

## September 10, 2020

For my latest video chat, I want to highlight what the AAAAI does for allergy/immunology providers who practice in community settings, specifically focusing on our Federation of Regional, State and Local Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Societies Assembly, often referred to as the RSL Assembly or simply the RSLs.

[This assembly consists](#) of 70+ independent allergy, asthma and immunology societies who promote, support and advocate for allergist/immunologists at a grassroots level.

The origins of the RSLs can be traced back as far as 1945 when our records indicate the Academy's desire to develop close communications with emerging state and regional allergy societies throughout the US.

In 1973, the first meeting of what would later become the RSLs took place in Washington, DC, under the leadership of Guy Settupane, the President of the Rhode Island Allergy Society. He sent letters to the presidents of the various regional and state societies inquiring about an interest in forming a council of presidents. And it was at that time that a Council of the Regional, State and Local Allergy Societies was formed.

Then in 1985, John Salvaggio, a past Academy President, invited members of this Council to a meeting to discuss the group's future. They agreed that the Council should have a representative seat on the Academy Board of Directors. This was the first time a non-academic allergist/immunologist had a voice on the Board, and the first such representative was Guy Settupane.

After the 1987 AAAAI Annual Meeting, the Council was renamed the Federation of Regional, State and Local Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Societies, which is the name it continues to go by today. It still has seven regions, each represented by a Governor.

The RSL Assembly is currently chaired by Jim Sussman and vice chaired by Weily Soong. Our current RSL Governors are:

- Lynda Kabbash, Region 1 Northeast
- David Hauswirth, Region 2 Mid Atlantic
- Sam Gubernick, Region 3 Southeast
- Joel Klein, Region 4 Midwest
- Louise Bethea, Region 5 Mid South
- Michael Rupp, Region 6 Rocky Mountain
- Jacob Offenberger, Region 7 Western

The RSL Governors are a great resource to not only help allergists connect with other A/I providers in their communities, but also to help individual practitioners and local allergy societies with practice issues, questions, concerns. The RSLs can even help you to establish or rejuvenate a local allergy society.

The RSL Assembly is a crucial constituency when it comes to the Academy's advocacy efforts. Jim Sussman as RSL Chair serves on the Academy's Advocacy Committee providing a key connection to

individual practitioners and local allergy societies, and enabling the Academy to better develop strategies and target advocacy efforts to address your practice-related issues and concerns.

The RSLs also help with Practice Matters, the AAAAI's twice a month newsletter brought to you by the Office of Practice Management, which keeps you informed on the latest issues that affect practicing allergists and what the Academy is doing to address them.

One feature within Practice Matters that the RSLs are responsible for is [Practice Champions](#), which highlights community-based allergists who have made significant contributions to A/I in their community. Our most recent Practice Champion was Louise Bethea, the RSL Governor of Region 5, who was highlighted in the Practice Matters issue emailed on September 3.

We're proud of our Practice Champions and I want to encourage members to submit nominations by emailing [practicematters@aaaai.org](mailto:practicematters@aaaai.org) or [contact your local RSL Governor](#). Help us congratulate practicing allergists who provide outstanding patient care and go above and beyond for patients, our specialty and their community.

While these are just some of the ways the RSLs can assist in providing support to ensure A/I docs are recognized as the premier providers of quality A/I care, I encourage you to reach out to your local RSL Governor to learn more and get involved.

In closing, as we move past Labor Day 2020, I want to again thank all of you for what you do for your patients and for your continued support of the Academy. As we enter the next chapter of this pandemic, we must continue to work together to make the changes necessary to be successful. I'm privileged to be part of your team. A team through whom strength, dedication and innovation will guide us through the challenging times.