

ISPOR SPEAKS

Shaping ISPOR's Role on the World Stage

Federico Augustovski, MD, MSc, PhD, ISPOR President (2018-2019)

Although this photo is a current picture of me, my life with ISPOR has been quite long. Not as long as the “founding fathers and mothers,” but rather long anyway. The smaller snapshot below shows a thirty something version of myself at the first Latin America ISPOR meeting in Colombia more than 10 years ago now.

Much has happened in these 10 long years—both for ISPOR as a whole and for me individually. I am very pleased to be serving as the 24th president of ISPOR. I recognize that I am here because of you. Sure, I had something to do about it, no doubt, but I’m here mainly because of you, the ISPOR community. I would like to thank all of you for the trust and the confidence you have placed in me.

My being here is the culmination of many things, some of them personal, but mostly as the result of a process ISPOR has been immersed in during the past several years. I am more inclined to view my involvement with ISPOR as a long journey—one that involves many encounters with people and institutions, rather than a single point in time. My ISPOR journey includes thousands of images—more like a movie, not a single snapshot. But when I look at the photos on this page, I cannot help but think about the significance of this moment in ISPOR’s history. This one snapshot represents an important change in ISPOR’s own journey. Not only does the snapshot depict ISPOR’s first elected president from a “non-central” country or region, it also represents ISPOR’s fulfilment of its longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. Paraphrasing the famous astronaut Neil Armstrong, I could say that this small step of electing a “non-central” president reflects a much bigger step for ISPOR in having a “built-in” global view—one that is less centered in the United States or Western Europe and that aims to incorporate a wide range of values and people.

THE ROAD AHEAD

I am really looking forward to serving as your president for the 2018-2019 term. What do I hope we can achieve this year and in the near future? I can contribute to balance the map a bit and make regions like Latin America, Asia, and Africa gain more prominence by helping to better blend our current ISPOR with other regional cultures, values, and knowledge to make ISPOR a broader, more diverse, and more inclusive Society.

As I look forward to my upcoming term as your president, I have been reflecting on the role ISPOR plays for its members and have been thinking about the themes I would like to focus on during my term. It has struck me that ISPOR is a very **diverse, innovative, and influential** Society.



DIVERSITY

ISPOR promotes inclusiveness by increasing its importance and influence beyond the United States and Europe and by promoting the growth of chapters and regional consortia. Diversity is an engine for creativity, inspiration, and success.

The integration of different backgrounds, geographies, types of education, formative paths, experiences, and training will have a significant impact in thinking and acting in a better way. I also consider it very important to keep making an effort to attract groups that are currently underrepresented in some regions, such as healthcare professionals, government decision makers, payers, and patients. Our new governance mandates and welcomes the participation >



of all regions in major groups such as the Health Science and Policy Council, Global Engagement Council, and more. No other organization is doing as much to capture the voices of its members in strategic and project-based activities.

We are also exploring ways to involve more mid-career people in important projects. Our Society is not an exclusive “VIP members only” club. It’s for anybody who wants to get involved...and I encourage each of you to do just that. We will also be introducing to the membership more information on guidelines for submitting ideas for task forces and special task forces in an effort to promote transparency and inclusiveness.

INNOVATION

Innovation is a complex process that requires dialogue, creativity, and articulation. Innovations usually come in small, incremental steps that pave the way forward and intensify their downstream impact. Here are just a few examples of how ISPOR is innovating and making an impact:

- ISPOR is leading discussions with many stakeholders at a time when decision making is most difficult.
- ISPOR good research practice reports (particularly the CHEERS report) are now required in new employee training and in decision making in industry and governments settings.
- ISPOR is organizing the first patient roundtables in Latin America and Asia—areas where the patient voice is not so well integrated.
- ISPOR is beginning to “speak” to the media and to thought leaders through innovative projects like the Top 10 HEOR Trends report.
- ISPOR’s outreach to other societies and organizations shows sincere desire to work collaboratively, not competitively.

INFLUENCE

Never has health economics and outcomes research been so needed and so valuable to decision makers. The expertise within our membership is needed in all corners of the world. ISPOR has begun to build a communication machine that will take our knowledge and resources to other stakeholders, including non-scientific parties that would benefit from ISPOR’s pool of talent and expertise.

SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

In summary, we are all part of a diverse, innovative, and influential organization. Having these characteristics at our core helps us amplify the meaningful differences we all make to improve healthcare decisions around the world.

I hope we enjoy the journey as we travel down this path together. Together we can build a space that stimulates growth, mainly in advancing the science of HEOR, but also in creating long-lasting relationships where compromise and trust can flourish.

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The metaphor of dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants aptly applies to the field of science where “discovering truth by building on previous discoveries” embodies what we do. This concept has been traced to the 12th century, and is most recognized in the sentiment expressed by Sir Isaac Newton: “If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”

This is where I—we—stand now...on the shoulders of the giants who built ISPOR, an organization that is rapidly approaching a quarter of a century with continuous growth and success. In my land, we dance the tango and drink Malbec wine. Two traditions that relate to sharing and enjoying. I hope we can keep sharing and enjoying, even without the tango and Malbec, as we work to advance the science that informs healthcare decisions. ●