Leadership: AMP’s current President is Dr. Iris Schrijver and its President-Elect is Dr. Jennifer Hunt. Mary Williams was appointed full time Executive Director in July 2011. The AMP membership approved a change to its governance structure in February 2012, which resulted in two primary refinements: 1) a shift from management by a Council to management by a Board of Directors and an Executive Committee, and 2) the transition of Subdivision Chairs from the role of Annual Meeting programming to one that focuses directly on the interests and needs of the subdivision.

Strategic Plan: AMP adopted a new strategic plan in 2011, which is comprised of the following areas: advocacy, education, innovation and improved patient care, governance, and management.

Membership: In November 2011, AMP’s membership was approximately 2,031, an increase of approximately 3.4% since November 2010. In 2011, member electronic communications migrated from Lyris (CHat AMP, “CHAMP” listserv) to a social media platform called “CHAMP 2.0.”

Annual Meeting: The 2011 Annual Meeting was held in Grapevine (near Dallas), Texas, November 17-19, and had an attendance of 1,334 scientific registrants, an increase of ~6% over 2010. The exhibits program continues to grow; 129 entities exhibited in 199 booth spaces. AMP again held a Molecular Pathology Outreach Course the day before the annual meeting, which had an attendance of approximately 85. AMP celebrated its 17th annual meeting with a social event that was very well received by attendees. This year, AMP will hold its 18th annual meeting in Long Beach, California, October 25-27. The Molecular Pathology Outreach Course will be held on October 24.

Awards: Dr. Carlo Croce was the keynote speaker at the 2011 annual meeting and the recipient of the AMP Award for Excellence in Molecular Diagnostics. Previous recipients include Francis Collins, Edwin Southern, Henry Erlich, Bert Vogelstein, Craig Venter, Sir Alec Jeffreys, Leroy Hood, Mary-Clare King, Janet Rowley, Carl Wittwer, Kay Davies, and Patrick Brown. The AMP Leadership Award, which honors a member who has contributed significant leadership to benefit the mission and goals of the society, was presented to Dr. Margaret Gulley in 2011. Previous recipients include Jeffrey Kant, Mark Sobel, Daniel Farkas, Karen Kaul, Debra Leonard, and Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez. AMP also provides Young Investigator Awards and Technologist Awards based on abstract submissions and poster presentations at the annual meeting. In addition, several awards to support travel to the annual meeting are provided, one of which was sponsored by ICPI, which was given to two recipients in 2011.

Publications: AMP’s official journal, The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics, is now in its 14th year. It is co-published with ASIP and is published bimonthly. Dr. Timothy O’Leary is the Editor-in-Chief. In 2011, AMP published two manuscripts: AMP Position Statement on population carrier screening for Spinal Muscular Atrophy (Muralidharan, et al.) and Laboratory Guidelines for Detection, Interpretation and Reporting of Maternal Cell Contamination (MCC) in Prenatal Analyses: A Report of the Association for Molecular Pathology (Nagan, et al.). The AMP Whole Genome Analysis Working Group published an editorial: The Association for Molecular Pathology’s Approach to Supporting a Global Agenda to Embrace Personalized Genomic Medicine. The CME program, which in 2011 readers could earn up to 50 credit hours in category 1 credit towards the AMA Physician’s Recognition Award, is growing.

Clinical Practice: AMP’s Clinical Practice Committee continues to work on a variety of clinical practice issues. During 2011, the Whole Genome Analysis Working Group published an editorial in JMD as noted above and completed a white paper. A significant investment the development in practice
guidelines began in 2010. AMP is collaborating with the College of American Pathologists (CAP) and the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) to develop practice guidelines for biomarkers in lung cancer. This project is nearing completion. AMP is collaborating with CAP, the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP), and the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) to develop practice guidelines for biomarkers in colorectal cancer. This project is in its early stages.

Economic Affairs: This committee is actively engaged in reimbursement, coding, and economic policy issues. The Committee continues to make significant progress in educating and influencing third party payers. AMP is a member of the CAP Pathology Coding Caucus (PCC) and a number of Committee members are active participants in the AMA CPT Editorial Panel Workgroup. As a result of this group’s work, the AMA has established new molecular pathology CPT codes for oncologic and heritable disorders. AMP believes that many of these codes should be placed on the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS). Because PhD laboratory scientists provide interpretive services for a number of these tests, the Committee has been coordinating AMP’s participation in a coalition of professional organizations seeking legislative recognition for PhD laboratory scientists having appropriate molecular training as ‘Qualified Healthcare Practitioners.’ Qualified healthcare practitioners can bill for professional component reimbursement for relevant molecular CPT codes on the PFS.

Membership Affairs: AMP’s Membership Affairs Committee manages effective volunteer and liaison management programs. During 2011, the Committee developed a new award, the AMP Meritorious Service Award, which recognizes significant service given by a member to AMP. The 2011 recipients were Dr. Teresita Redondo and Dr. Marlene Sabbath in recognition of many years’ service as co-editors of the AMP Newsletter. Seven individuals were selected to receive AMP membership grant awards. During 2011, the Committee’s International Affairs Working Group co-sponsored molecular pathology courses in Mumbai, India and in Beirut, Lebanon. The second course was patterned after AMP’s Molecular Pathology Outreach Course and was held immediately prior to the annual meeting of the Arab Division of the International Academy of Pathology (IAP).

Professional Relations: AMP’s active Professional Relations Committee continues to work on regulatory and legislative issues that impact molecular pathology. During 2011, AMP continued to advocate for its members with FDA regarding laboratory developed tests (LDTs), companion diagnostics, next generation sequencing, the identification of diagnostic tests on drug labeling, Research Use Only devices (RUOs); with NIH regarding the Genetic Test Registry (GTR) and a proposed exclusive license on quantitative protein expression analysis; with NIST regarding the need for Standard Reference Materials (SRMs); with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding research protections (the “Common Rule”); with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) regarding their technology assessments; and, with Congress regarding funding for Graduate Medical Education, LDTs, and gene patents.

Training & Education: AMP’s education initiatives continue to grow. The T&E Committee presents webinars and the Outreach Course at the annual meeting. During 2011, the Committee created a Task Force to develop a molecular pathology curriculum for medical residents.

AMP Test Directory (www.amptestdirectory.org): The online Directory is organized into sections for Hematopathology, Solid Tumors, and Infectious Diseases. Only Laboratory Directors who are AMP members can list tests; however, the Directory is available to the public without restriction. An extensive redesign of the database is ongoing that includes a specimen source field, a streamlined list of infectious agents, a Google-style search function, and a function that will allow the easy identification of labs who have not updated their listing in the past year so they can be inactivated.