

# ASTRO

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*news*

**CONFUSED ABOUT  
MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION?  
WE'VE GOT SOME ANSWERS**

**ALSO**

**2005: A YEAR IN REVIEW**

**ASTRO IN THE MEDIA**

**THE FUTURE OF PHYSICS TRAINING**



William Shipley, M.D.

## A International Relations Committee

### International Relations Committee Coordinates First Meeting *by William Shipley, M.D.*

Following a recommendation by the International Relations Committee, the ASTRO Board of Directors approved establishing regular educational courses in emerging nations with an emphasis on managing common cancers competently with the technology locally available. The first such meeting took place January 15-18, 2006, in Manila, the Philippines, following 13 months of planning with the Philippine Radiation Oncology Society and the Asian regional training program of the International Atomic Energy Association.

This four-day course updated local physicians and physicists in the management of the common malignancies of the Asian-Pacific area. Its implementation and venue was largely thanks to Theresa Sy Ortin, M.D., president of PROS, and her organizing committee, as well as B. Vikram, H. Tatsuzaki, M.D., and M.J. Calagunas, M.D., representing IAEA who combined their annual regional teaching course with this effort.

In addition to myself, ASTRO provided four faculty — Bernard Cummings, M.B., Ch.E., Anthony Fyles, M.D., Lawrence Marks, M.D., and Jatinder Palta, Ph.D. — who presented 25 lectures, case presentations and workshops on both the clinical and physics treatment planning issues in five subspecialty areas requested by the PROS. Additional



presentations were given by Drs. Sy Ortin and Tatsuzaki. The course was attended by 67 Philippine radiation oncologists and residents (96 percent of the radiation oncologists in the country), 30 Philippine medical physicists and therapists, plus 30 IAEA delegates and attendees from Asian countries including Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The attendees were all given a CD of the lecture slides plus a CD of our 2003-2005 ASTRO Annual Meetings.

The educational benefits and goodwill from this course were very evident from the warm reception given to the faculty for their excellent presentations, from the remarks of the 102 returned course questionnaires and from the prominent position this course was given during the simultaneous annual meetings of the

Philippine College of Radiology and the Asian Association of Radiology. The success of this initial ASTRO educational course in an emerging country bodes extremely well for similar projects in the future and brings credit to our Society for reaching out around the world to help in the education of radiation oncologists who do not have the opportunity to attend our Annual Meeting. Over the coming years, more joint educational ventures will be planned in Asia and South America pairing ASTRO with different national radiation oncology societies and using the venue of their annual meetings.

*Dr. Shipley practices at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He chaired this educational meeting in Manila.*