LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to invite you to the 2011 ASCO Annual Meeting in Chicago. There you will have the opportunity to be among the first to see the latest cutting-edge science in cancer care, practical knowledge you can bring home to your patients.

Like many cancer specialists, I entered oncology because of specific patients who touched my heart. They still do. In an effort to weave together my personal view of what ASCO stands for and the purpose the organization serves, my presidential theme this year is “Patients. Pathways. Progress.”

Patients come first. Caring for patients is the most rewarding aspect of being an oncology professional. The ability to foster a compassionate and honest relationship between patient and doctor is paramount, and no other society focuses its attention on the entire range of cancer care quite like ASCO.

While some pathways are molecular, others are figurative. Whether it is the pathway of the cancer cell’s machinery of destruction or the pathways patients traverse during the course of their disease, understanding these pathways will lead to improved, personalized treatment.

Our attention to patients and pathways has and will continue to lead us to progress. While progress has certainly been made, particularly in recent years, the pace of progress can and must be hastened. We must continue to find resources for new research, and ways to provide effective, less toxic treatments for our patients.

The Annual Meeting provides the optimal opportunity to discover the latest scientific advances. When I am at the ASCO Annual Meeting, I know I am part of something much larger than myself. I am part of an international group of oncology professionals committed to the goal of eliminating cancer as a cause of death and suffering. The excitement when a new survival curve pops up on screen—demonstrating an advance toward that goal—is almost palpable.

I look forward to seeing you in Chicago, where we will join together on the pathways to progress.

Sincerely,

George W. Sledge Jr., MD
2010-2011 ASCO President