LETTER FROM THE 2020 PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

When we developed the conference theme, “Raising Our Voices, Showing Our Strength,” we hoped it would resonate with the needed change in our profession. Little did we know it would adopt so much meaning given a global pandemic and outcry of racial injustice, affecting all aspects of society. The last few months have been difficult for many. Individually and as a profession, we advocated for the safety of our patients and our communities, we adapted to new and unexpected demands, and we proved ourselves to be resilient and strong.

In February, the NSGC Annual Conference Program Planning Committee met to review over 75 session proposals submitted by creative, practiced, trailblazing members of our community. We started this meeting by selecting three words to describe our vision for this year’s sessions: advancing, connected and challenging. We want NSGC’s Virtual Annual Conference to advance our knowledge and advance our profession. We want to connect with our colleagues and recognize how our conversations and new knowledge and skills will connect back to our practices. Most importantly, we want to leave the conference feeling challenged: challenged to sit with uncomfortable conversations, challenged to uncover difficult truths and challenged to grow.

After months of professional and societal disruption, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and global civil unrest as a response to systemic racism, it feels like that planning meeting occurred a lifetime ago. Yet the main themes we highlighted for presentation at the conference remain evergreen, somehow even more relevant today: innovative models of service delivery, diversity, equity and inclusion within our profession, professional issues and more.

Through conversations with many of you and the wonderful responses to recent NSGC initiatives, it is apparent that a space for continuing education and challenging conversations is important now, more than ever. We look forward to you joining us for the NSGC Virtual Annual Conference, and we are thrilled to share this preview of our conference with you.

Rachel Mills, MS, CGC
2020 Program 2020 Program Committee
Committee Chair

Barry Tong, MS, CGC
2020 Program Committee Vice Chair
EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

INNOVATIVE MODELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY
The adoption of tailored service delivery models has been an ongoing discussion in our field and is more relevant today with COVID-19 infection precautions and the rapid adoption of telehealth. The conference will feature extensive education on this topic, including:

▲ Meeting Patients Where They Are: Improving Access to Genetic Counseling While Maintaining High-Quality Care
● Creative Cancer Counseling: Use of Alternate Service Delivery Models to Facilitate Genetic Testing for Therapeutic Decisions
■ Delivering Genetic Counseling: Experiences, Insights and Outcomes Across Disparate Settings

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
The ongoing conversations around diversity within our profession will continue at the conference. NSGC will host a variety of speakers to discuss our role in moving the needle within our professional society and our communities at large. Following are several sessions with a diversity, equity and inclusion focus slated for presentation:

▲ More Than Just Raising Our Voices: Confronting Injustices in Patient Care
▲ Actualizing the Benefits of Genetic Counseling and Testing for All: Navigating the Minority Experience With Genetic Testing and Implicit Biases
■ Action Planning for Cultural Change in Genetic Counseling

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES
Just as our clinical delivery models changed drastically in response to COVID-19 related restrictions, our field in general required significant adaptations this year, and we are pleased to offer multiple sessions addressing education and professional development. Here is a snapshot of the sessions you can expect:

▲ Pariah or Pioneer? Stories of Expansion Into New and Emerging Genetic Counselor Roles
● More Than a Day’s Work: Purposeful Career Design for Genetic Counselors
■ So You Want to be a Leader? How to Increase Your Influence, Value and Career Satisfaction by Leveraging Non-Positional Leadership

AND MORE...
Many more interesting topics will be presented and discussed throughout the conference. Here are several more exciting sessions you will not want to miss:

● Are FH and AFib Ready for Widespread Genetic Testing? A Debate
◆ Supervising the Student With Anxiety and Perfectionism
● Catching Criminals and Contacting Cousins: Tools for Genetic Counselors in the Post-Secret Era
■ Transfer of Mosaic Embryos following PGT-A: Updates, Ethics, and Implications
◆ A Grant Writing Retreat to Jump Start Your Proposal
✚ Learning in a Digital World: Adapting to Remote Education and Supervision

This is just a snapshot of the sessions that you will find at the NSGC Virtual Annual Conference. As always, the conference will feature sessions describing recent advancements in technology and care, highlighting genetic counselor-led research, and contributing to personal and professional growth. For the full schedule, session descriptions, speaker information and more visit nsgc.org/conference.