



# INTERNATIONAL ECZEMA COUNCIL

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## Letter from the IEC President



I have exciting developments to share since my first-quarter note to you, when I was looking forward with hope to in-person events.

### **RADLA: Muy Bueno!**

I'm pleased to report our symposium [What's New in Atopic Dermatitis?](#), presented as part of the Reunión Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos (RADLA) in May, was a great success.

The annual meeting of Latin American dermatologists, RADLA is a professional scientific organization that brings together dermatologists and dermatology residents from 15 Latin American countries. Due to the pandemic, RADLA was held as a virtual meeting, hosted by Chile.

This series of presentations marked the IEC's first symposium in conjunction with a major meeting in South America. Our faculty recorded their presentations in English, and they were translated into Spanish for the meeting.

It was my honor to co-chair this event with IEC Councilor Valeria Aoki, MD PhD, of the University of São Paulo

Medical School in São Paulo, Brazil. We also moderated a group discussion at the end of the program.

I would like to extend my thanks to Dr. Aoki and to our other expert presenters: Paula Luna, MD, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Aaron Drucker, MD ScM FRCPC, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Amy Paller, MD MS, Chicago, IL, USA; Fernando Valenzuela, MD, Santiago, Chile; and Johannes Ring, MD, Munich, Germany. Together, we presented on the topics of what's new in atopic dermatitis (AD) prevention, comorbidities, pediatric AD, topical treatments, systemic treatments, and AD and infections (including *S. aureus*). I invite you to watch the symposium in [English](#) or [Spanish](#)—another first for the IEC.

The IEC is excited to have expanded our involvement to a new meeting and on a continent where we hadn't yet presented, bringing our participation to the front door of our many Councilors and Associates from Latin America.

### **Welcome New CEO**

On another positive note, the IEC welcomed new CEO Alan Stiles to our organization on June 1.

Alan's hiring was prompted by the Executive Director Margaret Jung's decision to retire from the IEC. You'll read more about Margaret's accomplishments later in this newsletter, but I do want to note that it has been a pleasure to work with her. I do hope she takes a well-deserved break, though I can't imagine her being idle. Whatever Margaret decides to do next, I'm confident it'll be a success.

Though we'll sorely miss Margaret, we're pleased to have found a successor who is well positioned to maintain the IEC's momentum.

Alan has more than 30 years of experience in finance, budgeting, communications, marketing, membership, governance, organizational structure, and administration. As a decision-maker and mission-driven professional, Alan has the leadership and interpersonal skills, talent, and energy to steer our organization.

His proven history of professional leadership began in management at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute where he rose to direct the NIH Research Scholars Program. Since that time, he has held several senior management positions at institutions and organizations that include McKinsey & Company, the Wistar Institute, the Heart Rhythm Society, and the Society for Vascular Ultrasound.

As a nod to the IEC's evolution and Alan's expertise, his title will be chief executive officer (CEO).

Like Margaret, Alan will work with IEC staff—including Director of Education Jennifer Westlund and Operations Manager Josephine Fazio—to support more than 100 Councilors and Associates from 26 countries in work that increases the understanding of AD and promotes its optimal management through research, education, and patient/family care.

I'm pleased to be working with him to further our mission. Should you need to contact new CEO Alan Stiles, he can be reached at [703.963.2704](tel:703.963.2704) or [astiles@eczemacouncil.org](mailto:astiles@eczemacouncil.org).

**Robert Bissonnette, MD FRCPC MSc**  
*IEC President*

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## **Celebrating Margaret Jung's IEC Leadership**

We're sorry to be saying goodbye to IEC Executive Director Margaret Jung, whose decision to retire from the organization prompted the hiring of new CEO Alan Stiles.

The IEC is a relatively young organization, founded in 2014 by Drs. Amy Paller and Emma Guttman. Margaret, our

second and longest-serving executive director (ED), joined the IEC in 2016. Under her leadership, the IEC has achieved so much.

Margaret brought not only years of experience in association leadership and financial expertise but also an unstoppable and egalitarian work ethic. When there was work to be done—and there always was—Margaret rolled up her sleeves and got it done. No task was insurmountable or beneath her.

As the IEC grew under her leadership, we undertook more activities—from publishing in major journals to presenting more symposia around the world. During this time, Margaret worked to secure additional funding to support our growth.

With the workload growing exponentially, the IEC contracted with association management professionals to use their time on an as-needed basis. As the need grew, Margaret and the IEC hired an operations manager and then an education manager.

