

Chair's Message

Since 2001, the American Thoracic Society (ATS) leadership has formally partnered with patients and their families through the ATS Public Advisory Roundtable (PAR). PAR continues to be one of the only patient-centered groups woven into the fabric of a medical membership association. As the patient arm of the Society, PAR is a central component of the ATS providing the patient perspective in all aspects of the organization.

Each year, ATS PAR identifies patients to participate in an edition of Patient Voices, with the goal of sharing their journey – to put a “face” to their diagnosis and challenges. As a result, respiratory professionals including physicians, clinicians, scientists, and researchers receive an intimate look into disease impact on patients’ lives.

Understanding the patient perspective is essential for Society members to innovate and to advance scientific research toward better patient outcomes.

This edition, ATS Patient Voices 9, was created to highlight the voices of BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) patients who have experienced disparities on their journey to diagnosis and treatment for their diseases. These stories are vital to understanding that inequities still exist in treatment and access to care within the healthcare system, and only through knowing and understanding struggles such as these can we begin to address how to change them.

Today, we continue to align our work with the unique and urgent needs of individuals living with sleep disorders, critical illness, and respiratory diseases. Together, we’re creating a more unified and powerful research and advocacy community. As our patients gain more knowledge and insight about their diseases and how it affects their quality of life, they remain invaluable resources to us all.

It is a great honor and privilege for the ATS PAR to serve as the “patient voice” of the ATS. ■



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