



## ADVOCATE UPDATE

November/December 2023

### Your Voice Is Needed: Take Action To Support Research Funding



As negotiations on funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 continue in Congress, it is imperative for the biomedical research community to speak out and educate Congress on the importance of supporting funding for genetics and genomics research and the institutions that enable continued scientific innovation. Contact your Members of Congress by clicking the button below or visiting our [Action Center](#) to share with them the necessity of completing the appropriations process in a timely manner and to urge Congress' support for continued, robust funding for the NIH for FY2024. ASHG remains committed to working with policymakers to ensure robust funding for the NIH.

[Take Action](#)

### Shutdown Avoided; Government Funded into Early 2024



With a new Speaker of the House, Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA-04), elected at the end of October, Congress has been able to resume work on FY2024 appropriations. As the initial continuing resolution (CR) that kept the government funded after September 30 expired last month, Congress has now punted the appropriations bill deadlines into early 2024. On Nov. 16, President Joe Biden [signed](#) the *Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024* (H.R. 6363), [passed](#) by Congress on Nov. 15, which creates a two-tiered CR that would fund some federal departments and agencies through January 19, and extend other spending bills, including the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill (which includes funding for the NIH), through February 2. President Joe Biden signed this CR just one day before the government was set to shut down, giving

Congress more time to negotiate funding levels for various government agencies, including the NIH, for FY2024.

## Applications for the 2024 ACGT Program are Open Now Through Jan. 5, 2024!

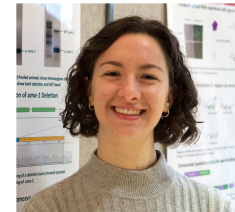


[Applications](#) for the 2024 [ASHG Advocacy Certificate for Human Genetics and Genomics Trainees \(ACGT\) program](#) are open through **January 5, 2024!** The ACGT program is designed for ASHG trainee members (residents/clinical fellows, postdocs, or graduate students) interested in pursuing a research or clinical career but who would like to learn more about science policy and what it means to be an advocate for human genetics and genomics research. Read what trainees from the 2023 cohort said as they reflected on their past year participating in the program:

*"I applied to the ACGT program due to my interest in public advocacy and policy. As an international postdoctoral fellow, I found the ACGT program taught me about the U.S. government, how to make policies and how citizens can influence policy and law. ACGT provided a framework for me to start an outreach project to advocate for underrepresented groups in science. The ACGT program provided tools for the causes in genetics I am passionate about." - Ricardo Harripaul, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital, The Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard and Harvard Medical School, ACGT 2023 Cohort*



*"I now feel more confident in my role as a scientist speaking up to policy makers about issues that are important and have built connections that I know will inspire me to continue in this work. I am grateful for this experience and am excited to continue integrating advocacy and policy into my work!" - Grace Tietz, PhD candidate, Baylor College of Medicine, ACGT 2023 Cohort*



[Apply Now!](#)

## ASHG 2023 Annual Meeting: Buzzworthy Topics



Thank you to those who could join us at the policy and advocacy events at the ASHG 2023 Annual Meeting! For those who were unable to make it, we welcome you to watch the recordings on the [ASHG Learning Center](#). As highlights for policy conversations: the Policy Forum organized by the ASHG Government & Public Advocacy Committee (GPAC) convened a range of stakeholders with expertise in the genetics field to share important considerations and perspectives in thinking about global data sharing, and the Population Descriptors luncheon hosted by the ASHG Professional Practice and Social Implications Committee (PPSI) invited panelists to guide researchers through rethinking how and why we use population descriptors in

genomics research. Stayed tuned for more educational content in the new year!

## In Other News

- On Nov. 7, the U.S. Senate [voted](#) 62-36 to confirm Monica Bertagnolli, MD, as the [17th director of the NIH](#). Dr. Bertagnolli takes over from Lawrence Tabak, DDS, PhD, who has served as Acting Director since December 2021. Dr. Tabak will stay on in a leadership role at NIH as the Principal Deputy Director. He recently shared his reflections in a [blog post](#).
- President Joe Biden announced that Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Kimryn Rathmell, MD, PhD, will serve as the National Cancer Institute's 17th director. Learn more about Dr. Rathmell and her new role in [this article from Science](#).
- To keep track of the House and Senate FY2024 appropriations bills, visit the [AAAS R&D Budget Program's dashboard](#).
- In case you missed it, view the [slides](#) and watch the [recording](#) of the Nov. 6 Research!America's discussion with Gelise Thomas, JD, MS, on the importance of creating a more diverse and equitable research environment.
- The next ELSI Friday Forum will be held on Dec. 8 at 12:00 PM ET on, "Affirming Sex and Gender Diversity in Genetics Practices, Policies, and Law: A Call to Action." [Register here](#). Previous ELSI Friday Forums can be viewed [here](#).
- In October, 2023 [Advocacy Certificate for Human Genetics and Genomics Trainees](#) (ACGT) advocate, Anna Capria, MS, shared how the ACGT program has positively benefitted her career and facilitated her advocacy as a scientist. [Read about](#) her experience participating in the ACGT program and attending the 11th Annual Rally for Medical Research.

## ASHG Calendar

- This week, watch for the newest edition of the [Nascent Transcript](#) newsletter, which features original content by and for ASHG trainee members.
- The [ASHG Membership Forum](#) has been scheduled for Friday, December 8 from 12:00-1:00pm ET/9:00-10:00am PT. Hear updates on the Society from ASHG President Brendan Lee, MD, PhD, and ASHG Treasurer Susan Slausenhaupt, PhD.
- Next week, read more Society news, member accomplishments, and broader community discussions in the next edition of [The Messenger](#), ASHG's quarterly member newsletter.
- Enjoy the winter holiday season and stay tuned for more news about ASHG's programming in the new year when the *Advocate Update* returns in January 2024!

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