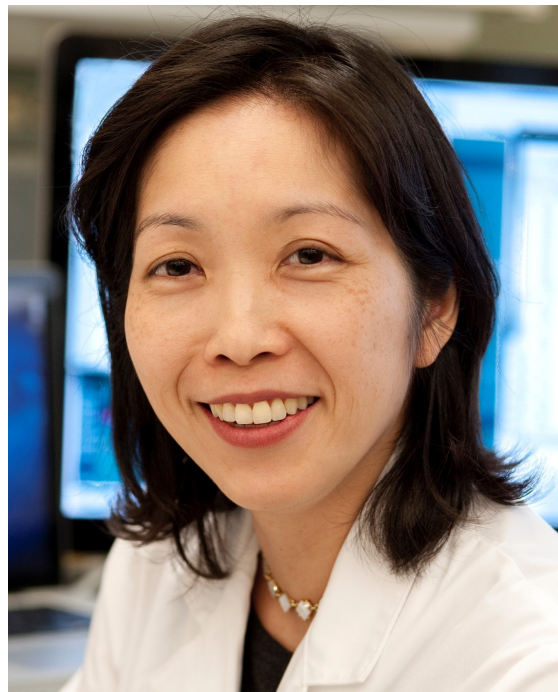
When Margaret came aboard, we had just 45 Councilors and Associates; today we have 115. She cites the great support and commitment of the Councilors and Associates in making it possible to present dozens of symposia, virtual education programs, and publications under her watch.

Margaret has nurtured numerous new programs into being: a fellowship program, educational modules, resident education, and more. Together with a talented and dedicated staff, she oversaw a redesign of our logo and look; forged strong partnerships with organizations such as Medscape, the National Eczema Association, the International Psoriasis Council, and the National Alopecia Areata Foundation; and implemented needed infrastructure improvements, including a new website.

Her dedication didn't end when she decided to retire from the IEC. In giving her notice, Margaret offered many additional months of time and flexibility to ensure that we could conduct a search to find a suitable replacement and that the next leader would get time to work with her toward a smooth transition.

Thank you, Margaret!

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## Meet the Councilor: Heidi Kong, MD MHSc

This issue's 'Meet the Councilor' features IEC Councilor Heidi Kong, MD MHSc.

Dr. Kong is a board-certified dermatologist and senior investigator and chief of the Cutaneous Microbiome and Inflammation Section in the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Intramural Research Program in Bethesda, MD, USA.

She also is an attending physician on the NIH Dermatology Consultation Service and an adjunct investigator at the National Cancer Institute.

In May, she cochaired the IEC symposium **Microbiome** for the Society for Investigative Dermatology (SID) Annual Meeting along with Tiffany C. Scharschmidt, MD.

### **What is your proudest accomplishment in the atopic dermatitis (AD) space?**

From a research perspective, an incredible amount of work by researchers across the globe has highlighted the multifactorial nature of AD, including the contributions of barrier disruption, immune dysregulation, genetics, and exposures.

Our group has helped to spotlight the potential contributions of skin bacteria to AD. We have used genomics to describe the predominance of ***Staphylococcus aureus*** and ***Staphylococcus epidermidis*** in AD skin during disease flares.

In addition, we have examined bacteria **in early life—prior to the development of AD**. Much remains to be investigated to understand the specific roles these microbes may play in disease development or exacerbation.

As a dermatologist, being able to provide both clinical and emotional support for patients who have AD and for their families is particularly rewarding.

### **What do you value most about being involved with the IEC?**

The IEC has very effectively brought together a diverse community of clinicians and investigators dedicated to advancing AD treatment and research. The commitment of the IEC members toward systematically exploring the multiple facets of AD—epidemiology, prevention, biological mechanisms, therapeutics—is invigorating. I value both the ability to connect with other AD clinicians and researchers and the dissemination of the latest in AD research advances in IEC meetings.

### **What do you think will garner the most attention over the coming year in the AD field?**

The pace of AD research in recent years with the increased focus on biological mechanisms and therapeutic approaches has revolutionized what we know about AD and its treatment. I am enthusiastic about the furthering of our knowledge of this disease and how this can improve the lives of AD patients.

### **What do you see as the biggest need among AD patients?**

Even with the notable advances in AD research and treatment, AD patients worldwide still suffer from multiple unmet needs. The burdens of disease and the disparities in access to care on both a global and national scale persist. I am hopeful that continued investigation in AD and efforts to expand outreach, particularly through the efforts of the IEC, will help to address these needs.

