



Division for Drug Metabolism and Disposition

Member Spotlight

From Regulation of P450s to ASPET Presidency: Edward Morgan

Submitted by Lindsay Henderson and Aarti Sawant-Basak, PhD

Edward (Eddie) Morgan, PhD is a professor in the Department of Pharmacology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. He earned his PhD in pharmacology at the University of Glasgow, Scotland in 1979. As a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Minor J (Jud) Coon at the University of Michigan, Dr. Morgan worked with Dennis Koop to purify and characterize CYP2E1 as a novel cytochrome P450 induced by ethanol. At the Karolinska Institute, Dr. Morgan worked as a visiting scientist fellow with Dr. Jan-Åke Gustafsson to purify sex-specific forms of cytochrome P450s and provided the first demonstration that their expression is regulated by growth hormone secretion. He joined Emory University as an assistant professor in 1986 and has been a faculty member since. Today, Dr. Morgan's research is focused on elucidating the mechanisms responsible for regulating cytochrome P450 enzymes in infectious or inflammatory disease states.

Since 1991, Dr. Morgan has been actively involved in ASPET. He served as chair of the Division for Drug Metabolism from 1998 to 2001 and was an at-large member of the Board of Publications Trustees from 2005 to 2010. He is currently the president-elect of the ASPET Council and will be completing his 6-year term as Editor of *Drug Metabolism and Disposition (DMD)* in December 2017.

Dr. Morgan kindly agreed to share his story, providing us with insights into his role as editor of *DMD* and his upcoming term as president of ASPET.

Q: Can you briefly describe your ASPET journey since joining the Society in 1991?

A: After I returned to the US from my postdoc at the Karolinska Institute, the first ASPET meeting I

attended was the fall meeting in Salt Lake City in the late 1980s, where I gave a 10-minute talk in a platform session. The experience of this small, very collegial meeting prompted me to join the Society, and my first experience in Society governance was when Jim Halpert recruited me to help him revive the Division for Drug Metabolism in the mid-90s. Jim's strong leadership was a great example to me and made it relatively easy to transition to chair of the division. I continued to participate in division affairs thereafter, and then I was recruited to serve on the Board of Publications Trustees (BPT). I assume this was at least partly due to my experience as an associate editor of *Molecular Pharmacology*. The BPT experience was really rewarding due to the rapidly changing publishing landscape and the vital role of the journals in the financial health of the Society. No good deed goes unpunished, and shortly after leaving the BPT, I was elected to the position of Secretary/Treasurer, as well as appointed editor of *DMD*! Both of these were tremendous honors for me and would have been recognition enough of my contributions to the Society. To be elected president of the society that John J. Abel founded, of whom so many of my esteemed colleagues are members, and to follow so many other illustrious scientists and ASPET luminaries, is an honor of which I honestly never dreamed.

Q: You have been very involved in ASPET leadership during your career. Why do you believe it is important to contribute to professional societies within your field? Can you advise ASPET members on different ways to get involved?

A: There are so many reasons to contribute to professional societies. It's one of the best ways to network and make crucial contacts for collaborations, service opportunities, and letters of reference. ASPET's approach of member-driven scientific programming and emphasis on students, postdocs, and junior scientists provides opportunities to enhance your standing in the field and promote career advancement. As a more senior scientist, society membership and leadership provides you with an opportunity to expand your mentoring role and give back to the discipline while continuing to network and discover new opportunities. And not least, you get to meet and become friends with some wonderful people. The best way to get involved is to engage with your division(s), whose main purpose is to bring society governance close to the membership. Go to your annual division business meeting and contribute to the discussion. Go to your division mixer and talk to the division leadership.

Q: What has been the most rewarding part of being editor of *DMD*? What challenges have you encountered during your term?

A: The most rewarding aspect has been to experience the esteem in which the journal is held by scientists in the drug metabolism/transporter/PK fields. I've also been privileged to have an incredible group of hard-working and insightful associate editors and editorial board members whose dedication has been inspiring. The biggest challenge has been to balance the importance of maintaining and improving the impact factor with the important role the journal plays in serving the drug metabolism and disposition community. I think that the previous editors did a good job of that, and I hope that I have too. A second challenge that has arisen recently with the advent of so many new journals is a reduced number of submissions. I'm not sure what we can do about that except to continue to provide rapid and fair expert reviews, and encourage you all to submit to *DMD*!

Q: What advice would you give young investigators who wish to pursue a higher degree in the field of drug metabolism and

disposition? Any advice to graduates and mid-career scientists and researchers?

A: There has been a lot of talk about this becoming a "mature field." However, the transporter field is burgeoning, as are new areas for research into drug metabolizing enzymes, e.g., as drug targets, or in developing novel catalysts for chemical syntheses and bioremediation. There is still much to learn about how genetics, physiology, and the environment interact to determine a person's drug metabolism phenotype. There will also be a continuing need for well-trained drug metabolism scientists in the pharmaceutical industry for the foreseeable future. So my advice would be: it's a rich and interesting field with lots of important contributions to be made, and I'd encourage you to be part of it.

Q: What in your view are the emerging areas of research in the field of drug metabolism and disposition?

A: I've mentioned a couple of them in my previous response. Bioinformatics and modeling. Developing the tools to probe the roles of specific transporters in the disposition of drugs is an important area. As biologics become a bigger part of the therapeutic arsenal, understanding their metabolism, disposition, and PK becomes more challenging and important. And I think we've only skimmed the surface on epigenetic control of drug metabolizing enzymes and transporters.



The Morgan Lab – October 2017 (from left to right): Nikki Olagbegi, JiWon Park, Eddie Morgan, and Choon Lee.