM	Resources from the NIGMS Sepsis Human Biospecimens Program	Optimizing Individual Learning in the Multi-Disciplinary ICU: Building Skills & Gaining Competencies	From Labs to Lungs: Translating Respiratory Science for Impact	
3:00 - 4:00 PM	Physician Wellbeing 2.0 (Beyond the Warm and Fuzzy Hour)	Navigating the Early Career: Expert Panel Discussion of Career Development, Mentoring, and Networking	Academic Career as an International Medical Graduate (IMG)	
4:00 - 5:00 PM	Storytelling Series	Storytelling Series	Storytelling Series	
<b>Networking Events:</b> PhD Reception (3-5 p.m.) TEACH (4-5 p.m.) IMG Reception (4-5 p.m.)				



Tailored education—  
anytime, anywhere



“It’s like Netflix for Pulmonologists!”

— Raed Dweik, MD, MBA, ATSF, ATS President



Activate your **FREE** subscription.  
Visit [atsnow.thoracic.org](https://atsnow.thoracic.org).

## Access **ATS NOW!** Tailored Education— Anytime, Anywhere

Meet the ATS’s new on-demand video learning platform driven by AI. Stream content curated from ATS 2025 and ATS 2026 just for you – a personalized way to explore conference highlights, podcasts, webinars, and other learning content. Your ATS 2026 registration automatically includes complimentary access, giving you an AI-curated collection of recorded conference sessions, key presentations, and additional educational content at **no extra cost through Dec. 31, 2026**.

Enroll to enter a drawing and  
a chance to **WIN BIG!**

**FIRST PRIZE**  
FREE VIP experience at  
ATS 2027, New Orleans

**SECOND PRIZE**  
Series 11 Apple Watch



# Step into the future at the AI Lab

Visit the **ATS 2026 AI Lab Exposition Space** — a dedicated innovation site inside the Exhibit Hall.

Experience curated sessions from the **ATS AI Taskforce** and **hands-on engagement** with industry leaders.