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## **Read the Top Atopic Dermatitis Articles of 2021**

The **Top Articles on Atopic Dermatitis from 2021** have been chosen by the IEC.

This annual effort asks the IEC's Councilors and Associates to nominate and evaluate relevant papers that were first published electronically or in print the previous year. (Review papers are not included.)

Creating the list involves multiple rounds of surveying—from an open-ended question seeking submission of key journal articles to rounds of evaluating the publications to measure their importance based on our experts' opinions.

This year, for the first time, the process included ranking articles within categories: basic/translational research,

clinical trials, and “other.” Previous years' lists included "honorable mentions," meaning more than 10 articles were cited. That's true again, but this year's list divides articles into the aforementioned categories, with five articles in each.

The annual rankings include publication details (author, title, and publication information) and links to their PubMed abstracts and the full articles. This project creates a convenient record of the most important developments and findings in AD since 2015, when the IEC began posting the lists.

View the [list](#) to see the rankings and read key journal articles you may have missed in 2021.

[View the Top Articles Lists](#)

## Mark Your Calendars: IEC to Present Symposia in Italy and Netherlands

### Customizing the Treatment of AD for Diverse Populations

7 September 2022 | 2:15-5:30 PM CEST | Milan, Italy

Presented before the [European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology \(EADV\) 31st Congress](#)

[Learn More & Register Now](#)

### Single-Cell Technologies Applicable to Atopic Eczema

28 September 2022 | 1-5:30 PM CEST | Amsterdam, Netherlands

Presented before the [European Society for Dermatological Research \(ESDR\) 51st Annual Meeting](#)

[Learn More](#)

## New Topics Added to On-Demand Learning

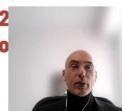
The IEC continues to develop on-demand webcasts featuring leading experts providing new insights on topics related to atopic dermatitis (AD).



**iBienvenidos!**  
**Bem-vindos!**

**What's new in Atopic Dermatitis?**

**IEC Inaugural Program at RADLA 2**  
**May 6, 2022, 6:00 - 7:00 pm CLT | Chile, So**  
**Virtual Symposium**



The newest addition is [What's New in Atopic Dermatitis?](#), which was presented at the Reunión Anual de Dermatólogos Latinoamericanos (RADLA), the annual meeting of Latin American dermatologists, in May in Chile.

The webcast includes six presenters' topics plus a group discussion moderated by program co-chairs IEC President Robert Bissonnette, MD, and IEC Counselor Valeria Aoki, MD PhD. Get up to date on the latest in AD prevention, comorbidities, pediatric AD, topical treatments, systemic treatments, and infections (including *S. aureus*). The full program is viewable in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

Another new topic in our on-demand learning series is [Microbiome](#), presented in May at the Society for Investigative Dermatology Annual Meeting in Portland, OR, USA. Cochaired by Tiffany Scharschmidt, MD, and Heidi Kong, MD MHSc, this webcast features sessions on

- skin microbiome signatures in AD
- on-person adaptive evolution of *S. aureus* during treatment for AD
- heterogeneity in cutaneous infection prevalence and frequency by timing of AD onset
- *S. aureus* proteases and skin inflammation via eosinophil-derived IL-17 responses
- infantile eczema and *S. aureus* agr mutations
- host-microbiome metabolic interactions in AD
- botanical inhibitors of staphylococcal virulence

[Diagnosis and Management of Non-Atopic Forms of Dermatitis in Atopic Dermatitis Patients](#), which the IEC presented in March the American Academy of Dermatology Association (AAD) meeting in Boston, MA, USA, was added this spring. Topics covered include pathophysiology of non-atopic forms of dermatitis, allergic and irritant contact dermatitis, AD patients with new-onset dermatitis on the face, patch testing, and the impact of flares and system medications.

Access dozens of complimentary [on-demand webcasts](#) from the IEC to learn the latest on AD research and care around the world.

[View On-Demand Education](#)



#### About the IEC

The [International Eczema Council](#) (IEC) is a global nonprofit organization led by dermatology experts on atopic dermatitis (AD). The IEC is dedicated to increasing the understanding of AD and promoting its optimal management through research, education and patient/family care. More than 100 Councilors and Associates from 26 countries contribute their expertise to support the IEC's research, programs, events, and education.